THE ISLAMIC MONTHS

A detailed treatise on the merits, virtues and practices for the months of the Islamic year

لطائف المعارف

فيما لمواسم العام من الوظائف

AL-ḤĀFIẒ IBN RAJAB AL-ḤANBALĪ
Raḥimahullāh

Translated by
Mahomed Mahomedy

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المؤلف : الحافظ ابن رجب الحنبلي

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Islamic Abbreviations or Terminologies

Muslims use certain expressions when mentioning Allah, His Messenger, and the companions.

These expressions show the reverence Muslims have for Allah and the respect for the Messenger and the companions.

They have been abbreviated as follows:

ﷺ = After the Prophet is mentioned. It stands for "Salla Allahu.. ãlaihi wa Sallam" which means Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him.

رضي الله عنه = After one of the companions of the prophet is mentioned. It stands for "Radiya Allahu ‘Anhu", which means may Allah be pleased with him.

Radiyallâhu ‘anhâ = After one of the female companions of the prophet is mentioned. It stands for "Radiya Allahu ‘Anhâ", which means may Allah be pleased with her.

رضي الله عنهم = After more than one of the companions of the prophet are mentioned. It stands for "Radiya Allahu ‘Anhum", which means may Allah be pleased with them.

سبحانه وتعالى = Exalted is He.

عليه السلام = It stands for "Allaïhi as Salam", which means Peace be upon him.

Ibn, b. = It signifies son of.

Bint = It signifies daughter of.

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

BIOGRAPHY OF IBN RAJAB

His name and titles

He is Hâfiz 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn Ahmad ibn Rajab - his grandfather's name is 'Abd ar-Rahmân and he was named **"Rajab"** because he was born in the month of Rajab – ibn al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn Abî al-Barakât Mas'ûd as-Salâmî al-Baghdâdî. He adopted Damascus as his place of residence. He belonged to the Hambalî schools of jurisprudence and followed the pious predecessors in his course, beliefs and conduct. He is well-known by the name Ibn Rajab al-Hambalî. In fact, he is rarely known by any other name. When this name is taken, it most certainly refers to none other than him.

Most *'ulamâ'* are of the opinion that his title (*laqab*) is Zayn ad-Dîn (the embellishment of religion). He was also given other titles which make reference to his memory and knowledge. For example, *al-Hâfiz* (one who has a good memory), *al-'Umdah* (a person possessing excellent qualities), *al-Muhaddith* (a proficient Hadîth scholar) and *al-Qudwah* (a person who is worthy of emulation).

His *kunnîyyah* (agnomen) is Abû al-Faraj. He shares this agnomen with Shaykh Abû al-Faraj ibn al-Jauzî, as stated by al-Hâfiz in his biography from *adh-Dhayl*. This agnomen is also shared by Shaykh 'Abd al-Wâhid ibn Muhammad ash-Shîrâzî al-Baghdâdî ad-Dimashqî who was the imam of the Hambalî school in Syria.

His birth and demise

The biographers differ greatly as regards the year of his birth. It is said that he was born in 706 A.H. but this is a mistake because it was the year in which his father, Ahmad ibn Rajab, was born. The preferred opinion is that he was born in 736 A.H. in Baghdad.

He passed away in 795 A.H. in Damascus in the month of Ramadân. Al-Hâfiz Ibn Hajar states in *ad-Durar al-Kâminah* that he passed away in Rajab. Allâh ﷻ knows best. He would have thus passed away at the age of sixty. He was buried in al-Bâb as-Saghîr graveyard next to 'Abd al-Wâhid ibn Muhammad ash-Shîrâzî. Ibn

Nâsir ad-Dîn said: **"The person who dug the grave of Ibn Rajab related to me that Shaykh Zayn ad-Dîn ibn Rajab came to him a few days before his demise and said: 'Dig a grave for me over here', and he pointed to the spot where he is presently buried. I dug the grave and when I completed digging it, he went inside and lied down. He liked the grave and said: 'This is good.' By Allâh, I did not think anything about it until he was brought dead after a few days. I placed him in that grave and covered him up in it."**

His teachers

Ibn Rajab *rahimahullâh* had many teachers. We shall list a few by way of example. [The names are left in their original Arabic].

1. والده المقرئ الشيخ شهاب الدين أحمد بن رجب السلامي الحنبلي.
2. جده الشيخ المقرئ عبد الرحمن بن الحسن السلامي الملقب بـ(رجب).
3. الشيخ العالم المسند محمد بن إبراهيم بن عبد الله بن أبي عمر محمد بن قدامة صاحب (الشرح الكبير).
4. الشيخ أحمد ابن عبد المؤمن السبكي النووي الشافعي وأفاد منه وجعل إجازته له.
5. الشيخ محمد بن النقيب الشافعي.
6. الشيخ يوسف بن عبد الله النابلسي الفقيه الفرضي وقد سمع (سنن ابن ماجه) منه.
7. وسمع من المحدث محمد بن إسماعيل بن الخباز المدرس بدار الحديث السكرية.
8. الشيخ المحدث أبا الفتح محمد بن محمد بن إبراهيم بن الميدومي وأكثر عنه سماع الأحاديث.
9. ومن شيوخه أيضا قاضي الحنابلة علي بن الزين المنجا التنوخي المقرئ الدمشقي.
10. وأخذ عن قاضي الديار المصرية وابن قاضيها الشيخ أبو عمر عبد العزيز بن محمد بن إبراهيم بن جماعة الكتاني الشافعي الحموي المصري.

11. الشيخ جمال الدين يوسف بن عبد الله بن محمد النابلسي الفقيه الفرضي سمع منه (سنن ابن ماجه) بدمشق.
12. الحافظ أبو سعيد خليل بن كيكلدي العلائي المصنف المشهور.
13. الشيخ محمد بن عبد الرزاق الشيباني الزاهد قرأ عليه ببغداد.
14. المحدث أبو حفص سراج الدين عمر بن علي بن موسى الحسيني البغدادي البزار الأزجي الشافعي أخذ منه ثلاثيات البخاري بالسند.
15. ومن أشهر شيوخ الحافظ ابن رجب شيخه الإمام أبو عبد الله بن القيم حيث لازمه ابن رجب أكثر من سنة وسمع عليه العقيدة النونية وغيرها.
16. كما تتلمذ ابن رجب على شيخ الحنابلة بالشام المعروف بابن قاضي الجبل وتحمل عنه علما كثيرا خصوصا فقه المذهب بل إن الحافظ ابن رجب خلفه في حلقته وابن قاضي الجبل من تلامذة شيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية.
17. ومنهم مسند الوقت الشيخ عبد الله بن محمد بن إبراهيم بن نصر الدمشقي العطار الحنبلي.
18. الشيخ المسند المكثر أبو الفضل بن الحموي وهو محمد بن إسماعيل بن أبي الفضل المسلم بن الحسن الدمشقي المعروف بابن الحموي.
19. الشيخ العالم القاضي جمال الدين عمر بن إدريس الأنباري البغدادي الحنبلي.

Ibn Rajab *raḥimahullâh* had many other teachers. He himself wrote their biographies in his book, *Dhayl Ṭabaqât al-Ḥanâbilah*.

His students

[The names of these are left in the original Arabic].

1. أكبرهم سنا الشيخ علي بن محمد البعلي الدمشقي المشهور بابن اللحام.
2. الشيخ عمر بن أحمد بن الملقن.
3. الشيخ محمد بن علي بن عبد الرحمن المقدسي القاضي الحنبلي.
4. الشيخ أبو عبد الله محمد بن محمد بن عبادة السعدي الأنصاري الحنبلي قاضي الحنابلة بالشام.
5. الشيخ المحدث محمد بن أحمد الحبتي الحنبلي القاهري المصري.

6. الشيخ القاضي محمد بن خالد بن موسى الحمصي المعروف بابن زهرة.
7. الشيخ عمر بن محمد بن علي السراج الدمشقي أبو حفص الشافعي المعروف بابن المزلق.
8. الشيخ المفتي أحمد بن نصر الله بن أحمد بن محمد القاضي الحنبلي البغدادي ثم المصري.
9. الشيخ داؤد بن سليمان بن عبد الله الموصلي ثم الدمشقي زين الدين الحنبلي.
10. ومن أصغرهم أبو شعر المقدسي عبد الرحمن بن سليمان.
11. ومنهم أبو ذر عبد الرحمن بن محمد المصري الحنبلي المعروف بالزركشي.
12. الشيخ علي بن محمد بن علي الطرسوسي المزي.
13. شمس الدين محمد بن أحمد بن أحمد بن سعيد المقدسي النابلسي الحنبلي المكي.
14. الشيخ الناسخ إسماعيل بن علي بن محمد البقاعي الشافعي الدمشقي.

His journeys for the sake of knowledge

Travelling for the sake of knowledge was one of the salient features of the people of knowledge and a means which no student could do without. The students used to compete with each other in undertaking as many and as distant journeys as possible. This is because it was a means to listen from the scholars of different lands, and learn narrations and sciences from them. Ibn Rajab *rahimahullâh* commenced his journeys for the sake of knowledge from an early age. He travelled with his father to several lands and benefited from the *'ulamâ'* of those places. In this way, he acquired lofty permissions [to narrate Hadîth] while at the same time benefiting from the *'ulamâ'* of Baghdad and listening to them while he was still a young boy. He was thus engrossed in seeking knowledge and listening to the scholars from a young age. He travelled to various places and benefited greatly from them. He travelled to Damascus on two occasions: the first with his father, and the second time when they shifted and settled down there. While in Damascus, he attended the lessons of many of its scholars, some of whom were mentioned previously.

He also travelled to Egypt after he reached the age of maturity,

and met many scholars under whom he studied. He then travelled to Nablûs and then to Jerusalem. These journeys had a major impact on his life.

His intellectual position

Ibn Rajab *rahimahullâh* attained a lofty position among the *'ulamâ'* of his time and even among those who differed with him in his *madhhab* and programme. All those who wrote his biography praise him and do not speak of anything which is disparaging. The only criticism levelled against him is that he used to issue legal verdicts based on the verdicts of Ibn Taymîyyah *rahimahullâh*. But these criticisms were very few. His intellectual position can be gauged from reading his life history, the opinions of the *'ulamâ'* about him, and the books which he wrote. His student, Ibn al-Lahhâm said about him: **"He is our shaykh and imam, the *'âlim*, the erudite scholar, the unique, the *hâfiz*, the shaykh of Islam, the solution to problems, the clarifier of confusions, the last of the noble predecessors, the unique person of his time and era, Abû al-Faraj ibn Rajab al-Hambalî. May Allâh ﷻ be with him, and may He shower everyone with His blessings, favours and kindness."**

All those who wrote his biography described him with noble qualities and an enviable position as regards his religiosity, juridical school, and condition. In like manner, he was from among the imams who were practical in their lives, ardent worshippers, advisers to people, and abstentious. He possessed numerous merits, he was a reliable scholar, firmly entrenched in knowledge and literature, wrote famous books, and possessed the knowledge of many beneficial sciences.

His written works

[These are left in the original Arabic].

1. أحكام الخواتم وما يتعلق بها.
2. اختيار الأولى في شرح اختصام الملأ الأعلى.
3. الاستخراج لأحكام الخراج.
4. استنشاق نسيم الأنس من نفحات رياض القدس.
5. أهوال القبور وأحوال أهلها إلى دار النشور.
6. تحقيق كلمة الإخلاص.

7. تسلية نفوس الآباء والرجال عند فقد الأطفال.
8. تفسير سورة الإخلاص.
9. التخويف من النار والتعريف بحال دار البوار.
10. تفسير سورة النصر.
11. جامع العلوم الحكم.
12. الحكم الجديرة بالإذاعة من قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "بعثت بالسيف بين يدي الساعة".
13. (الخشوع في الصلاة) او (الذل والانكسار للعزيز الجبار).
14. ذم قسوة القلوب.
15. ذيل طبقات الحنابلة.
16. سيرة عبد الملك بن عمر بن عبد العزيز.
17. شرح حديث أبي الدرداء في طلب العلم.
18. شرح حديث زيد بن ثابت وفيه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أمره أن يتعاهد أهله كل صباح...لبيك أللهم لبيك.
19. نزهة الأسماع في مسألة السماع.
20. شرح حديث ما ذئبان جائعان.
21. شرح حديث يتبع الميت ثلاث.
22. شرح علل الترمذي.
23. غاية النفع في تمثيل المؤمن بخامة الزرع.
24. فتح الباري شرح صحيح البخاري (لكنه مات قبل أن يتمه وقف فيه على كتاب الجنائز).
25. الفرق بين النصيحة والتعيير.
26. فضل علم السلف على علم الخلف.
27. (القواعد الفقهية) أو (قواعد الفقه الإسلامي).
28. لطائف المعارف – وهو كتابنا هذا.

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

INTRODUCTION

We seek the assistance of Allâh ﷻ. O Allâh! Send salutations and peace to our master, Muhammad, his family and his Companions ﷺ. My inspiration to do good is solely from Allâh ﷻ. I place my trust in Him and I turn to Him alone.

All praise is due to Allâh the sovereign, the one who has control over all things, the mighty, the over-powering, the turner of hearts and eyes, the one who establishes matters as He wills and likes, and the one who imposes the day over the night and the night over the day. He cast a veil over the night so it became dark in order to provide rest and concealment. He provided light to the lamp [sun] of the day so it illuminated it for movement and spreading out in the land. He appointed the days and nights in order to apportion times for work and calculate ages. He subjugated the sun and moon which move according to a set pattern and course. They follow each other in the milky way according to a set pattern. He made them signs through which the times for the days, nights, months and years of this world are calculated. It is through them that the times for salâh, zakâh, hajj, fasting, and opening of the fast are established. This is an established proof which leaves no ground for excuses, and demonstrates the absolute wisdom of the all-wise, all-knowing, and all-powerful Allâh.

I praise Him and the sweetness of praising Him increases with repetition. I express gratitude to Him and His bounties on the one who is grateful to Him are sent down in torrents. I testify that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh, who is one and has no partner. This testimony absolves the heart from polytheism provided it is attested to correctly, and it enables the person who utters it to return to the abode of peace [Paradise]. I testify that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger. His forehead is like the full moon – it glitters brightly when it is happy. The ocean is his right hand from which he gives whenever he is asked, and he never fears poverty. Absolute monotheism (*al-Hanîfiyyah*) is his religion – the upright and preferred religion. It was by commissioning him as His Prophet that Allâh ﷻ removed all chains and burdens from his followers. It was

through his propagation that Allâh ﷻ exposed the harms of eye-sights and the filth of the eyes. It was through his Sharî'ah that He distinguished between the righteous and the sinners, to the extent that right was separated from wrong. The locks of the hearts were opened, and so knowledge and dignity spread, and the burden of music disappeared. May Allâh ﷻ send salutations to him and his family members who were at the forefront and greatly valued. Salutations to his Companions who were guides in different parts of the world – salutations which convey them to the highest objectives in those lands. And may Allâh ﷻ bestow all of them with peace.

Allâh ﷻ says: **"We made the night and the day as two symbols. We then obliterated the symbol of the night and We established the symbol of the day luminous so that you may search for the bounty of your Sustainer, and that you may come to know of the number of years and of the reckoning."** *(Sûrah Banî Isrâ'îl/al-Isrâ', 17: 12)* **"It is He who made the sun a radiance and the moon a light, and determined for it phases so that you might know the number of years and the reckoning [of time]."** *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 5)* Allâh ﷻ thus informs us that He attached the calculation of years and reckoning of time to determining phases of the moon. In fact, He attached this to making the sun a radiance, and the moon a light. This is because the year and month are calculated by the moon, while the day and week are calculated by the sun. It is through these two bodies that the reckoning of time is carried out. As for the words **"and that you may come to know of the number of years and of the reckoning"**: since the lunar month does not need to be counted because it is established between two crescents, Allâh ﷻ did not say **"that you may come to know the number of months"**. A month does not need a number unless the last day of the month is cloudy [thereby preventing the sighting of the crescent]. In such a case, the number will be unanimously completed [i.e. thirty days] except in the case of Sha'bân if its last day is cloudy. This is specifically in relation to Ramaḍân, because there are many differences in this regard [whether thirty days will be completed or not]. As for the year, it has to be counted because there is no obvious limit for it through observation. It therefore has to be counted by the number of months. This is especially so bearing in mind that years continue for lengthy periods of time.

Allâh ﷻ made a year into twelve months. He says: **"The number of months in the sight of Allâh is twelve, [laid down] in the decree of Allâh..."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 36)* This is equal to the

number of the signs of the zodiac which, by the movement of the sun, the solar year is completed. When the moon revolves around it, it completes its annual circuit. Allâh ﷻ made the moon the basis of calculation because its appearance on the horizon is not dependent on any calculations. Rather, it is something manifest and seen by the naked eye. On the other hand, understanding the movement of the sun is dependent on calculations and records. Allâh ﷻ therefore did not impose this onto us. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"We are an unlettered nation, we neither write nor calculate. The month is like this, like this and like this."** He indicated with both his hands two times [equalling twenty] and then folded his one thumb the third time [to indicate nine, totalling twenty nine]. He said: **"Commencing fasting [in Ramadân] on seeing the crescent and end fasting on seeing the crescent. If the crescent is hidden from you [because of clouds], complete the full number [of thirty]."**(1)

Salâh and fasting and their Attachment to the Sun

Allâh ﷻ attached the injunctions of the day – salâh and fasting – to the movement of the sun because this too is seen with the naked eye and does not need any calculations and records. Salâh is dependent on the break of dawn, rising of the sun, passing of the sun through mid-day, setting of the sun, the shadow of objects equalling the length of the object, and the disappearance of twilight. Fasting is delineated by the extent of the day from the break of dawn till sunset.

Allâh ﷻ says: **"and the reckoning"**. This refers to the reckoning [and counting] of things which are related to the religious and worldly benefit of people, e.g. fasting, opening fast, hajj, zakâh, vows, atonements, number of wives, period of *'îlâ'*,(2) period of rental and hiring, end of debt period, and other matters which are dependent on months and years. Allâh ﷻ says: **"They ask you about the crescents. Say: 'They are appointed times for the people and for the hajj.'"** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 189)* Allâh ﷻ says that the crescents are for the calculation of times in general, and specifically mentioned the hajj in order to show its importance. Allâh ﷻ appointed for His believing servants certain duties which they have to carry out by night and day in order to show obedience to Him. Some of these

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (1913) and Muslim (1080).

(2) Annulment of a marriage after the husband's sworn testimony to have refrained from marital intercourse for a period of at least four months.

duties are compulsory, e.g. the five compulsory salâhs, while others are optional, e.g. the optional salâhs, *dhikr* (remembrance of Allâh ﷻ), etc.

In like manner, Allâh ﷻ imposed certain duties on His servants which they have to fulfil in the lunar months, e.g. fasting, zakâh, hajj. Some of them are compulsory, e.g. fasting in Ramadân, and the obligatory hajj. Others are optional, e.g. fasting in Sha'bân, Shawwâl, and the sanctified months [Dhû al-Qa'dah, Dhû al-Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab]. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Among them, four months are sacred. This is the straight religion. Therefore, do not wrong yourselves therein."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 36)* Allâh ﷻ says: **"The months of hajj are few, well known."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 197)* **"It is the month of Ramadân in which the Qur'ân was revealed."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 185)*

Allâh ﷻ made certain days and nights superior to others. He also made the night of Power (*laylatul Qadr*) better than 1 000 months. He took an oath on the ten nights, and the preferred opinion is that this refers to the first ten nights of Dhû al-Hijjah. We will explain this at the appropriate place – if Allâh ﷻ wills. There are, in each of these meritorious seasons, acts of obedience to Allâh ﷻ through which a person gains proximity to Him. It is during such seasons that Allâh ﷻ has subtle fragrances which He pours onto His servant by virtue of His favour and mercy on him. The fortunate person is thus the one who takes maximum benefit from the meritorious seasons of the months, days and hours, and gains proximity to his Master during those times through acts of obedience. It is likely that some of those fragrances will engulf him and thereby enjoy such good fortune after which he will be secure from the Hell-fire and its burning flames.

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ, at-Tabarânî and others narrate a Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ: **"Seek goodness throughout your lives and seek the fragrances of your Lord's mercy. Allâh ﷻ most certainly has fragrances of His mercy which He pours onto whomever He wills from His servants. Ask Allâh to conceal your private matters and give you security from all which causes you fear."**(1) At-Tabarânî narrates from Muhammad ibn Maslamah: **"Allâh ﷻ sends down fragrances [of His mercy] during certain times. Seek these fragrances because if any of you obtains such a fragrance, he will**

(1) Checked by Al-Baihaqi (1121).

never suffer again."(1)

'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"A seal is set on every deed of the day."**(2) Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates from Mujâhid who said: **"Allâh ﷻ says on every single day: 'O man! I have brought today to you and I will never bring it back to you. Consider, then, what you are going to do in it.' When the day expires, Allâh ﷻ folds it up and sets a seal on it. The seal does not break until Allâh ﷻ Himself breaks it on the day of Resurrection. At the time when the day expires, it says: 'All praise is due to Allâh ﷻ who gave me peace from the world and its inhabitants.' The night also says the same thing."**(3)

Mâlik ibn Dînâr narrates: **"'Îsâ ﷺ used to say: 'This day and night are two treasures. You should therefore be watchful of what you place in them.'"** He also used to say: **"Do in the night whatever was created to be done therein. Do during the day whatever was created to be done therein."**(4) Al-Hasan said: **"With the arrival of every single day, it says: 'O people! I am a new day and I am a witness to whatever is done in me. Once the sun sets, I will never return to you until the day of Resurrection.'"** Al-Hasan also used to say: **"O man! The day is your guest and a guest is bound to depart. A guest either praises you or criticizes you. Similar is the case with the night."**(5) Bakr al-Muzanî said: **"Each time Allâh ﷻ produces a day for the inhabitants of the world, it announces: 'O man! Make the most of me because there could well be no day for you after me.' The night announces: 'O man! Make the most of me because there could well be no night for you after me.'"**(6)

'Umar ibn Dharr used to say: **"Do good deeds for yourselves. May Allâh shower His mercy on you in this night and its darkness. A cheated person is the one who is cheated of the good of the day and night. The deprived person is the one who is**

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(1) In Al-Kabir (19/233) and Al-Haithami said in Al-Majmaa' (10/231):Some of them I didn't know while those whom I knew were mentioned.

(2) Musnad of Imam Ahmad (4/146).

(3) Check Al-Hilya (3/296).

(4) Check Al-Hilya (2/383).

(5) Check Al-Hilya (2/158).

(6) Check "Safwat As-Safwa" (3/249).

deprived of the good of the day and night. The night and day have been made means for the believers towards the obedience of their Lord. They have also been made the means for misery for others [non-believers] because they are heedless to their own selves. Revive yourselves for the sake of Allâh ﷻ through His remembrance because the hearts are revived through the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ."(1)

Abû Mûsâ ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The similitude of the person who remembers his Lord and the one who does not remember his Lord is like that of the living and the dead."**(2) Many a person who stands up at night for the sake of Allâh ﷻ rejoices by this standing in the darkness of his grave. Many a person who remains sleeping at night shall regret his lengthy periods of sleeping when he sees the honour which Allâh ﷻ shall bestow to the ardent worshippers tomorrow. You should therefore make the best of the passing hours, days and nights – may Allâh ﷻ have mercy on you.

Dâ'ûd at-Tâ'î said: **"The night** and day are stations at which people get down at one after the other until this conveys them to their final journey. You should therefore try to present some provision at every station for the next journey. The journey is going to end very soon and it will end sooner than you expect. Take provisions for your journey and fulfil whatever responsibilities you have because it will descend upon you unawares.

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ said: Mahmûd ibn al-Husein said:

مضى أمسك الماضي شهيدا معدلا وأعقبه يوم عليك جديد

فيومك إن أغنيته عاد نفعه عليك وماضي الأمس ليس يعود

فإن كنت بالأمس اقترفت إساءة فثنِّ بإحسان وأنت حميد

فلا ترج فعل الخير يوما إلى غد لعل غدا يأتي وأنت فقيد

"Your yesterday passed as a just witness, and it has been followed by a new day. If you make the best of your day, its benefit will come to you. As for yesterday, it is not going to return. If you committed any wrong yesterday, follow it by good

(1) Check Al-Hilya (5/108).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (6407) and it belongs to him, and by Muslim (211, 779).

[today] and you will be eligible for praise. Do not ever hope to do good tomorrow because it may well be that tomorrow will come but you will not be present [you will be dead].”

The commentary of ‘Abd ibn Humayd and other reliable commentaries quote the following statement of al-Hasan with regard to this verse: **“It is He who created the night and the day to follow each other for him who wants to reflect or wants to be grateful.”** *(Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 62)* He said: **“If a person does not do any good at night, the first part of the day is there to reprimand him. If a person does not do any good during the day, the night is there to reprimand him.”** Qatâdah said: **“A believer may forget [to do good] at night, but he remembers with the approach of the day. He may forget [to do good] during the day, but he remembers with the approach of the night.”** He said: **“A person came to Salmân al-Fârisî ﷺ and said: ‘I am unable to engage in worship at night.’ He said: ‘If that is the case, do not display any weakness [in engaging in worship] during the day.’”** Qatâdah said: **“Do good deeds for the sake of Allâh ﷻ during these days and nights because they are conveyances which convey people to their final abodes. They bring close all that is far, make old all that is new, and bring every promise until the [arrival of] the day of Resurrection.”**

I sought the guidance of Allâh ﷻ in compiling this book on duties for the different months of the year and the acts of obedience which are peculiar to certain months and seasons, e.g. *salâh*, fasting, *dhikr*, gratefulness, providing food, offering *salâm* (the Islamic greeting), and other qualities of the righteous and noble people. I compiled this book so that it will help me and my brothers in making preparations for the Hereafter, and preparing for death before its arrival. I hand over my affairs to Allâh ﷻ - He is most certainly fully aware of His servants. I also compiled this book so that it may be a worthy source for the lecturers who want to prepare speeches. The most superior deeds in the sight of Allâh ﷻ is for the person who seeks the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ when awakening those who are asleep and warning those who are heedless. Allâh ﷻ says: **“Go on reminding because reminding benefits the believers.”** *(Sûrah adh-Dhâriyât, 51: 55)*

Allâh ﷻ promised a mighty reward for the person who enjoins the giving of charity, the doing of good, or joining ties of kinship – and he does all this for the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ says: **“Not**

good are most of their deliberations except he who enjoins charity or good deeds or reconciliation among the people. And whoever does this for the pleasure of Allâh, We shall give him a great reward." *(Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 114)* The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who calls towards guidance shall receive the reward equal to the one who follows him."**(1) This in itself is a great virtue.

I arranged these duties which are connected to the months into *majâlis* (assemblies). I arranged them in the order of the lunar months of the year. I commenced with Muharram and ended with Dhû al-Hijjah. I mentioned the duties which are connected to each of these months. If any month does not have any specific duty, I did not mention anything under it. I concluded all this with duties which are related to the seasons of the solar year. These make up three *majâlis*: spring, winter and summer. I concluded the entire book with a *majlis* on repentance and hastening towards it before the end of one's life. Repentance is a duty of one's entire life. Before commencing with the duties of the months, I commenced with a *majlis* on the merit of reminding about Allâh ﷻ. It contains some of the merits of reminding. I named this book *Laṭâ'if al-Ma'ârif fî mâ li Mawâsim al-'Âm min al-Waẓâ'if*. I ask Allâh ﷻ alone to make this book solely for His pleasure, and to make it a means to gain proximity to Him and to His abode – the abode of peace and eternal bounty. I beseech Him to enable us and His believing servants to benefit from this book, to inspire us to do all that He loves and is pleased with, and to enable us to depart [from this world] with goodness and well-being. He is most certainly the most generous of all, and the most merciful of all. Âmîn.

The time has now come for us to commence what we intended, and to start with the first *majlis* as we had laid down. There is no power and might except with Allâh ﷻ.

(1) Checked by Muslim (2673), Abu Dawoud (4609), At-Tirmidhi (2683), and Ahmad (2/397).

THE MERIT OF REMINDING ABOUT ALLÂH ﷻ

Imam Ahmad, at-Tirmidhî and Ibn Hibbân in his *Sahîh* narrate a Hadîth from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ who said: **"We said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! How is it that when we are in your company, our hearts become soft, we become abstinent towards the world, and we become the people of the Hereafter? But when we leave your company, become occupied with our wives and get the fragrance of our children, we find that we are not the same [as when we had left you]?' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'If you were to remain in the condition in which you are when you leave me, the angels would have visited you in your homes. If you were to abstain from sins, Allâh ﷻ would have produced a new creation so that they could sin and He would be able to forgive them.' I asked: 'O Messenger of Allâh! From what was the entire creation created?' He replied: 'From water.' I asked: 'What is the building of Paradise like?' He replied: 'It is made from alternating bricks of gold and silver, its mortar is musk, its pebbles are pearls and sapphires, its soil is saffron. He who enters it shall live in comfort and luxury, and he will not experience misery. He shall live therein forever without dying. Their clothes will not become worn out and their youth will not come to an end.'"**(1)

The assemblies of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ with his Companions ﷺ were by and large assemblies of reminding them about Allâh ﷻ, urging them towards good and warning them against evil. They would also contain recitation of the Qur'ân, discussing aspects of wisdom and sound admonition which Allâh ﷻ blessed him with, or teaching those aspects which would benefit them in religion. All this was done as per the instruction of Allâh ﷻ when He ordered him in the Qur'ân to remind, admonish, narrate, invite towards the cause of his Lord with wisdom and sound admonition, to convey glad tidings, and to warn [against His disobedience]. Allâh ﷻ named the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ thus: **"a bearer of glad tidings and as an**

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2525), Ahmad (2/304) and Ibn Hibban (2683).

issuer of warnings. And as one who invites towards Allâh...” *(Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 45-46)*

Conveying glad tidings and issuing warnings actually entails urging towards good and warning against disobedience. It is for this reason that those assemblies used to soften the hearts, create aloofness from the world, and yearning for the Hereafter – as stated by Abû Hurayrah ﷺ in the above Hadîth. Softness of the hearts comes from the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. This is because the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ enforces submission of the heart, its rectification, and softness. It also removes heedlessness.

Allâh ﷻ says: **“Those who believed and whose hearts find tranquillity in the remembrance of Allâh. Behold! It is only through the remembrance of Allâh that the hearts find tranquillity.”** *(Sûrah ar-Ra‘d, 13: 28)* **“Believers are only they whose hearts tremble when the name of Allâh is mentioned, and whose faith increases when His words are recited to them, and they place their trust in their Sustainer.”** *(Sûrah al-Anfâl, 8: 2)* **“Give glad tidings to those who are humble. Those who, when the name of Allâh is mentioned, their hearts tremble.”** *(Sûrah al-Hajj, 22: 34-35)* **“Has the time not come for the believers that their hearts should feel humble at the remembrance of Allâh and what has come down of the true religion, and that they should not be like those who were given the Book before this and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts became hard? And many among them are disobedient.”** *(Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 16)* **“Allâh revealed the best speech, a Book, in unison with itself and oft-repeated. [Whereas] the hairs stand on end on the skins of those who fear their Sustainer. Thereafter, their skins and hearts soften to the remembrance of Allâh.”** *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 23)*

Al-‘Irbâd ibn Sâriyah ﷺ said: **“The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ admonished us in a manner that the hearts trembled and the eyes shed tears.”**(1) Ibn Mas‘ûd ﷺ said: **“An excellent assembly is the one in which wisdom is dispersed and in which mercy is hoped for. They are the assemblies of *dhikr*.”**

A person complained to al-Hasan about his hard-heartedness so he said to him: **“Take your heart closer to the remembrance of**

(1) Checked by Abu Daoud (4607), At-Tirmidhi (2676).

Allâh ﷻ." He also said: **"The assemblies of *dhikr* give life to knowledge and create humility in the heart. Dead hearts are revived through *dhikr* just as a barren land is revived through the rains."**

بذكـــــر الله تـــــرتاح القلـــــوب ودُنـــــيانا بِذِكْـــــرَاه تطـــــيب

"It is through the remembrance of Allâh that the hearts gain comfort, and our world becomes wholesome through His remembrance."

Aloofness from the world and desire for the Hereafter are experienced in these assemblies because the assemblies of *dhikr* make mention of the defects of this world, create aloofness towards it, make mention of the merit of Paradise, create a yearning for it, make mention of the terrors of the Hell-fire, and create a dread for it.

It is in the assemblies of *dhikr* that mercy descends, tranquillity pervades, the angels surround it, and Allâh ﷻ speaks highly of the people in those assemblies to the angels who are with Him, and even those who are merely sitting in those assemblies [for some other need] are not deprived. Many a time, Allâh ﷻ shows mercy to a person who is sitting with them even though he may be a sinner. It may well happen that a single person from among all of them may cry out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ and He forgives all those who were present because of him. These assemblies are the gardens of Paradise. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When you pass by the gardens of Paradise, you must graze [at your heart's desire]."** The Companions ﷺ asked: **"What are the gardens of Paradise?"** He said: **"The assemblies of *dhikr*."** When an assembly of *dhikr* ends, those who attended can be divided into several categories:

The person who returns to his base desires and has no connection whatsoever with what he heard in the assembly of *dhikr*. He neither increases in guidance nor abstains from evil. He is the worst of these categories. Whatever he heard is used as evidence against him and his punishment is increased because of this. He is the one who has wronged his own self: **"It is these upon whose hearts, ears and eyes Allâh set a seal. And it is they who are heedless."** *(Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 108)*

There are those who benefit from what they heard. They can be further divided into the following: (1) Those who abstain from the prohibitions which they heard and adhere to the obligations. They

are the balanced people – the people of the right side. (2) Those who progress towards striving in optional acts of obedience, remaining vigilant in abstaining from minute reprehensible acts (*makrûhât*), and have the yearning to emulate the ways of the pious predecessors. They are the ones who have surpassed, and they are the ones who enjoy close proximity [with Allâh ﷻ].

Those who listened to an assembly of *dhikr* with concentration and those who were heedless to it can be divided into three categories:

(1) Those who return to their lawful worldly activities and become occupied in them. In so doing, their hearts forget what they had been experiencing while they were in the assembly of *dhikr* with regard to consciousness of the greatness, might and power of Allâh ﷻ, His promises and warnings, and His rewards and punishments. This is what the Companions ﷺ complained about to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Based on their perfect recognition of Allâh ﷻ and their intense fear, they feared that this smacked of hypocrisy. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ informed them that it was not hypocrisy.

The *Sahîh* of Muslim narrates from Hanzalah ﷺ that he said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Hanzalah has become a hypocrite.' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: 'Why is that?' He said: 'When we are with you, you talk to us about Paradise and the Hell-fire, and it is as though we are seeing them right before our eyes. But when we leave you, we become occupied with our wives, children and livelihoods. In so doing, we forget many of the things [which you related to us].' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'If you remain in that condition in which you are when you are in my company, the angels will shake hands with you in your assemblies and on your pathways. However, O Hanzalah, there is a time for worship and there is a time for worldly engagements.' He said this three times."** Another narration states: **"If your hearts remain in the same condition as they are when they are engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, the angels will shake hands with you and even offer *salâm* (Islamic greeting) to you on the roads."**(1)

This means that it is extremely difficult to remain conscious of the Hereafter with the heart during all conditions and situations. The majority of people are unable to do this. They may therefore suffice

(1) Checked by Muslim (2750).

with remembrance of the Hereafter occasionally even if neglect is experienced while they are occupied with lawful worldly activities. However, a true believer can never be pleased with such a situation. Rather, his soul must reprimand him for this and cause grief to him. A person who has truly recognized Allâh ﷻ regrets the times of neglect over the times of clarity, and he yearns for the time of proximity at the time when he feels that he is distant [from Allâh ﷻ]. A poet said:

مـا أذكـر عيـشنا الـذي قـد سـلفا إلا وجـف القلـب، وكـم قـد وجفـا

واهًـا لـزماننا الـذي كـان صـفا هـل يـرجع بعـد فـوته وا أسـفا

"Whenever I think of my life which passed, I consider my heart at present to be hard. How cut off and hard it has become! How wonderful that time was when it was pure. How sorrowful! Will that time which has passed ever come back?"

(2) Those who continue in the condition in which they were when listening to the assembly of *dhikr* and continue thinking about it with their hearts all the time. These are subdivided into two categories:

(a) The person who becomes so engrossed that it turns his attention away from his lawful worldly activities. He thus severs his ties from the creation. He is neither able to intermingle with them nor able to fulfil their rights. Many people of the past experienced this condition. Some of them would never laugh while others used to say: **"If the remembrance of death departed from my heart for a single moment, it will be destroyed."**

(b) The person who is conscious of the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, His greatness, His rewards and His punishments with his heart. At the same time, his body is occupied with his worldly activities as regards earning lawful sustenance and seeing to his family. He intermingles with the creation in matters which would be of benefit to them because this is an act of worship in itself. For example, he will convey knowledge, wage *jihad*, enjoin good and forbid evil. Such people are the better of these two categories and they are the deputies of the Messengers ﷺ. It is with regard to them that 'Alî ﷺ said: **"They joined the world with their bodies while their souls were connected to the highest abode [the Hereafter]."**

The condition of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to change when he was engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. When this condition

ended, it would return to intermingling with the people and fulfilling their rights.

The *Musnad* of al-Bazzâr and *Mu'jam* of at-Tabarânî narrate from Jâbir ﷺ who said: **"When revelation would descend to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, I would think to myself: 'He appears like a person who is going to warn a people on whom punishment has come.' When he regained his composure, he was the person who laughed the most and was the best in character."**(1)

'Alî ﷺ or az-Zubayr ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to address us and remind us of the torments of Allâh ﷻ to the extent that we used to recognize this on his face and it was as if he was warning the people of an army which was to attack them the very next morning. When Jibra'îl ﷺ departed from him [after bringing revelation to him], he would not smile until he regained his composure."**(2)

Jâbir ﷺ narrates that when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ addressed them and spoke about the Final Hour, his anger would intensify and his voice would rise as though he was warning them of an army saying: 'The army is going to attack you in the **morning and the evening.'"**(3)

'Adîyy ibn Hâtim ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fear the Hell-fire."** And he turned away. He then said: **"Fear the Hell-fire."** He turned away three times to the extent that we thought that he was looking at it. He then said: **"Fear the Hell-fire even if it is by giving a piece of date [in charity]. The one who does not have that too must say a good word."**(4)

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* was asked as to how the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was when he was in privacy with his wives. She said: **"He was like any of you with the exception that he was the most honourable of people and the one who possessed the best character. He was always smiling and laughing."**

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(1) Al-Haithami said in Al-Majmaa' (9/17), Al-Bazzar checked it with a good Isnad.

(2) Checked by Ahmad in his Musnad (1/167).

(3) Muslim (867).

(4) Al-Bukhari (6563) and Muslim (1016).

This category of people are those who were connected to Allâh ﷻ with their hearts while they interacted with people with their bodies. Râbi'ah *rahimahallâh* said:

ولقد جعلتُكَ في الفؤاد مُحَدِّثي وأبَحْتُ جسمي من أراد جلوسي

فالجسم مني للجليس مؤانسٌ وحبيب قلب في الفؤاد أنيسي

"I made you my confidant in my heart while I conferred my body to the person who wants to sit in my company. My body is thus interacting with the person who is sitting with me, while the beloved of my heart is my confidant in my heart."

Admonitions are whips which are used to strike the hearts. They thus have the same effect on the hearts as whips have on the body. A strike does not have the same effect later on as it has at the time when it is given. However, the effect of the pain remains in accordance with the strength and weakness of the strike. The stronger the strike is, the longer the effect of the pain is.

Many of the predecessors who departed from an assembly of *dhikr* would come out with peace and tranquillity on them. Consequently, some of them could not eat immediately thereafter. Others would practise in accordance with what they heard for some time. The best charity is teaching an ignorant person or awakening a heedless person. The greatest thing which a person who is in a deep sleep of heedlessness can attain is a strike with the whip of admonition so that he wakes up. Admonitions are like whips which strike the depths of the hearts. When a person is injured by this strike and he shouts out, there is no harm. The one whose pain is more severe and he thus dies, his blood is lawful [there is no retribution for this death].

قضى الله في القتلى قصاص دمائهم ولكن دماء العاشقين جُبارُ

"Allâh ﷻ decreed retribution for those who are murdered. However, there is no retribution for the blood of lovers."

'Abd al-Wâhid ibn Zayd was delivering a lecture one day when a man shouted to him saying: **"O Abû 'Ubaydah! Stop because your admonition has exposed the veil of my heart."** 'Abd al-Wâhid completed his lecture and the man died.

A man shouted in the assembly of ash-Shiblî and passed away. His family members went to the caliph and sought retribution against ash-Shiblî. So ash-Shiblî said: **"His was a soul which**

shouted out and thus became inclined. It was summoned and it responded. Now what crime did ash-Shiblî commit?"

فكـــر فـــي أفعالـــه ثـــم صـــاح لا خيـــر فـــي الحـــب بغيـــر افتـــضاح
قـــد جئـــتكم مـــستأمنا فارحمـــوا لا تقتلونـــي قـــد رمـــيت الـــسلاح

"He pondered over his actions and shouted out: 'There is no good in love without sacrifice. I have come to you seeking peace, so show mercy to me. Do not kill me because I have cast aside my weapons [I have no desire to fight]."

Disciplining a person with a whip will only be beneficial if the person is healthy in body, has a firm heart, and has strong arms. Striking him will cause him pain and he will retract. As for the person who is physically ill and has no strength, what benefit will there be in disciplining him by striking him?

When al-Ḥasan went out before the people, it seemed as if he was a person who had just seen the Hereafter and had come to inform the people about it. When they departed from his assembly, they left in a state in which they considered the world to be absolutely insignificant. Sufyân ath-Thaurî used to excuse himself from sitting in an assembly where the world was discussed. The world was never discussed in the assemblies of Aḥmad, nor was it ever mentioned. Someone said: **"Admonition is only beneficial when it emanates from the heart. Only then does it have an effect on the heart. When it emanates from the tongue, it merely enters from one ear and leaves from the other."**

One of the predecessors said: **"When an *'âlim* does not intend the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ from his lecture, its slips away from the hearts just as raindrops slip away from smooth rocks."** Yaḥyâ ibn Mu'âdh used to say in his assemblies:

مـــواعظ الـــواعظ لـــن تقـــبلا حتـــى تعـــيها نفـــسه أولا
يـــا قـــوم مـــن أظلـــم مـــن واعـــظ خالـــف مـــا قـــد قالـــه فـــي المـــلا
أظهـــر بـــين الـــناس إحـــسانه وبـــارز الـــرحمان لمـــا خـــلا

"The lectures of a lecturer will never be accepted unless his self safeguards them first of all. O people! Can there be a more wrongful person than a lecturer who goes against what he said in public? He displays his goodness before the people while he opposes the Merciful [Allâh] when he is in privacy."

The similitude of an *'âlim* who does not practise on his knowledge is like a lamp which provides light to people while burning itself. Abû al-'Atâhiyah said:

وبخت غيرك بالعمى فآفدته بصرا وأنت محسن لعماكا
وفتيلة المصباح تحرق نفسها وتضيء للأعشى وأنت كذاكا

"You reprimanded another for his blindness and so you bestowed him with eyesight. But you yourself consider your blindness to be good. The wick of a lamp burns itself and provides light to the dim-sighted. Similar is the case with you."

Admonitions are medications for sins. These medications should therefore only be given by an expert healthy doctor. As for the person who is bitten by vain desires, he is more in need of drinking the medication for himself than giving it to others.

It is stated in one of the books of the past: **"If you wish to admonish people, admonish yourself. Once you have admonished yourself, you may admonish others. If not, you must remain ashamed of Me."**

وغير تقي يأمر الناس بالتقى طبيب يداوي الناس وهو سقيم
يا أيها الرجل المقوم غيره هلا لنفسك كان ذا التقويم
فابدأ بنفسك فانهها عن غيها فإن انتهت عنه فأنت حكيم
فهناك يقبل ما تقول ويقتدي بالقول منك وينفع التعليم
لا تنه عن خلق وتأتي مثله عار عليك إذا فعلت عظيم

"A non-pious person ordering the people to piety is like a sick doctor treating people. O you who are trying to straighten others! Why don't you straighten yourself? Start with your self and stop it from its waywardness. If it desists from its waywardness, you will be wise enough [to stop others]. It is only then that what you say will be accepted, your statements will be followed, and your teaching will be beneficial. Do not prohibit [others] from doing something while you yourself commit it. It would be a serious blemish against you if you do this."

When 'Abd al-Wâḥid ibn Zayd sat down to deliver a lecture, a pious woman came to him and said:

يا واعظا قام لاحتساب يزجر قوما عن الذنوب

تنهـــى وأنـــت المـــريض حقـــا هـــذا مـــن المنكـــر العجـــيب
لـــو كـــنت أصـــلحت قـــبل هـــذا عيـــبك أو تـــبت مـــن قـــريب
كـــان لمـــن قلـــت يـــا حبيبـــي موقـــع صـــدق مـــن القلـــوب
تنهـــى عـــن الغـــي والـــتمادي وأنـــت فـــي النهـــي كالمـــريب

"O you lecturer who got up to take stock of people! You are prohibiting people from sins. You are stopping them but you are most certainly sick yourself. This is a very strange situation indeed. Had you rectified your faults before this or repented recently, then whatever you say would make a genuine impression on the hearts – O my beloved! You are persisting in prohibiting against waywardness, while you yourself are like a person arousing suspicion in your prohibition."

When the righteous took stock of themselves, they feared the bad consequences of admonition and reminder. A person said to Ibn 'Abbâs: **"I want to enjoin good and prohibit evil."** He said to him: **"If you do not fear the following three verses disgracing you, you may do so. If not, start with yourself."** He then recited these verses: **"Do you order the people to piety and forget yourselves..."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 44)* **"O believers! Why do you say what you do not do? It is most abhorrent in the sight of Allâh that you say what you do not do."** *(Sûrah as-Saff, 61: 2-3)* And the words of Shu'ayb ﷺ: **"I do not want to do afterwards that which I prohibit you from."** *(Sûrah Hûd, 11: 88)*

An-Nakha'î said: **"They used to dislike relating stories because of these three verses."** Someone asked Mautriff: **"Why do you not admonish your friends?"** He replied: **"I dislike saying what I do not practise."** A Tâbi'î stepped forward to lead the people in salâh. He turned around towards the followers in order to straighten the lines and said: **"Stand upright."** He then fell unconscious. When he was asked the reason for this, he replied: **"When I said: 'Stand upright' to the people, I thought to myself: 'Did you ever remain upright with Allâh ﷻ for a single moment?'"**

مـا كـل مـن وصـف الـدواء يـستعمله ولا كـل مـن وصـف التقـي ذو تقـى
وصـفت التقـي حتـى كأنـي ذو تقـى وريـح الخطايـا مـن ثيابـي تعـبق

"Every person who describes a medicine does not

necessarily use it himself. Every person who describes piety is not necessarily pious himself. I described a pious person to the extent that I assumed that I myself am pious, whereas the smell of sins is clinging to my clothes."

Despite all this, it is essential for people to enjoin good, forbid evil, admonish others and remind them. If only a person who is free from fault were to admonish people, no one after the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ would have admonished anyone because no one enjoys freedom from fault after him.

إذا لـم يعـظ فـي القـوم مـن هـو مـذنب فمـن يعـظ العاصـين بعـد محمـد

"If a sinful person cannot admonish people, who is going to admonish the sinners after Muhammad?"

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates through a weak chain from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Enjoin good even though you yourself do not practise all of it. Prohibit evil even though you yourself do not abstain from all of it."**(1)

Someone said to al-Hasan: **"There is a certain person who does not admonish others and says: 'I fear saying something which I myself do not practise on.'"** Al-Hasan said: **"Which of us practises on everything which he says?! Satan would love to spread such a notion so that no one would enjoin good and no one will prohibit evil."** Mâlik narrates from Rabî'ah who said that Sa'îd ibn Jubayr said: **"If a person were to abstain from enjoining good and forbidding evil until he himself has no fault in him, not a single person will enjoin good and prohibit evil."** When Mâlik heard this, he said: **"He is correct. Who is there who has no fault in him?"**

مـــن ذا الـــذي مـــا ســـاء قـــط ومـــن لـــه الحـــسنى فقـــط
ســـامح أخـــاك إذا خلـــط مـــن الإســـاءة بـــالغلط
ولـــئن طلـــبت مهـــذبا فـــي عـــصرنا رمـــت الـــشطط
ولـــو انـــتقدت بنـــي الـــزمان وجـــدت أكثـــرهم ســـقط

"Who is there who never committed a wrong? And who is there who has good only? Pardon your brother when he commits

(1) Checked by At-Tabarany and he said in Al-Majmaa' (1/330): Its Isnad is weak.

a wrong by mistake. If you were to search for a cultured person in our times, you will have to go beyond the limits [in your quest]. If you were to criticize the people of your time, you will find the majority of them to have fallen [from grace].”

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz *rahimahullâh* said in one of his sermons: **“I am saying this now but I do not know the sins committed by anyone more than I know the sins committed by me. I therefore seek forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ and turn in repentance to him.”**

He wrote a letter to one of his governors in one of the cities and stated the following at the end: **“I am admonishing** you with all this while I myself have committed many excesses against my self, without ordering my self about many of my matters. If a person were to abstain from admonishing his brother until he orders himself, people will abstain from doing good, enjoining good and forbidding evil will disappear, the unlawful will be considered lawful, and those who admonish and advise for the sake of Allâh ﷻ will be very few. Satan and his cohorts desire that no one enjoins good and forbids evil. When anyone enjoins them to do good and forbids them from evil, they castigate him for the faults which are in him and the good which is not in him. As a poet says:

وأُعلنت الفواحشُ في البوادي ... وصار الناس أعوان المريب

إذا ما عبتهم عابوا مقالي ... لما في القوم من تلك العيوب

وودوا لو كففنا فاستوينا ... فصار الناس كالشيء المشوب

وكنا نستطب إذا مرضنا ... فصار هلاكنا بيد الطبيب

“Immoral acts are openly committed in the lands and the people are helping those who are prone to suspicion. When I find fault with them, they find fault with my statement because of those faults which are in them. They would like us to stop [admonishing them] so that we could all be the same. If that were to happen, all the people would become like a thing which is adulterated. We used to consult a doctor when we fell ill, and now we are destroyed at the hands of the doctor.”

A famous *‘âlim* used to conduct an assembly in which he advised the people. He sat in his assembly one day and looked at the large number of people around him. Every single one of them was sitting with a trembling heart and tearing eyes. He thought to himself saying: **“What will happen to you if all these people are saved while you are destroyed?”** He then said to himself: **“O Allâh! If**

You decree punishment for me tomorrow, do not let these people come to know of my punishment. I am saying this to protect Your honour and not for my own self. It must not happen that someone says: 'The person who was directing others to Allâh in the world is being punished.' O Allâh! Someone said to Your Messenger ﷺ: 'Kill Ibn Ubayy, the hypocrite.' The Messenger ﷺ replied: 'I do not want the people to talk and say that Muhammad is killing his companions.' He abstained from punishing him because he aligned himself to the Messenger ﷺ outwardly. And I align my self to You in all conditions – outwardly and inwardly."

Someone visited another so that the latter may intercede on his behalf before the king. The latter immediately got up and hastened to the king in order to fulfil this need of the person. He strove hard until it was fulfilled. He returned and said: **"I could not permit anyone to lose after he placed his hopes in me, and hoped to benefit through me."**

O my Allâh! You are the most generous and the most merciful. Do not let the person who placed his hopes in You, aligned himself to You, and called Your servants to Your door to lose. Although he may have been a parasite for Your generosity and was not worthy to be a middleman between You and Your servants, he had hopes in Your vast generosity and kindness. You alone are worthy of generosity and kindness. A generous person may feel ashamed to refuse a person who imposes **on his generosity."**

إن كـــنت لا أصـــلح للقـــرب فـــشأنكم صـــفح عـــن الـــذنب

"If I am not worthy of gaining Your proximity, You can at least pardon my sins."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If you do not commit sins, Allâh ﷻ will produce a new creation so that they may sin and He will forgive them."**(1)

Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrated the above in a different way: Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If you do not commit sins, Allâh ﷻ will destroy you and bring another nation who will commit sins, seek forgiveness, and He will**

(1) Ahmad checked it (1/289).

forgive them."(1) Abû Ayyûb ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If you do not commit sins, Allâh ﷻ will create another creation who will sin and He will then forgive them."**(2) Another narration states: **"If you do not have sins which Allâh ﷻ forgives, He will produce a nation who have sins and He will then forgive them."**(3)

This means that Allâh ﷻ has some wisdom in occasionally casting heedlessness in the hearts of His servants. This is so that some of them may commit certain sins. If they remained vigilant as they had been when they were in the assembly of *dhikr*, they would not commit any sin. There are two major benefits in casting sins occasionally into them:

(1) Acknowledgement of the sinners for their sins and shortcomings as regards their Master, and lowering their heads of conceit. This is more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than carrying out many acts of obedience. This is because continuity in acts of obedience could cause the person to become conceited.

A Hadîth states: **"If you do not sin, I fear something worse for you: conceit."**(4) Al-Hasan said: **"If a person were to be right every time he uttered something or excelled every time he did something, he would be on the verge of becoming mad out of conceit."** Someone said: **"A sin with which I submit myself before Him is more beloved to me than an act of obedience with which I show off before Him. The crying of sinners is more beloved to Him than the humming sound produced by those who are glorifying Him. This is because the humming sound of those who are glorifying Him could well be tainted by haughtiness, while the crying of sinners is embellished by their submission and humility."**

A Hadîth states: **"Allâh ﷻ enables a person to benefit from a sin which he committed."** Al-Hasan said: **"When a person commits a sin, he does not forget it and is always fearful of it until he enters Paradise. The thing which is desired from a**

(1) Muslim (2749).

(2) Muslim (2748).

(3) Muslim (2748).

(4) Al-Baihaqi checked it in (7255) Ash-Shua'b and Al-Bazzar as in Kachf al-Astar (3633).

person's mistake is his remorse, from his shortcoming his sorrow, from his crookedness his uprightness, from his lagging behind his moving forward, and from his falling into the pit of desires that he be taken by his hand and conveyed to the peak of salvation." A poet said:

قـــرة عينـــي لا بـــد لـــي مـــنك وإن أوحـــش بينـــي وبيـــنك الـــزللُ

قـــرة عينـــي أنـــا الغـــريق فخـــذ كـــف غـــريق علـــيك يـــتكل

"O the delight of my eyes! I am dependent on you even if a mistake has caused us to become distant from each other. O the delight of my eyes! I am drowning. So grab the hand of the drowning person who is relying on you."

(2) The servant of Allâh ﷻ acquires forgiveness and pardon from Him. Allâh ﷻ loves to pardon and forgive. Al-Ghaffâr (the one who forgives), al-'Afuww (the one who pardons) and at-Tawwâb (the one who accepts repentance) are some of His names. If the entire creation was sinless, for whom is this pardon and forgiveness going to be?!

A predecessor said: **"When Allâh ﷻ created the pen for the first time, He wrote: 'I am at-Tawwâb, I relent to the one who repents.'"** Abû al-Jalad said: **"A person who was obedient to Allâh ﷻ said: 'O Allâh! Reform me in such a way that I never experience corruption again.' Allâh ﷻ replied: 'All My believing servants ask Me for the same thing which you asked. If I were to reform all My servants, on whom will I bestow My favours and whom will I bless with My forgiveness?'"**

A predecessor used to say: **"Had I known the deed which is most beloved to Allâh ﷻ, I would have exerted myself in doing it."** He then saw a dream in which someone said to him: **"You want something which is not possible. Allâh ﷻ loves to forgive."**

Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh said: **"If pardoning was not the most beloved to Allâh ﷻ, the best of His creation [man] would not become wet with sins."**

يـــــا رب أنـــــت رجائـــــي وفـــــيك حـــــسنتُ ظنـــــي

يـــــا رب فاغفـــــر ذنوبـــــي وعافنـــــي واعـــــف عنـــــي

العفـــــو مـــــنك إلهـــــي والـــــذنب قـــــد جـــــاء منـــــي

والظـــــن فـــــيك جمـــــيل حقـــــق بحقـــــك ظنـــــي

"O my Lord! You are my hope and it is in You alone that I have good expectations. O my Lord! Forgive me my sins, pardon me, and overlook my faults. O my Allâh! Pardon is from You, while the sin has come from me. My thoughts about You are good, so realize my thoughts about You."

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"From what was the entire creation created?"** He replied: **"From water."** This shows that water is the origin and essence of all the creations, and that all the creations were created from it.

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates: **"I said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! When I see you, I feel nice and I experience delight. So tell me about everything.' He said: 'Everything was created from water.'"**(1)

Ibn Jarîr and others narrate from Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ and a group of predecessors who said: **"Water was the first thing to be created."**

Al-Jauzjânî narrates with regard to 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr that he was asked about the beginning of creation, so he said: **"From soil, water and clay. And from fire and darkness."** He was asked: **"What is the beginning** of the creation which you mentioned: **"He said from gushing water."**

Allâh ﷻ informs us in His Book that water was existing before He created the heavens and the earth: **"It is He alone who created the heavens and the earth in six days – and His Throne was on water."** *(Sûrah Hûd, 11: 7)*

'Imrân ibn Husayn ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ was existing and there was nothing before Him."** Another narration states: **"[and there was nothing] with Him." "His Throne was on water. He recorded everything in the Preserved Tablet and then created the heavens and the earth."**(2) 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ laid down the numbers of the creations 50 000 years before He created the heavens and the earth, and His Throne was on water."**(3)

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(1) Al-Musnad (2/295).

(2) Al-Bukhari (3191).

(3) Muslim (2653).

Ibn Jarîr and others narrate that Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"The Throne of Allâh was on water and He did not create anything else before water. When He decided to create the creation, He caused smoke to come out of the water. This smoke rose above the water and was called the heaven. He then caused the water to become dry and made it one single earth [or piece of land]. He then split it into seven earths. He then went to the heaven while they were smoke. This smoke emanated from the water when it breathed. This heaven was one and He split it into seven heavens."**

Wahb said: **"The Throne was on the water before the heavens and the earth could be created. When Allâh ﷻ decided to create the heavens and the earth, He took a handful of water. He then opened the handful and it raised as smoke. He decreed that they be seven heavens in two days. He then took clay from the water and placed it at the spot where the Ka'bah is. He then spread out the earth from it."**

Someone said: **"Allâh ﷻ first created the earth and then the heavens. He then spread out the earth after creating the heavens."** It is said: **"Allâh ﷻ created a green emerald equal in** thickness to the heavens and the earth. He then looked at it with a look which instilled awe, it melted and turned into water. It is for this reason that water is always seen to be in motion – because of that awe and fear which was instilled in it. Allâh ﷻ then caused mist to rise from the ocean. It is the smoke which He talks about: **"He then ascended the sky while it was smoke."** *(Sûrah Hâ Mîm as-Sajdah/Fussilat, 41: 11)* Allâh ﷻ created the heavens from the smoke, the earth from the water, and the mountains from the waves **of the water."**

Wahb said: **"The first thing which Allâh ﷻ created was a dark place. He then created a jewel which illuminated that place. He looked at the jewel with a look which instilled fear, and it therefore turned to water. Its smoke and foam rose [above the water]. He created the heavens from the smoke and the earth from the foam."** 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ created His creation from darkness. He then cast His light onto them. Whoever received some of that light was guided, whoever missed it went astray."**(1)

(1) Checked by Ahmad (2/176) and At-Tirmidhi (2642).

'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ said to Ka'b al-Ahbâr: **"What was the first thing which Allâh ﷻ created?"** Ka'b said: **"Allâh ﷻ wrote a** book which was neither written with pen nor ink. His book is of emeralds, pearls and sapphires. He wrote: 'I am Allâh, there is none worthy of worship except Me. I am one, I have no partner. Muhammad is My servant and Messenger. My mercy has surpassed My wrath.' Ka'b said: **"When it is the day of Resurrection, Allâh ﷻ will take out that book. He will then take out from the Hell-fire double the number of those who are in Paradise and admit them into Paradise as well."**

Salmân and 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr said: **"Allâh ﷻ has 100 mercies as wide as the distance between the heavens and the earth. From those mercies, He sent down one mercy to the people of the world. It is through this one single mercy that the jinn and humans show mercy to each other, and so do the birds in the sky, the fish in the water, and all other creatures in the skies and earth. He retained ninety nine mercies with Him. When it is the day of Resurrection, He will send down those mercies which are with Him and show mercy to His servants through those mercies."**

There are many other traditions in this regard. They all make it clear that the heavens and the earth were created from water. But there is a famous difference as to whether water was the first creation or not. The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ shows that water was the essence [or matter] of all the creations. The Qur'ân makes reference to the fact that water was the essence of all living creatures: **"We created from water every single thing which has life."** *(Sûrah al-Ambiyâ', 21: 30)* **"Allâh created every moving creature from water."** *(Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 45)*

Some people are of the opinion that the water refers to the sperm from which animals are created. This opinion is far-fetched for two reasons:

(1) Sperm is not referred to as water in an absolute sense, but in a restricted sense: **"He has been created from a gushing forth fluid. Which issues from between the loins and the chest."** *(Sûrah at-Târiq, 86: 6-7)* **"Did We not create you from a worthless fluid?"** *(Sûrah al-Mursalât, 77: 20)*

(2) There are certain animals which are not created from sperm, e.g. vinegar and fruit worms. So every animal is not created from

sperm. The Qur'ân says that everything which moves and has life was created from water. It is gauged from this that the origin of all of them is absolute water.

The fact that everything was created from water does not contradict the following: **"The jinn We created before this from a flaming fire."** *(Sûrah al-Hijr, 15: 27)* The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The angels were created from light."** This is because the Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ shows that the origin of light and fire was water, just as the origin of the soil from which Âdam ﷺ was created was water. Âdam ﷺ was created from clay and clay is soil which is mixed with water. And soil was created from water as quoted previously from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ and others.

Muqâtil claims that water was created from light. This is rejected by the present Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ and other Ahâdîth. The creation of fire from water should not be considered impossible because Allâh ﷻ - through His power – combined water and fire in a green tree, and made it one of the proofs of resurrection. Those who study nature state that when water flows, it turns to smoke, and this smoke turns to air, and air turns to fire. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

When Abû Hurayrah ﷺ asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about the buildings of Paradise, he said: **"It is made from alternating bricks of gold and silver, its mortar is musk, its pebbles are pearls and sapphires, its soil is saffron."** A similar Hadîth is also narrated by at-Tabarânî from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ.

The buildings of Paradise. This could refer to the palaces and houses of Paradise, or the constructions of the walls which surround the buildings – and this is more likely. Another narration of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ states: **"The wall of Paradise is made from alternating bricks of gold and silver. And its staircase is made of sapphires and pearls."** He said: **"We used to talk that the pebbles of its rivers are pearls, and the soil of the rivers is saffron."**(1)

Abû Sa'îd narrates: **"Allâh ﷻ created Paradise with alternating bricks of gold and silver, and its mortar is musk. He then said to it: 'Speak.' It said: 'The believers have most certainly triumphed.' The angels said: 'Glad tidings to you, you**

(1) Checked by Al-Baghawi in "Sharḥ Al-Sunnah" (4287).

are the abode for kings.'"(1)

The following Hadîth makes it clear that the buildings of Paradise mentioned in these Ahâdîth refer to its walls which surround it: Abû Mûsâ ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Two gardens of gold, their utensils and whatever is in them [is also of gold]. Two gardens of silver, their utensils and whatever is in them [is also of silver]."**(2)

Abû Mûsâ ﷺ narrates: **"Two gardens of gold for those who are close to Allâh, and two gardens of silver for the people of the right side."**(3) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Paradise is not just one, but many."**(4) It is related that the buildings of some of them are of pearls and emeralds. Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates from Anas ﷺ who said: **"Allâh ﷻ created the garden of Eden with His hand. One brick is of a white pearl, another is of a red emerald, and another is of a green sapphire. Its mortar is musk, its pebbles are pearls, and its grass is saffron. Allâh ﷻ then said to Paradise: 'Speak."** It said: 'The believers have certainly triumphed.' Allâh ﷻ said: 'I take an oath by My might, no miser will **be near Me.'"**(5)

'Atîyyah narrates from Abû Sa'îd who said: **"Allâh ﷻ created the garden of Eden from a red emerald. He then said to it: 'Beautify yourself.' It beautified itself. He then said: 'Speak.' It said: 'Glad tidings to the person with whom You are pleased. Allâh ﷻ then covered it and suspended it to the Throne. It is opened every day at the time of pre-dawn. It is for this reason that the weather is cool during the pre-dawn."** Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"The Throne of Allâh ﷻ was on water. He then took a garden for** Himself. He then took another one and covered both with a single pearl. The creations do not know what is in them. It is with regard to this that Allâh ﷻ says: **"So no soul knows what bliss is in store for them – a recompense for what they used to do."** *(Sûrah as-Sajdah, 32: 17)*

Safwân ibn 'Amr narrated from one of his teachers who said: **"Paradise has 100 levels. The first level is of silver: its ground is**

(1) Al-Bazzar's Musnad (2253).

(2) Al-Bukhari (4878) and Muslim (180).

(3) Al-Hakim narrated it (2/28) and he said: Ṣaḥiḥ.

(4) Al-Bukhari (2809).

(5) Al-Munthary checked it in "At-Targhib".

of silver, its dwellings are of silver, and its soil is of musk. The second level is of gold: its ground is of gold, its utensils are of gold, and its soil is of musk. The third level is of pearls: its ground is of pearls, its utensils are of pearls, and its soil is of musk. As for the remaining ninety seven levels, no eye has set sight on anything like that, no ear has heard of anything like that, and no human heart ever imagined of anything like that. He then recited this verse: 'So no soul knows what bliss is in store for them – a recompense for what they used to do." *(Sûrah as-Sajdah, 32: 17)*

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ says: 'I prepared for My righteous servants something which no eyes saw, no ears heard, and no human heart imagined.' Abû Hurayrah ﷺ then said: 'Read this verse if you like: 'So no soul knows what bliss is in store for them.'"**(1)

Al-Mughîrah ibn Shu'bah ﷺ narrates: **"Mûsâ ﷺ asked his Sustainer: 'What is the lowest level of Paradise?' He replied: 'A person will come after all the inhabitants of Paradise have entered Paradise.' He will be told: 'Enter Paradise.' He will ask: 'O my Sustainer! How can I enter when the people have already settled down in their places and taken their partners?' He will be told: 'Would you be pleased if you have something like what one of the kings of the world had?' He will reply: 'I will be pleased, O my Sustainer!' Allâh ﷻ will say to him: 'You can have that, and the like thereof, and the like thereof, and the like thereof.' When this is said to him the fifth time, he will say: 'I am pleased.' Allâh ﷻ will say: 'This is for you and ten times the like thereof. You can have whatever your heart desires and whatever your eyes like.' He will say: 'I am pleased, O my Sustainer!' Mûsâ ﷺ asked: 'O my Sustainer! What about the one who has the highest rank?' Allâh ﷻ replied: 'They are the ones for whom I personally planted their honour with My hands and I sealed it. No eye has seen the like thereof, no ear has heard about it, and it did not cross the imagination of any human.' Al-Mughîrah ﷺ said: 'This is confirmed in the Book of Allâh: 'So no soul knows what bliss is in store for them.'"**

The mortar of Paradise is *al-misk al-adhfar*. This was mentioned in several Aḥâdîth. Mortar is made of sand and is used to construct

(1) Al-Bukhari (3244) and Muslim (2824).

buildings. The word *al-adhfar* means pure.

Anas ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When I entered Paradise, I saw domes of pearls and its soil was of musk."**(1) Some are of the opinion that the soil which he was referring to was soil which was mixed with water, i.e. clay. Anas ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to *al-Kauthar*: **"Its clay is of pure musk."**(2)

In explaining the words: **"The seal of which is set on musk."** *(Sûrah al-Mutaffifîn, 83: 26)* some are of the opinion that the **"seal"** refers to the heavy sediment which remains at the bottom of a liquid, and this shows that the rivers of Paradise flow on beds of musk. It is for this reason that the musk settles in the bottom just as soil settles in the bottom of a container in this world.

The pebbles of Paradise are pearls and emeralds. Pebbles are small stones. Anas ﷺ narrates from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ with regard to *al-Kauthar* that its pebbles are pearls.(3) Another narration states: **"Its pebbles are pearls."** Ibn 'Umar ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"It flows on a bed of pearls and emeralds."**(4)

At-Tabarânî narrates from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Its clay is of white musk, its pebbles are jewels, and its stones are pearls."** Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Its clay is of musk and its pebbles are jewels."**(5) Abû al-'Âliyah said: **"I read in a book: 'O assembly of godly people from the community of Muhammad! Devote yourself for an abode whose ground is of green sapphires over which the rivers of Paradise flow. In it are pearls and emeralds. Its walls are of green sapphires over which the trees of Paradise with their fruits are suspended."**

The soil of Paradise is saffron. Another narration mentions saffron and *al-wars* (a yellow plant used to dye clothes). It is said

(1) Al-Bukhari (3342) and Muslim (163).

(2) Al-Bukhari (6581).

(3) Al-Musnad (3/231).

(4) At-Tirmidhi (3361) and Ibn Majah checked it (4334).

(5) Al-Musnad (1/398).

that the **"soil"** mentioned here refers to that part of the ground which has no water over it. As for the ground which is covered with water, it is of musk – as mentioned previously. It was also mentioned in some narrations that its grass is saffron. It is thus the plant that grows on the ground of Paradise. As for the Hadîth which says: **"Its soil is of musk"**, it refers to the soil which is mixed with water – as mentioned previously.

Others state that it means that the smell of the ground is that of musk, and its colour is that of saffron. The Hadîth referring to *al-Kauthar* supports this view: **"Its soil is white musk."** Its smell is thus that of musk, and its colour is brilliant, unlike the colour of the musk of this world. Rather, it is white in colour. You get both white and yellow musk. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

Abû Sa'îd narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked Ibn Sayyâd about the soil of Paradise and he said: **"It is fine and white, and pure musk."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said that he is correct [in his description].(1) Another narration states that Ibn Sayyâd asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and he attested to the description of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.(2) Al-Barâ' ibn 'Âzib ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The soil of Paradise is fine and white."** He then asked the Jews and they said: **"It is like flour."** So he said: **"Flour is fine and white."**(3)

What becomes clear from all these Ahâdîth is that the soil of Paradise is white in colour, some of it looks like the colour of saffron in its splendour and brilliance, its smell is that of pure musk, its taste is that of pure white bread, and this could refer to the white soil only. Thus, all merits are found in it. May Allâh ﷻ not deprive us of this through His mercy and generosity.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"He who enters it shall live in comfort and luxury, and he will not experience misery. He shall live therein forever without dying. Their clothes will not become worn out and their youth will not come to an end."** This is a

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(1) Muslim (2928).

(2) Muslim (92/2928).

(3) Checked by Ahmad (3/361) and Al-Haithami in Al-Majmaa' (10/399): Checked by Ahmad and those who checked it are those of Ṣaḥiḥ other than Mujaled. It was documented by more than one.

reference to the eternity of Paradise and the eternity of all the bounties which are in it. The perfect qualities of youth which its inhabitants will have will never change. The clothes which they are wearing will never become worn out. The Qur'ân makes reference to similar points in various places: **"and of gardens wherein there is everlasting comfort for them."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 21)* **"its fruit is eternal, and so is its shade."** *(Sûrah ar-Ra'd, 13: 35)* **"Abiding therein forever."** *(Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 57)* This last verse is mentioned in numerous places in the Qur'ân.

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who enters Paradise will experience comfort without experiencing any misery, his clothes will not become worn out, and his youth will not end."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, a person will announce: 'You shall live in comfort and luxury without ever experiencing misery. You shall live a healthy life without ever falling ill. You shall remain young without ever becoming old."**(1) **"And an announcement will be made: This is the Paradise which you inherited by virtue of [the good deeds] which you used to do."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 43)* Another narration has the following additional words: **"You shall live forever without ever dying."**

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates: **"The people of Paradise shall have no body hair, no facial hair, and they will be black-eyed. Their youth will not end and the clothing will not become worn out."**(2)

Abû Sa'îd ﷺ narrates: **"The inhabitants of Paradise shall enter Paradise while their age will be thirty. They will never get older than this."**(3)

'Alî ﷺ narrates: **"There will be in Paradise a gathering of the doe-eyed damsels. They will raise their voices which no creation ever heard the like thereof. They will say: 'We are the ones to live forever, we will never die. We will always be in comfort and never experience misery. We will always be pleased and never become angry. Glad tidings for the person who is for us and we**

(1) Checked by Muslim (2837) and also by At-Tirmidhi (3246) and Ahmad (8059).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2539) and Ahmad (7874) and Ad-Darimy (2826) and Al-Baihaqi in "Al-Ba'eth wa An-Noshoor" (462).

(3) At-Tirmidhi narrated it (2545).

are for him."(1)

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ narrates: **"One of the things which they will sing – that is, the doe-eyed damsels – is this: 'We shall live forever and will never cause him to die. We are the ones who provide peace and will never cause him fear. We are the ones who shall remain and will never abandon him."**(2)

Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates: **"The women of Paradise shall say: 'We shall live forever and never die. We will always be in comfort and never experience misery. We are the ones who shall remain and never abandon [our partners]. We will always be pleased and never become angry. Glad tidings to the person to whom we belong and who belongs to us."**

The Messenger's ﷺ description of those who shall enter Paradise is an indirect disparagement of this fleeting worldly life. Whoever enters this world is bound to experience misery even if he enjoys some comfort. Whoever lives in it is bound to die – he will never remain forever. Their youth will end and the clothes will become worn out. In fact, even their bodies will become worn out.

Similar themes are mentioned in the Qur'ân as well. They disparage this fleeting worldly life, while at the same time praise the Hereafter, and mention its perfection and eternity:

"The love of desirable things has deluded the people. [Desirable things] like women, sons, hoarded treasures of gold and silver, branded horses, cattle, and agriculture. This may be enjoyed in the life of this world. And with Allâh alone is a good abode. Say: Shall I inform you of something better than that? For the pious there are, with their Sustainer, gardens beneath which rivers flow - abiding therein forever, and pure wives and the pleasure of Allâh. And in Allâh's sight are the servants." *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 14-15)*

"This worldly life is only like water which We sent down from the sky, emerging thereby intermingled plants of the earth of which man and animals eat, until – when the earth assumes its splendour." *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 24)* Allâh ﷻ then says: **"Allâh**

(1) At-Tirmidhi checked it (2564) and Ahmad (1345).

(2) Al-Tabbarany checked it in Al-Awsat (4917) and Al-Haithami said in Al-Majmaa' (10/419).

calls to the abode of peace and He shows to whomever He wills the straight path. Those who have done good, for them is goodness [itself] and [something] additional. Neither darkness nor humiliation shall cover their faces. They are the dwellers of Paradise, abiding therein forever." *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 25-26)*

"Set forth for them the parable of the worldly life: like water which We sent down from the sky on account of which the vegetation of the earth comes forth mingled with it. The following morning it is reduced to bits flying about in the air. And Allâh has power over everything. Wealth and sons are an adornment in the worldly life. Good deeds of lasting merit are better with your Sustainer as a recompense and better as a source of hope." *(Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 45-46)*

"The life of this world is nothing but amusement and play. As for the abode of the Hereafter, that is the true life. If only they possessed understanding." *(Sûrah al-'Ankabût, 29: 64)*

"Know that the worldly life is a play, an amusement, a show, mutual boasting among you, and a quest for more riches and children. It is like a rain whose vegetation seemed attractive to the tillers. It then dries up and you see it turning yellow. It is then reduced to trampled grass. In the hereafter there is a severe punishment and forgiveness as well from Allâh, and His pleasure. This worldly life is nothing but an enjoyment of delusion. Hasten towards forgiveness from your Sustainer and [towards] Paradise the extent of which is like the extent of the heavens and the earth – prepared for those who believe in Allâh and in His Messengers. This is the grace of Allâh which He gives to whomever He wills. And Allâh's grace is very great." *(Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 20-21)*

"No such thing! You prefer the worldly life. While the Hereafter is better and more lasting." *(Sûrah al-A'lâ, 87: 16-17)*

"Are you pleased with the life of this world, forsaking the Hereafter? The enjoyment of the worldly life is but little compared to the Hereafter." *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 38)*

Allâh ﷻ quotes the statement of a believer from Pharaoh's nation who said to his people: **"O my people! This worldly life is a mere [temporary] enjoyment. As for the abode of the Hereafter, that is the abode of eternity."** *(Sûrah al-Mu'min/ Ghâfir, 40: 39)*

The previous two verses mention the word *matâ'* **"enjoyment"**. This word refers to something which a person uses for a short while and it perishes thereafter. The defectiveness of the world has not been conveyed in a more eloquent way than mentioning its fleeting nature and constantly changing conditions. This is a most absolute proof of its eventual termination and disappearance. Its health is replaced by illness, its existence is replaced by non-existence, its youth is replaced by senility, its comfort is replaced by misery, and its life is replaced by death. The souls leave the bodies, the buildings of the world perish, all the gatherings of this world result in separation between beloveds, and everything above the soil is reduced to soil.

It was a day of *'îd* when a predecessor looked at the multitudes of people and the beautiful clothes which they were wearing. On seeing all this, he said: **"What else do you see apart from rags which will become worn out and flesh which will be eaten by worms?"**

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* used to say: **"O house! You are going to perish and those who are living in you are going to die."** A Ḥadîth states: **"It is most astonishing for a person to look at the world and the swift manner in which its inhabitants are constantly changing – how can he still feel satisfied with it?"** Al-Ḥasan said: **"Death has disgraced the world and has left no joy for any person of intelligence."** Muṭarrif said: **"This death has spoilt the comforts of those who are relishing in comfort. You should therefore search for comfort which never dies."**

A person said: **"The remembrance of death has taken away the joy of every life and the happiness of every comfort."** He then cried and said: **"O how I desire an abode in which there is no death."** Yûnus ibn 'Ubayd said: **"The remembrance of death has left no joy for us in our families nor in our wealth."** Yazîd ar-Raqâshî said: **"The inhabitants of Paradise are safe from death. Life is therefore a joy for them. And they are free from all illnesses. Congratulations to them for they are in the close proximity of Allâh ﷻ for a long time."**

The defects of this world are manifest and it is announcing [to man] through its lessons and admonitions. However, love for the world has caused people to become blind and deaf. The person who is in love with the world therefore does not hear its calls. And when it exposes itself to others, he does not see the misery which it causes.

قـد نـادت الدنـيا علـى نفـسها لـو كـان فـي العـالم مـن يـسمع
كـم واثـق بالعمـر أفنيـته وجامـع بـددت مـا يجمـع

"The world announced itself, but if only there was someone in the world who would listen to it. [It announced]: 'How many a person who relied on his life have I destroyed! And how many a person who gathered [the chattels of this world] have I destroyed [all his chattels]!"

How often the comforts of this world are changed to misery! How often a person who possessed the world had full reliance on it in the morning, yet he was reduced to despondency by the evening! When an Arab king was afflicted by misery, one of his daughters said: **"In the morning there was not a single Arab who did not envy us and did not fear us. But now, in the evening, there is not a single Arab who is not feeling sorry for us [because of the misery which has befallen us]."** She then said:

وبيـنا نـسوس الـناس والأمـر أمـرنا إذا نحـن فـيهم سـوقة لـيس ننـصف
فـأفٍ لـدار لا يـدوم نعـيمها تقلـب تـاراتٍ بـنا وتـصرف

"We were governing the people and all power was with us. When we led them, we did not mete out justice. Away with that world whose comforts do not remain forever. There are times when it turns us around and turns us over."

The mother of Ja'far ibn Yahyâ al-Barmakî went to some people on the day of *'îd al-aḍ-ḥâ* and asked them for a sheep skin which she could wear. She said: **"This *'îd* has come upon me [and I have to go around begging] while I have 400 servant girls at my beck and call, and my son, Ja'far, is disobedient to me."**

Aḥmad ibn Ṭûlûn was a ruler of Egypt. His sister was very extravagant in spending money. When she eventually got married, she spent 100 000 dinars on her wedding feast. And within a short time thereafter she was seen begging in the markets of Baghdad.

One of the caliphs of Banû al-'Abbâs (Abbasid) was removed from his position, imprisoned and then freed. He then became so poor that he was forced to stand by the musjid and say to the people: **"Give me some charity, you know who I am."**

A pious man passed by a house in which there was much joy and a woman was singing:

ألا يـــا دار لا يـــدخلك حـــزن ولا يـــزري بـــصاحبك الـــزمان

"O house! May no grief enter you, and may time not revile the person who is living in you."

The pious man happened to pass by that house after a short while and he saw the door coloured black, and he heard crying and screaming inside the house. He asked about them and was told that the owner of the house passed away. He knocked on the door and said: **"It was from this very house that I heard a woman saying such and such thing."** The woman started crying and she said: **"O servant of Allâh! Allâh ﷻ changes [conditions] but He Himself does not change. Death is the end of every creation."** The man then turned away, crying.

During his caliphate, Abû Bakr as-Siddîq ﷺ sent a delegation to Yemen. The members of this delegation passed by an Arab oasis near which were fortified castles, large cattle and many slaves. They saw many women who had gathered for a wedding and there was a young girl who had a tambourine in her hand. She was saying:

يـــا معـــشر الحـــساد موتـــوا كمـــدا كـــذا نكـــون مـــا بقيـــنا أبـــدا

"O you who are envious of us, die in your grief. We shall remain like this forever."

The delegation disembarked near them and the person who owned the oasis was hospitable towards them. He excused himself from them because he was busy in the wedding. They supplicated in his favour and departed.

[Many years later], Mu'âwiyah ﷺ sent some of the members of that original delegation to Yemen. They passed by near that oasis so they went towards it in order to stop over there. They found all the fortified castles destroyed, there was neither any water there nor any human. The only thing which remained was a deserted hill. They went towards it and found a blind woman who was living in a hole in that hill. They asked her about the people who had been living at the oasis. She replied: **"They all died."** They asked her about the wedding occasion. She replied: **"The bride was my sister and I was the woman who was singing with the tambourine in my hand."** They offered to take her with them but she refused and said: **"I find it extremely difficult to leave these decaying bones until I myself become one of them."** While she was still talking to them, she fell to one side, experienced a slight pang of death and passed

away. They buried her and continued on their way.

During the caliphate of Sulaymân ibn 'Abd al-Malik, six loads of musk were conveyed to him from Khurâsân to Syria. They were first taken to his son Ayyûb who was also his heir incumbent. The messenger went with the musk to his house. He entered a white house in which were servants wearing white clothes and silver jewellery. He then entered a gold coloured house in which servants were wearing gold coloured clothes and gold jewellery. He then entered a green house in which servants were wearing green clothes and jewellery of emeralds. He then went to Ayyûb who was sitting with his slave girl on a couch. He could not distinguish one from the other because they looked so alike. He placed the musk before him and the servants seized all of it. The messenger then departed and was gone for about ten days. When he returned and passed by the house of Ayyûb, he found it completely deserted. He inquired about them and someone said to him: **"They were seized by a plague and they all died."**

Yazîd ibn 'Abd al-Malik who had become the caliph after 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz had a slave girl by the name of Habâbah. He was intensely enamoured by her and was only able to acquire her after much efforts. After she came to him, he took her in privacy to a garden. He almost lost his mind out of joy at possessing her. While he was playing and joking with her, he threw a pomegranate seed or grape seed towards her. She was laughing at the time and the seed went into her mouth. She choked on it and died. His soul did not allow him to bury her until it was fully consoled. He only buried her when he was reprimanded [for this delay]. It is said that he dug up her grave after burying her, and that after her death, he went to her cabinets and closets with a slave girl who belonged to her. This slave girl sang the following poem:

كفى حزنا بالواله الصب أن يرى منازل من يهوي معطلة قفرا

"It is a great sorrow for a grief-stricken lover to see the abodes of his beloved completely disused and deserted."

On hearing this, he screamed and fell unconscious. He only regained consciousness after some part of the night. When he regained consciousness, he continued crying for the rest of the night and the next day. The people went to see him and found him dead. A scholar of the past said: **"Every occasion of happiness is followed by tears. Anything which causes laughter in this world is**

followed by crying. The person who truly recognizes this world considers it insignificant and abhors it." A poet said:

أمـــا لـــو بـــيعت الدنـــيا بفلـــس أنفـــت لعاقـــل أن يـــشتريها

"Listen! If the world was to be sold for a small coin, an intelligent person will abhor purchasing it."

O servants of Allâh! Let's go towards that abode whose inhabitants never die, whose buildings never perish, whose youth never becomes old, whose beauty and kindness never change, whose air is *nasîm*,(1) whose water is *tasnîm*,(2) whose inhabitants move about in the mercy of the most Merciful, and who have the joy of seeing His noble countenance all the time: **"Their invocation therein [will be]: 'Your being is absolutely pure, O Allâh!' Their greeting therein [will be]: 'Peace.' And the end of their invocation [will be]: 'All praise is due to Allâh who is the Sustainer of the entire universe.'"** *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 10)*

'Aun ibn 'Abdillâh ibn 'Utbah said: One of the past kings built a city and he was extremely choosy about its buildings. He then prepared a feast and invited people to it. At the exits of the city, he appointed guards to ask every person who left if he saw any defect in the city. All the people replied in the negative. Eventually, a group of people wearing shawls went through. They asked them: **"Did you see any defect?"** They replied: **"We saw two defects."** The guards took them to the king who asked them: **"Did you see any defect?"** They replied: **"We saw two defects."** He asked: **"What are they?"** They replied: **"They are bound to perish and their owner is going to die."** The king asked: **"Have you ever heard of an abode which will not perish and whose owner will not die?"** They replied: **"Yes, the abode of Paradise."** These people then invited him, he accepted their invitation, left his kingdom and engaged in worship with them.

'Aun related this story to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz and it had a great effect on him to the extent that he also thought of giving up the caliphate. His nephew, Maslamah, came to him and said: **"O Amîr al-Mu'minîn! Fear Allâh ﷻ with regard to the *ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ. By Allâh, if you were to give up the caliphate, they will kill each other with their swords."** He said: **"Away with**

(1) A soft gentle breeze with a sweet fragrance.

(2) A certain water in Paradise which falls from above.

you, O Maslamah! I have been made to bear a responsibility which I cannot bear." He continued repeating this and Maslamah continued consoling him until he calmed down.

An Arab king built the al-Khawarnaq[1] and as-Sadîr.[2] He looked at his kingdom one day and asked: **"Do you know anyone who has been given anything similar to what I have been given?"** All the people replied: **"No."** One of the people present remained silent and then said: **"O king! If you permit me, I will like to say something."** The king said: **"You may speak."** He said: **"Tell me, all this which you have accumulated – is it something which you always possessed and will always possess, or is it something which belonged to someone before you, left that person and came to you, and will eventually leave you as well?"** The king replied: **"Actually it is something which belonged to someone before me, it came to me, and it will leave me."** The man said: **"So you are delighting over something whose pleasure is going to go away from you and whose weight will remain on you. You will own it for a very short while but you will be mortgaged because of it [i.e. punished because of it] for a long time."** The king began crying and asked: **"What is the way out?"** The man said: **"You either remain in your kingdom and act in the obedience of your Lord, or give up your kingdom, live in solitude, and worship your Lord until your death comes to you."** The king asked: **"If I were to do this, what will I get in return?"** The man said: **"A life which will never end, youth which will never go to old age, health which will never experience illness, and a new kingdom which will never perish."** The king said: **"What good is there in something which is fleeting? By Allâh, I will seek a life which never ends."** He then gave up his kingdom and began travelling around in the land. 'Adîyy ibn Zayd said the following famous lines with regard to him:

أيهـــا الـــشامت المعيـــر بالـــدهـ ـــــر أأنـــت المُبَـــرأ الموفـــور
أم لـــديك العهـــد الوثـــيق مـــن الأيـــام بـــل أنـــت جاهـــل مغـــرور
مـــن رأيـــت المـــنون أخلـــدن أم مـــن ذا علـــيه مـــن أن يـــضام خفيـــر
أيـــن كـــسرى، كـــسرى الملـــوك أنوشـــر وان أم أيـــن قـــبله ســـابور

(1) A palace belonging to an-Nu'mân al-Akbar in Iraq.

(2) A palatial home having three sections. Also refers to a water source.

وبـــنو الأصـــفر الكـــرام ملـــوك الـــروم لـــم يـــبق مـــنهم مذكـــور

وأخـــو الحـــضر إذ بـــناه وإذ دجـــ ـــلـــة تجبـــى إلـــيه الخابـــور

شـــاده مرمـــرا وجللـــه كلـــ ـــسا فللطيـــر فـــي ذراه وكـــور

لـــم يهـــبه ريـــب المـــنون فـــباد الـــ ـــملـــك عـــنه فـــبابه مهجـــور

وتذكـــر رب الخورنـــق إذ أشـــ ـــرف يـــوما وللهـــدى تفكيـــر

ســـره مالـــه وكثـــرة مـــا يمـــ ـــلـــك والبحـــر معرضـــا والـــسدير

فارعـــوى قلـــبه وقـــال مـــا غـــ ـــطـــة حـــي إلـــى الممـــات يـــصير

ثـــم أضـــحوا كـــأنهم ورق جـــف فألـــوت بـــه الـــصبا والدبـــور

ثـــم بعـــد الفـــلاح والملـــك والأمـــة وارتهـــم هـــناك القـــبور

“O you malicious person who is finding fault with time. Do you think that you are absolved and perfectly intact? Or do you possess a firm covenant from the days? In fact, you are ignorant and deceived. Have you ever seen fate enabling anyone to live forever? Who is there who can cause harm to the guard? Where is Kisrâ, the Kisrâ Anûsherwân, or the one who was before him: Sâbûr? Where are the pale-complexioned Roman kings? No sign of them remains.

MUHARRAM-THE MONTH OF ALLÂH

THE MERIT OF MUHARRAM AND ITS FIRST TEN DAYS

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The most superior fasting after the month of Ramadân is in the month of Allâh which you refer to as Muharram. The most superior salâh after the compulsory salâhs is the night [*tahajjud*] salâh."**(1) This Hadîth is explained in the next two sections: the best optional fast and the best optional salâh.

Section one: the merit of optional fast

This Hadîth clearly states that the best optional fast after the compulsory fast of Ramadân is the fast of Muharram. This could mean that after the month of Ramadân, it is the best month for optional fasts throughout the month. As for partial optional fasts where there is fasting in certain days of the month, these could be superior to the optional fasts of Muharram. For example, fasting on the day of 'Arafah [9th Dhû al-Hijjah], the first nine days of Dhû al-Hijjah, the six fasts of Shawwâl, etc. This is supported by the Hadîth of 'Alî ﷺ who states that a man came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Inform me of a month in which I could fast after the month of Ramadân."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If you want to fast in any month after Ramadân, fast in Muharram because it is the month of Allâh. It is a month in which Allâh ﷻ accepted the repentance of a nation and will accept the repentance of other nations [as well]."**(2)

However, it is said that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast the month of Sha'bân(3) and there is no narration stating that he used to fast the [whole] month of Muharram. Yes, he used to fast on the day

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(1) Muslim (1163).

(2) Ahmad checked it (1/154) and At-Tirmidhi (741).

(3) Also, Al-Bukhari (1970) and Muslim (872).

of 'Âshûrâ' (10th Muharram).[1] In the last year of his life, he said: **"If I am alive next year, I will fast on the ninth."**[2] This shows that he had not kept fast on the ninth before that. People provide certain weak answers to this.

It seems to me – and Allâh ﷻ knows best – that optional fasts are of two kinds:

(1) Unrestricted optional fasting, and the best time for this is Muharram, just as unrestricted optional salâh is the night [*tahajjud*] salâh.

(2) The fasting which is subservient to fasting before and after Ramadân. This is not unrestricted fasting. Rather, it is subservient to the fast of Ramadân and attached to it. It is therefore said that the six fasts of Shawwâl are attached to the fasts of Ramadân and the person who keeps these six fasts shall have the reward of compulsory fasts for the entire year recorded in his favour. It is related that Usâmah ibn Zayd ﷺ used to fast in the sanctified months (*al-ashhur al-hurum*). The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ instructed him to fast in Shawwâl. He thus gave up fasting in the sanctified months and began fasting in Shawwâl.[3] We will explain this at the appropriate place – if Allâh ﷻ wills. So this type of fasting is attached to Ramadân and fasting on such days is the most superior unrestricted optional fast.

As for unrestricted optional fasting, the most superior is fasting in the sanctified months. It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ instructed a person to fast in the sanctified months. We will explain this later – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

The most superior fasts of the sanctified months is fasting in Muharram. This is proven from this Hadîth in which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The most superior salâh after the compulsory salâhs is the night [*tahajjud*] salâh."** This refers to the compulsory salâhs together with the Sunnah salâhs which are attached to them. The Sunnah salâhs before and after the compulsory salâhs are superior to the *tahajjud salâh* according to the unanimous opinion of the *'ulamâ'*. This is because they are attached to the compulsory

(1) Al-Bukhari (2004) and Muslim (1128).

(2) Checked by Ibn majah (1736) and Muslim (1134).

(3) Checked by Ibn Majah (1744).

salâhs. It is only some of the Shâfi'î *'ulamâ'* who differ in this regard. Similar is the case with fasting before and after Ramadân – these fasts are attached to the month of Ramadân. Fasting during such days is superior to fasting in the sanctified months. While the most superior unrestricted optional fasting is the fasting in Muharram.

The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to which of the sanctified months are the most superior. Al-Hasan and others said that the most superior of them is Muharram. A group of latter scholars give preference to this view. Wahb ibn Jarîr narrates from Qurah ibn Khâlid from al-Hasan who said: **"Allâh ﷻ commenced the year** with a sanctified month and ended it with a sanctified month. Therefore, apart from the month of Ramadân, there is no month which is greater in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than Muharram. It used to be called **"the deaf month of Allâh"** because of its intense **sanctity."** Âdam ibn Abî Iyâs narrates that Abû Hilâl ar-Râsibî narrated from al-Hasan that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The most superior salâh after the compulsory salâh is the salâh which is offered in the middle of the night. The most superior month after Ramadân is Muharram. It is the deaf month of Allâh."**(1)

Abû Dharr ﷺ narrates: **"I asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: 'Which night is the most superior and which months are the most superior?' He replied: 'The best part of the night is the middle of the night, and the most superior month is the month of Allâh ﷻ which you refer to as Muharram.'"** His reference to it as **"the most superior month"** is considered with regard to the month after Ramadân. As in the previous narration of al-Hasan. Sa'îd ibn Jubayr and others said: **"The most superior** of the sanctified months is Dhû al-Qa'dah or Dhû al-Hijjah. In fact, it is considered to be the most superior of all months. We will explain this at the appropriate place – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

Some Shâfi'î scholars are of the opinion that Rajab is the most superior of the sanctified months. This opinion is rejected. The most superior part of Muharram are its first ten days. Yamân ibn Ri'âb claims these are the days on which Allâh ﷻ took an oath in the Qur'ân. However, the correct opinion is that the ten days on which He took an oath are the first ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah. This will be explained at the appropriate place – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

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(1) Al-Hakim checked it (1/307) and Ibn Khuzaimah (1134) and Ibn Al-Mubarak in Al-Zuhd (427).

Abû 'Uthmân an-Nahdî said: **"The people used to accord respect to three sets of ten days: the last ten days of Ramadân, the first ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah, and the first ten days of Muharram."** This is mentioned in some editions of *Fadâ'il al-'Ashr* of Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ from Abû 'Uthmân who narrates from Abû Dharr ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to accord respect to these three sets of ten days. But his narration is not authoritative. It is said that it refers to the ten days with which Allâh ﷻ completed the forty days for Mûsâ ﷺ, and that the difference lies on which ten days they were.

Wahb ibn Munabbih said: **"Allâh ﷻ revealed to Mûsâ ﷺ saying: 'Order your people to gain proximity to Me in the first ten days of Muharram. When it is the tenth day [of Muharram], they must come out to Me and I will forgive them.'"**

Qatâdah states that the dawn on which Allâh ﷻ took an oath in the first verse of Sûrah al-Fajr is the dawn of the 1st of Muharram from which the year commences. Since the sanctified months are the most superior after the month of Ramadân, or they are the most superior of all, it is desirable to fast in all of them – as instructed by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. One of them marks the end of the lunar year while another one marks the beginning of the lunar year. If a person fasts for the entire month of Dhû al-Hijjah – apart from the days on which fasting is prohibited – and then fasts for the entire month of Muharram, he would have concluded the year with obedience and commenced the next year with obedience. It would thus be hoped that his entire year will be recorded as an act of obedience. This is because when a person's initial deed is an act of obedience and his final deed is an act of obedience, he is considered to be completely engrossed in obedience in the period between the two.

A Hadîth states: **"When the angels who are deputed to record deeds take a book of deeds to Allâh ﷻ and He sees good in its beginning and end, He says to His angels: 'I make you witnesses to the fact that I have forgiven My servant for the intervening periods.'"**(1)

Another Hadîth states: **"O man! Remember me for some time at the beginning of the day and for some time at the end of the**

(1) Narrated by At-Tirmidhi (981) and Al-Baihaqi (7053).

day and I will forgive you during the intervening periods, but not the major sins unless you repent from them." Ibn al-Mubârak said: **"The person who concludes his day with the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ shall have his entire day recorded in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ."** He is making reference to the fact that deeds are judged by the manner in which they ended. If the beginning and end was spent in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, it is more worthy for the entire period to be included as spent in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. It becomes clear that commencing the year with sincere repentance wipes off the sins which were committed in the past during days of futile activity.

قطعتَ شهور العام لهوا وغفلة ... ولم تحترم فيما أنت المحرما
فلا رجبا وافيت فيه بحقه ... ولا صمتَ شهر الصوم صوما مُتمَّما
ولا في ليالي عشر ذي الحجة الذي ... مضى كنت قواما ولا كنت محرما
فهل لك ان تمحو الذنوب بعبرة ... وتبكي عليها حسرة وتندما
وتستقبل العام الجديد بتوبة ... لعلك أن تمحو بها ما تقدما

"You passed the months of the year in play and heedlessness. You did not accord any respect to Muharram nor did you fulfil the rights of Rajab. Nor did you keep fast for the entire month of fasting [Ramadân]. You neither spent the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah in worship nor did you perform the hajj [in this month]. You will now have to wipe out your sins with tears and cry over them with remorse and regret. Approach the new year with repentance. Perhaps you will be able to wipe out the past sins."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ referred to Muharram as the month of Allâh. This attribution to Allâh ﷻ demonstrates its honour and merit because Allâh ﷻ only attributes His special creations to His self. For example, He attributed Muhammad ﷺ, Ibrâhîm عليه السلام, Is-hâq عليه السلام, Ya'qûb عليه السلام and other Prophets عليهم السلام to His worship, and attributed His house [the Ka'bah] and His camel to Himself.

Since this month is specifically attributed to Allâh ﷻ and fasting is one of the deeds which is attributed to Allâh ﷻ, it was considered appropriate to specify an action for this month which is attributed to Him with an action which is attributed to Him and done solely for Him, viz. fasting.

It is said that the reason for attributing this month to Allâh ﷻ is

to show that its sanctity belongs to Allâh ﷻ and no one has the right to change this as was the habit of the people of *jâhilîyyah* who used to change its sanctity and transfer it to Safar. He thus makes reference to the fact that it is the month of Allâh ﷻ which He sanctified, and no one from His creation has the right to change this.

شـــهر الحـــرام مـــبارك مـــيمون والـــصوم فـــيه مـــضاعف مـــسنون

وثـــواب صـــائمه لـــوجه إلهـــه فـــي الخُلـــد عـــند ملـــيكه مخـــزون

"The sanctified month is blessed and sacred. The reward for fasting in it is multiplied and Sunnah. The reward for the one who fasts in it for the pleasure of his Lord is stored with his Creator in eternity."

Fasting is a secret between a servant and his Lord. It is for this reason that Allâh ﷻ says: **"Every deed of man is for him, except for fasting. It is for Me and I shall personally give the reward for it because he gave up his desires, food and drink for My sake."**(1)

There is a door in Paradise whose name is ar-Rayyân. None but those who used to fast shall enter through it. Once they have entered, it will be locked and no one else will be able to go through.(2) Fasting is a shield against the Hell-fire like a shield which one of you uses in battle.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When a person fasts for a single day for the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ distances him from the fire of Hell equal to the distance which a young crow flies until it dies out of old age."**(3) Abû Umâmah ﷺ said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"Advise me."** He said: **"Be regular in fasting because there is nothing equal to it."**(4) Abû Umâmah ﷺ and his family used to be very regular in fasting. When any smoke was seen coming out of their house during the day, it was a sign that they had a guest.

'Umar ﷺ, Abû Talhah ﷺ, 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ,* other Companions ﷺ and numerous people of the past used to fast

(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (1904) and Muslim (1151).

(2) This was proved in Al-Hadith as-Ṣaḥiḥ by Al-Bukhari (1896) and Muslim (1152).

(3) Al-Musnad (2/526) and in Ibn Luhai'a and it is weak.

(4) Al-Musnad (5/249).

constantly. Ibn 'Umar ﷺ, al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* and others used to fast in all the sanctified months. One of them said: **"It is merely lunch and supper. If you delay your lunch till supper, you will be included in the register of those who kept fast."**

"There are two occasions of joy for a fasting person: the joy when he opens his fast and the joy when he shall meet his Lord." That is, when he will find the reward for his fasting stored for him. Someone heard a person announcing at the time of *sehrî* (pre-dawn) in the month of Ramadân: **"O do you know what rewards we have set aside for fasting?! Get up for those rewards and start fasting."** It is related that a table [of food] will be laid out beneath the Throne for those who used to fast while the rest of the people will be busy giving an account of their deeds. On seeing them, the people will ask: **"How is it that these people are eating while we are still being taken to account?"** A reply will be given: **"They used to fast while you abstained from fasting."** It is related that they will be expressing their opinions about the fruits of Paradise while the rest of the people will be giving an account of their deeds. Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ related this in *Kitâb al-Jû'*.

Allâh ﷻ says: **"the fasting men and the fasting women, the men who guard their chastity and the women who guard [their chastity], the men who remember Allâh abundantly and the women who remember [Allâh abundantly] – Allâh has set aside for them forgiveness and a great reward."** *(Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 35)* **"Eat and drink to your heart's content as a reward for what you sent ahead in days gone by."** *(Sûrah al-Hâqqah, 69: 24)* Mujâhid and others said: **"This verse was revealed with reference to the fasting people. If a person abstains from food, drink and intercourse, Allâh ﷻ shall give him in return something better than that: food and drink that does not end, and wives who do not die."**

The following is stated in the Taurâh: **"Glad tidings to the** person who starves himself for the day of the greatest meal. Glad tidings to the person who makes himself thirsty for the day of the greatest drink. Glad tidings to the person who abstains from intercourse which is available to him for a promised reward which he did not see as yet. Glad tidings to the person who abstains from food which is consumed in an abode that is temporary [i.e. this world] for an abode **"whose fruit is eternal, and so is its shade"** *(Sûrah ar-Ra'd, 13: 35)*

مـــن يـــرد ملـــك الجـــنان فلـــيذر عـــنه التوانـــي
ولـــيقم فـــي ظلمـــة اللـــيـ ـــل إلـــى نـــور القـــران
وليـــصل صـــوما بـــصوم إن هـــذا العـــيش فانـــي
إنمـــا العـــيش جـــوار الله فـــي دار الأمـــان

"Whoever desires the kingdom of Paradise will have to abandon heedlessness. He must stand in the darkness of the night with the light of the Qur'ân, and keep fasting regularly. This life is fleeting. The true life is being in the proximity of Allâh in the abode of peace [Paradise]."

A righteous person used to fast a lot. He saw in his dream that he seemed to be entering Paradise. Someone called out from behind him: **"O such and such person! Do you ever remember fasting for a single day for Allâh?"** He replied: **"By Allâh, indeed, I used to fast day after day."** He then started picking up the scattered pearls to his right and left [this was his reward which he saw in his dream].

A righteous person kept fasting until he became bent and he lost his voice. He then passed away. One of his friends saw him in a dream and asked him about his condition. He said:

قـد كـسي حلـة الـبهاء وطافـت بالأباريـــق حـــوله الخـــدام
ثـم حلـي وقـيل يـا قـري ارقـه فلعمـــري لقـــد بـــراك الـــصيام

"I was made to wear a splendid garment, pitchers [of a drink] were passed around me, and I had attendants surrounding me. I was then made to wear jewellery and told thus: 'O reader! Go up because fasting has most certainly worn you out.'"

A Tâbi'î kept fast for such lengthy periods that his complexion became dark. Al-Aswad ibn Yazîd kept fasting until his body became green and yellow. Whenever he used to be reprimanded and asked to be kind to his body, he would reply: **"I am actually doing this for the honour of my body."** One of them kept fasting to the extent that he got the taste of his brain in his throat. One of them used to fast continuously. He fell ill while he was fasting. Some people said to him: **"Open your fast."** He said: **"This is not the time to stop fasting."** Another sick person was told: **"Open your fast."** He replied: **"How can I open my fast while I am a prisoner not knowing what is going to be done to me?"**

‘Âmir ibn ‘Abdillâh ibn az-Zubayr passed away while he was fasting but he did not open his fast [before his death]. Some people went to Abû Bakr ibn Abî Maryam while he was in the throes of death and he was fasting. They offered him water to open his fast. He asked: **“Has the sun set?”** They said: **“No.”** He refused to open his fast. They then brought him water when the pangs of death were severe. He asked them through gestures: **“Has the sun set?”** They replied: **“Yes.”** They dripped a single drop of water in his mouth and he passed away. Ibrâhîm ibn Hâni’, a companion of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, was in the throes of death while he was fasting. He asked for water and asked: **“Has the sun set?”** The people replied: **“No.”** And they added: **“There is concession to break a compulsory fast in such a condition, and here you are keeping an optional fast.”** He replied: **“Indeed. Wait a bit.”** He then said: **“It is for such things that those who endeavour should endeavour.”** *(Sûrah as-Sâffât, 37: 61)* His soul then departed, but he had not opened his fast.

The entire world is a month of fasting for the pious people. The day of their *‘îd* shall be on the day when they meet their Lord. A greater portion of the day of fasting has passed and the *‘îd* of meeting Allâh has drawn near.

وقد صُمْتُ عن لذات دهري كلها ويوم لقاكم ذاك فطر صيامي

“I abstained from desires throughout my life. The day when I meet You [O Allâh] shall be the day when I open my fast.”

Since fasting is supposed to be a secret between the servant and his Lord, the sincere ones strove to conceal it in every way possible so that no one comes to know of it. A righteous man said: **“We heard that ‘Îsâ ibn Maryam ﷺ said: ‘When any of you is fasting, he must apply oil to his beard and wipe some of that oil on his lips so that when any person looks at him, he thinks that he is not fasting.’”** Ibn Mas‘ûd ﷺ said: **“When any of you is fasting, he must comb his hair and apply oil to it. When he gives charity with his right hand, he must conceal it from his left hand. When he offers optional salâh, he must offer it inside his house.”** Abû at-Tayyâh said: **“I saw my father and the seniors of my area that when any of them was fasting, he would apply oil to himself and wear his best clothes.”**

One of the scholars of the past kept fasting for forty years and no one knew about it. He had a shop. He used to take two loaves of

bread everyday from his house and depart towards his shop. On the way, he would give both the loaves in charity. His family members assumed that he was eating the bread in the market-place while the people in the market-place assumed that he ate at home before coming to the shop.

A righteous person became well-known for his abundant fasting. He would stand at the *jâmi' musjid* on a Friday, hold a jug of water in his hand, place its edge to his mouth, and do as if he was sipping from it. The people would be watching him but nothing would go down his throat. He started doing this in order to remove the popularity of his fasting.

No matter how much the truthful people try to conceal their conditions, the fragrance of truth betrays them. When a person conceals a secret, Allâh ﷻ most certainly brings it into the open.

كـــم أكـــتُمُ حـــبّكم عـــن الأغـــيار والدمـــع يذيـــع فـــي الهـــوى أســـراري

كـــم أســـتركم هتكـــتموا أســـتاري مـــن يخفـــى فـــي الهـــوى لهـــيب الـــنهار

"No matter how much I conceal my love for you from others, my tears betray my secrets of love. No matter how much I try to conceal you, you remove my veils. Who is there who can conceal love from the blazing of the day?"

A Hadîth states: **"The fragrance of a fasting person is better in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the fragrance of musk."** No matter how much a fasting person tries to conceal this smell, it spreads to the hearts, and the souls inhale this fragrance. It may well appear after death and on the day of Resurrection.

فكـــاتم الحـــب يـــوم البـــين منهـــتك وصـــاحب الـــوجد لا تخفـــى ســـرائره

"The person who conceals love will disclose it on the day of separation. The secrets of a person in ecstasy cannot be concealed."

When 'Abdullâh ibn Ghâlib was buried, the fragrance of musk used to emanate from the soil of his grave. Someone saw him in a dream and asked him about the fragrance at his grave. He replied: **"It is the fragrance of recitation [of the Qur'ân] and thirst [due to fasting]."**

A Hadîth states: **"The fasting people will come out of their graves and they will be recognized by the fragrance of their fasting. Their mouths will be better than the fragrance of musk."**

وهبني كتمت السر أو قلت غيره أتخفى على أهل القلوب السرائر
أبى ذاك أن السر في الوجه ناطق وأن ضمير القلب في العين ظاهر

"Tell me and I will conceal the secret, or else, I will say something else [different from what you tell me]. Can secrets be concealed from the people of the hearts? A secret expresses itself on the face, and what is in the depth of the heart becomes obvious in the eyes."

Section two: the merit of the night salâh

The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ [mentioned at the beginning of this chapter] demonstrates that the night (*tahajjud*) salâh is the most superior after the compulsory salâhs. As for whether it is superior to the Sunnah salâhs which are offered before and after the compulsory salâhs or not, there is difference of opinion in this regard, and this was explained previously. Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"The superiority of the night salâh over the day salâh is like the superiority of charity given in privacy over charity given in public."**(1) 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ said: **"A single rak'ah [of salâh] offered at night is better than ten rak'ahs offered during the day."** (Narrated by Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ) The reason for the superiority of night salâh over the day salâh is that it is easier to conceal and closer to sincerity.

The pious predecessors used to strive to conceal their *tahajjud salâh*. Al-Hasan said: **"A person used to have visitors, but he would get up at night and offer salâh without his visitors knowing about it."** They used to engage in abundant supplications, but their voices would not be heard. A person would sleep with his wife on the same pillow and cry the entire night without her perceiving anything.

Muhammad ibn Wâsi' used to offer salâh the entire night in his carriage while travelling for hajj. He would instruct his camel driver to raise his voice in order to divert the people's attention from him. A person used to get up in the middle of the last part of the night without anyone knowing anything about him. When the time of dawn approached, he would raise his voice in the recitation of the Qur'ân giving the impression that he woke up just at that time.

[Another reason for the superiority of the night salâh] is that it is

(1) At-Tabarany checked it in al-Kabir (10384).

more difficult on the souls. This is because the night is the time to sleep and give the body a rest from the fatigue of the day. Giving up sleep while the soul is inclined to sleep is a great effort. A person said: **"The most superior deeds are those which are difficult on the souls."**

Another reason is that recitation of the Qur'ân in the night salâh is more likely to enable a person to reflect and ponder [over what he is reading]. This is because all occupations and activities come to an end at night. There is presence of heart, and the tongue and heart work in concert on the mouth. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Surely waking up at night has the strongest impression and the word comes out most upright."** *(Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 6)* It is for this reason that we are ordered to recite the Qur'ân in a measured pace at night. It is also for this reason that the night salâh prevents a person from sinning, as will be mentioned in a Hadîth narrated by at-Tirmidhî.

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that someone said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"There is a person who offers salâh at night but steals the next morning."** He said: **"What you are referring to [i.e. the night salâh] shall stop him [from stealing]."**(1)

The time of *tahajjud* is the most superior time for optional salâh. It is a time when a person is closest to his Allâh. It is a time when the doors of the heavens are opened, supplications are accepted, and the needs of the seekers are presented to Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ praises those who wake up at night in order to engage in His remembrance, supplicate to Him, seek His forgiveness, and converse with Him. He says:

"Their sides remain away from their sleeping places, calling on their Sustainer with fear and longing. And they spend out of what We provided for them. So no soul knows what bliss is in store for them – a recompense for what they used to do." *(Sûrah as-Sajdah, 32: 16-17)* **"who seek forgiveness for sins in the latter part of the night."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 17)* **"They used to sleep but little at night. And in the hours of dawn they used to seek forgiveness."** *(Sûrah adh-Dhâriyât, 51: 17-18)* **"Who spend their night before their Sustainer, prostrating and standing."** *(Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 64)* **"Can he who is engaged in worship in the hours of the night, prostrating and standing [before Allâh], fearing the**

(1) Al-Musnad (2/447).

Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Sustainer [be compared to an unbeliever]? Say: 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?'" *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 9)* **"Among the people of the Book there is a group on the straight path. They recite the verses of Allâh at night times and they prostrate."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 113)*

Allâh ﷻ said to His Prophet ﷺ:

"In some portion of the night remain awake with the Qur'ân – this addition is for you only. It may be that your Sustainer will raise you to a laudable position." *(Sûrah Banî Isrâ'îl/al-Isrâ', 17: 79)* **"And during some part of the night, prostrate before Him. And extol His purity all night long."** *(Sûrah al-Insân/ad-Dahr, 76: 26)* **"O you wrapped in garments! Remain standing at night except little. Half the night or a little less than that. Or add to it, and recite the Qur'ân distinctly."** *(Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 1-4)*

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said to a man: **"Do not leave out the night salâh because the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ never left it out. If he was ill – or she said, if he was feeling tired – he would perform it sitting."** She said in another narration: **"I have heard that some people are saying: 'As long as we fulfil the compulsory duties, we will not bother about doing anything more.' I take an oath that Allâh ﷻ will only question them about their compulsory duties. However, they are committing a wrong by day and night. You are most certainly strongly connected to your Prophet and he is most certainly strongly connected to you. By Allâh, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ never left out the night salâh."** She then quoted every verse which makes mention of the night salâh. She made reference to the fact that there are two major benefits in the night salâh: (1) Following the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and emulating him. Allâh ﷻ says: **"There is a good example for you in the Messenger of Allâh."** *(Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 21)* (2) Atonement of sins. Man commits sins by day and night and needs to engage in abundant acts which atone for sins. The night salâh is one of the greatest atonements. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to Mu'âdh ibn Jabal ﷺ: **"A person offering salâh in the middle of the night atones for sins."** He then recited this verse: **"Their sides remain away from their sleeping places..."** *(Sûrah as-Sajdah, 32: 16)*[1]

(1) Ahmad checked it in Al-Musnad (2921, 22002).

It is related that those who are regular with the *tahajjud salâh* shall enter Paradise without having to account for their deeds. Shahr ibn Haushab narrates from Asmâ' bint Yazîd that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When Allâh ﷻ assembles all the early and latter generations on the day of Resurrection, an announcer will come forward and call out in a voice which all the creations will hear: 'Today, all the creations will learn who is most worthy of affection.' He will then return and call out: 'Where are the people 'whom neither trade nor business distracted from the remembrance of Allâh'?' A small number of people will stand up. He will return and call out: 'Those who used to praise Allâh ﷻ during times of prosperity and affliction may now stand up.' A small number of people will stand up. He will return and call out: 'Those whose sides used to remain away from their sleeping places may now stand up.' A small number of people will stand up. The accounting of deeds for the remainder of the people will then commence."**(1) Narrated by Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ and others. It is also narrated from Shahr ibn Haushab from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ as his statement. A similar Hadîth is narrated by Abû Is-hâq, from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Atâ', from 'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir as a *marfû'* and *mauqûf* Hadîth. A similar Hadîth is also narrated from 'Ubâdah ibn as-Sâmit, Rabî'ah ibn al-Jarashî, al-Hasan and Ka'b as their statement.

A predecessor said: **"Standing up for the night salâh will ease the lengthy standing up on the day of Resurrection. Those who used to wake up for the night salâh will hasten towards Paradise without reckoning and they would have rested from the lengthy wait for the reckoning."** A Hadîth of Abû Umâmah ﷺ and Bilâl ﷺ states: **"Be steadfast with the night salâh because it was the habit of the righteous people before you. The night salâh is a means of proximity to Allâh ﷻ, an atonement for sins, a preventative against sins, and an expellant of illnesses from the body."**(2) We learn from this Hadîth that the night salâh ensures the health of the body and repulses illness from it. Similar is the case with fasting during the day. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates: **"Keep fasting and you will remain healthy."**(3) Just as the night salâh

(1) Ibn Kathir mentioned it in his explanation (6/75, 366) and Al-Hafez mentioned it in Al-Matalib al-'Aleya (4627) as belonging to Ishaaq Bin Rahawayh and abi Ya'la.

(2) At-Tirmidhi checked it in As-Sunan (3549) and Ibn Khuzaimah (2/177).

(3) At-Tabarany in Al-Awsat (8312).

atones for sins, it also raises the rank of a person. We already mentioned that those who are regular with the night salâh shall be among the first ones to enter Paradise without reckoning.

There is a famous Hadîth in which a dream of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is related. It is stated therein that the angels of the highest assembly (al-Mala' al-A'lâ) will dispute about the deeds which increase the rank of a person and the deeds which are atonements for sins. The deeds which increase the rank of a person are: (1) providing food, (2) making the *salâm* (Islamic greeting) common, and (3) offering salâh at night while the people are asleep.(1) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are apartments in Paradise whose outside can be seen from the inside, and the inside can be seen from the outside. They are reserved for those who possess these three qualities."**(2) The famous Hadîth of 'Abdullâh ibn Salâm ﷺ which states that the first thing which he heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying when he arrived in Madînah was this: **"O people! Provide food, make the *salâm* common, maintain ties of kinship, and offer salâh at night while the people are asleep; you shall enter Paradise peacefully."**(3)

Among the merits of *tahajjud* is that Allâh ﷻ loves those who perform it, speaks highly of them to His angels, and accepts their supplications.

Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are three types of people whom Allâh ﷻ loves, at whom He smiles, and with whom He is happy."** Among these is: **"A person who has a beautiful wife and a comfortable bed. Yet he gets up at night. Allâh ﷻ says: 'He is leaving aside his desires and engaging in My remembrance. Had he willed, he could have continued sleeping. Another is a person who is travelling with a group of people. They fell asleep peacefully, but he got up in the latter part of the night [and offered salâh] during prosperity and affliction."**(4)

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(1) Ahmad (1/368) and At-Tirmidhi (1984).

(2) Ahmad (1/156) and At-Tirmidhi (1984).

(3) At-Tirmidhi checked it (2485) and Ibn Majah (1334).

(4) At-Tabarany and others narrated it and Al-Haithami said in Al-Majmaa' (2/255): Its men are trustworthy.

Abû Dharr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are three types of people whom Allâh ﷻ loves."** He mentioned therein: **"A group of people travelled through the night [and became so exhausted] that sleep was the most desirable thing to them. They placed their heads down to sleep, but one person stood up praising Me and reciting My verses."**(1)

Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Our Sustainer admires two people: (1) A person who jumps out of his bed, from between his duvet and beloved wife, and goes to offer his salâh. Allâh ﷻ says: 'Look at My servant: he jumped out of his bed, from between his duvet and beloved wife and goes to offer his salâh, desiring the reward which I have and fearing the punishment which I have. (2) A person who wages jihâd for the cause of Allâh ﷻ. His friends are put to flight. He knows what the consequences of fleeing are and what the rewards are in returning [to the battle field]. So he goes back [and fights] till he dies. Allâh ﷻ says: 'Look at My servant. He went back [to fight] out of hope for My reward and fearing My punishment [and fought] till he died.'"**(2)

The above Hadîth mentions the words **"jumps out"** to demonstrate the person's eagerness and determination.

'Atîyyah narrates from Abû Sa'îd ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ is most pleased with three people: (1) A person who gets up in the middle of the night, performs an excellent ablution and offers salâh. (2) A person who falls asleep while in prostration. (3) A person who is with a defeated army. He is sitting on a swift horse and could have fled had he wanted [but he remained steadfast in battle]."**(3)

Ibn Mâjah narrates from Mujâlid, from Abû al-Waddâk, from Abû Sa'îd ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ is most pleased with three types of people: (1) The row of worshippers in salâh. (2) A person who offers salâh in the middle of the night. (3) A person who remains fighting [in jihad] – I think he said – at**

(1) Ahmad checked it (5/153), At-Tirmidhi (2568) and An-Nasae'i (3/207).

(2) Al-musnad (1/416).

(3) Al-Bazzar checked it as in Al-Majmaa' (2/256).

the back of the army."[1]

Abân narrates from Anas from Rabî'ah ibn Waqqâs that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are three places where supplications are not rejected: (1) A person who is in the desert where no one can see him. He stands up and offers salâh. Allâh ﷻ says to His angels: 'I see this servant of Mine knowing that he has a Lord who forgives sins. See what he is asking for.' The angels say: 'O Lord! He is seeking Your pleasure and Your forgiveness.' Allâh ﷻ says: 'Be witness to the fact that I have forgiven him and am pleased with him.' (2) A person who stands up at night. Allâh ﷻ says: 'Did I not make the night for tranquillity and sleep for resting? Yet this servant of Mine got up and is offering salâh, knowing that he has a Lord.' Allâh ﷻ then says to His angels: 'See what this servant of Mine is asking for.' The angels say: 'O Lord! He is seeking Your pleasure and Your forgiveness.' Allâh ﷻ says: 'Be witness to the fact that I have forgiven him.'"**[2] He then mentioned the third person who is with an army in which all his companions fled while he remains steadfast in battle. He is mentioned in the previous Ahâdîth as well.

'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are two people from my *ummah*: One of them wakes up at night and imposes on his self to perform ablution. He has several knots when he commences his ablution. When he washes his hands, one knot becomes untied; when he washes his face, another knot becomes untied; when he passes his wet hands over his head, another knot becomes untied; when he washes his feet, another knot becomes untied. Allâh ﷻ says to the angels who are behind the veil: 'Look at this servant of Mine who is imposing all this on his self. He shall receive whatever he asks for.'"**[3]

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"'Abdullâh – i.e. ibn 'Umar ﷺ - is an excellent man. If only he was regular in offering the night salâh."** Consequently, 'Abdullâh ﷺ would sleep very little at night.[4]

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(1) Ibn Majah checked it in As-Sunan (200).

(2) Al-Hindi mentioned it in "Kanz Al 'Oummal" (3336).

(3) Ahmad checked it (4/159, 201) and Ibn Hibban (1052).

(4) Al-Bukhari (1122) and Muslim (2478).

Abû Dharr ﷺ used to say to the people: **"Tell me, if any of you decided to go on a journey, would he not carry such provisions which would aid him and convey him to his destination?"** The people replied: **"Indeed."** He said: **"The journey on the road to the Hereafter is the furthest. You should therefore carry whatever will aid you. Perform hajj so that you can overcome difficult matters. Keep fast on an intensely hot day in preparation for the hot day of the Resurrection. Perform two rak'ahs of salâh in the darkness of the night in preparation for the solitude of the grave. Give in charity in preparation for the evil of the most difficult day."** Where are the people of the night? Where is al-Hasan, Sufyân and Fudayl?

يـــا رجـــال اللـــيل جِـــدُّوا ربَّ داع لا يـــــــ

of the night.

Abû Dharr ﷺ narrates: **"I asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: 'Which part of the night is the best?' He replied: 'The middle of the night.'"**(1)

Abû Dharr ﷺ narrates: **"I asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: 'Which part of the night is the best for worship?' He replied: 'When the middle of the night passes, or in the middle of the night. But there are few who do this.'"**(2)

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates from Abû Umâmah ﷺ that a man asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Which part of the night is most superior?"** He said: **"The middle of the night."** He asked: **"Which supplication is most likely to be accepted?"** He said: **"Supplication after the compulsory salâhs."**(3)

The above Hadîth is also narrated by at-Tirmidhî and an-Nasa'î as follows: **"Which supplication is most likely to be accepted?"** He said: **"Supplication made in the middle of the last part of the night and after the compulsory salâhs."**(4)

'Amr ibn 'Abasah ﷺ narrates that he heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: **"The closest Allâh ﷻ is to a servant is in the middle of the night. If you are able to be among those who remember Allâh ﷻ at that time, you must do so."**(5)

It is related that Dâ'ûd ﷺ asked: **"O Allâh! At what time should I get up for You?"** Allâh ﷻ said: **"Do not get up in the first part of the night nor in the last part. Rather, get up in the middle of the night so that you can be in solitude with Me and I will be in solitude with you. And present your needs to Me."**

A famous tradition states: **"The person who claims to love Me is a liar because when the night overcomes him, he sleeps away and abandons Me. Doesn't every lover like to be in solitude with**

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(1) Al-Nasa'ei checked it in As-Sunan (1/283).

(2) Ahmad checked it in Al-Musnad (5/179).

(3) Ibn Majah checked it in (1251).

(4) At-Tirmidhi (3499) checked it and An-Nasa'ei also checked it in "Al-Yawm wal Layla" (one day and night) (108).

(5) Abu Dawoud checked it (1277), At-Tirmidhi (3579) and An-Nasa'ei (1/280).

his beloved? So here I am watching My beloveds. When the night overcomes them, I place their sight in their hearts. They address Me while seeing Me and speak to Me in My presence. Tomorrow I will gladden My beloveds in My gardens [of Paradise].”

اللـــيل لـــي ولأحبائـــي أحـــادثهم قـد اصـطفيتهم كـي يـسمعوا ويعـوا

لهـــم قلـــوب بأســـراري لهـــا ملـــئت علـــى ودادي وإرشـــادي لهـــم طـــبعوا

ســـروا فمـــا وهـــنوا عجـــزا ولا ضـــعفوا ووواصـــلوا حـــبل تقريبـــي فمـــا انقطعـــوا

“The night is for Me and My beloveds. I converse with them. I selected them so that they may listen and remember. They have hearts which are filled with My secrets. They are naturally inclined to My love and directives. They travelled without becoming weak and incapable. They joined the rope of My proximity and did not sever it.”

The true lovers do not have anything more beloved to them than the times of solitude in which they converse with their beloveds. It is a cure for their hearts and the peak of their quest.

كـــتمتُ اســـمَ الحبـــيب مـــن العـــباد ورددت الـــصبابة فـــي فـــؤادي

فـــيا شـــوقا إلـــى بلـــد خلـــي لعلـــي باســـم مـــن أهـــوى أنـــادي

“I concealed the name of my beloved from the servants and I kept my ardent love in my heart. O, how I desire a place that is deserted so that I could call out the name of my beloved [and no one would be able to hear me].”

Dâ’ûd aṭ-Ṭâ’î used to say at night: **“Your concern for me has incapacitated all other concerns. It has come to me as an ally against sleeplessness. My desire to see You is the firmest of all my pleasures. This has come as a barrier between me and desires.”**

‘Utbah, a youth, used to say in his private conversation with Allâh ﷻ at night: **“If You punish me, I most certainly love You. If You show mercy to me, I most certainly love You.”** (In other words, my love for You is unwavering under all conditions).

لـــو أنـــك أبـــصرت أهـــل الهـــوى إذا غـــــارت الأنجـــــم الطلـــــع

فهـــــذا يـــــنوح علـــــى ذنـــــبه وهـــــذا يـــــصلي وذا يـــــركع

“If you were to see the lovers when the rising stars have disappeared, you would see this person crying over his sins, this

one offering salâh, and that one bowing [before Me].”

The person who does not join them in their love and does not taste the sweetness of their private conversation [with Allâh ﷻ] cannot understand what causes them to cry. The person who did not see the beauty of Yûsuf ﷺ cannot understand what caused pain to the heart of Ya‘qûb ﷺ.

مـن لـم يـبت والحـب حـشو فـؤاده لـــم يـــدر كـــيف تفـــتت الأكـــباد

“The person who did not sleep with love filled in his heart cannot understand how hearts break.”

Abû Sulaymân used to say: **“Those who spend the night in worship experience more delight than the delight which is experienced by those who are engrossed in amusement. Were it not for the night, I would have disliked remaining in this world.”**

The middle of the night is for those who love solitude in order to engage in private conversation with their beloved. The pre-dawn is for the sinners so that they may seek forgiveness from the sins. The middle of the night is thus specifically for the solitude of the special servants. The pre-dawn is generally for all the servants to present their needs and to obtain signatures authorizing the fulfilment of their needs. The person who is unable to compete with the true lovers in their quest should not lag in joining the sinners in their seeking forgiveness and asking for pardon.

The pages of those who repent are their cheeks, and their ink is their tears. Someone said: **“If those who fear [Allâh ﷻ]** cry [before Him], they have actually corresponded with Allâh ﷻ with their tears. The letters which are sent in the pre-dawn are carried [to Allâh ﷻ] without the celestial sphere knowing about them. The replies to these letters are sent in such privacy that the angels do not know about them.

صـــــــــحائفنا إشـــــــــارتنا وأكثـــــــر رُسْـــــــلِنا الحُـــــــرَق

لأن الكـــــــتب قـــــــد تقـــــــرا بغيـــــــر الدمـــــــع لا تـــــــثق

“Our scrolls are our gestures and most of our messages are burnt. Since the letters are read without tears, do not be over confident.”

Conditions are constantly presented before Allâh ﷻ and signatures authorizing the fulfilment of needs are issued till the break of dawn. Our Lord descends every night to the lowest heaven

and says: **"Is there anyone seeking repentance so that I may accept his repentance? Is there anyone seeking forgiveness so that I may forgive him? Is there any supplicant so that I may accept his supplication?"** This continues till the break of dawn. It is for this reason that the pious predecessors preferred salâh in the latter part of the night over the first part.

نحـــن الـــذين إذا أتانـــا ســـائل نولـــيه إحـــسانا وحـــسن تكـــرم

ونقـول فـي الأسـحار هـل مـن تائـب مـــستغفر ليـــنال خيـــر المغـــنم

"We are those whom when a beggar comes to Us, We bestow Our favours and honour to him. We say at the time of pre-dawn: 'Is there anyone repenting and seeking forgiveness so that he could receive the best booty?"

Booty is distributed among all those who participate in the battle. The infantry, runners, and youngsters are given together with the leaders, courageous ones, brave ones and cavalry. So before the dawn of reward breaks, the people [who engaged in night worship] receive the booty, acquire something to be proud about, and they commend night-journeying at daybreak. In the meantime, those who spent their night sleeping and in negligence know nothing of what transpired.

A righteous person used to engage in night worship. When it was the pre-dawn, he would announce at the top of his voice: **"O you caravan of people who stopped over for the night! Are you going to sleep throughout the night? Are you not going to wake up and depart?"** When people hear his voice, they jump from their beds. You would then hear one person crying, another supplicating, another reciting the Qur'ân, and another performing ablution. When the dawn broke, he would announce at the top of his voice: **"At daybreak the travellers commend night-journeying."**(1)

يـا نفـس قومـي فقـد نـام الـورى إن تـصنعي الخيـر فـذو العـرش يـرى

وأنـت يـا عـين دعـي عـنك الكـرى عـند الـصباح يحمـد القـوم الـسرى

"O soul! Get up because the people have fallen asleep. If you do good, the Master of the Throne is watching you. And you, O eyes! Leave your sleep aside. At daybreak, the travellers

(1) This is a proverb which is applied to a person who endures difficulty or fatigue hoping for rest or ease.

commend night-journeying."

O you who engage in night worship, intercede in favour of those who are asleep. O you whose hearts are alive, have mercy on those who are dead.

Someone said to Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ: **"We are unable to get up at night to engage in worship."** He replied: **"It is your sins which are causing you to lag behind."** Someone said to al-Hasan: **"We are unable to get up at night to engage in worship."** He replied: **"It is your sins which have restricted you."** Al-Fudayl ibn 'Iyâd said: **"If you are unable to engage in worship at night and fast during the day, you must realize that you are deprived and in shackles. It is your sins which have shackled you."**

Al-Hasan said: **"A person commits a sin and is deprived of engaging in night worship because of it."** A pious predecessor said: **"I committed a sin and was deprived of night worship for six months."** None are worthy of solitude with kings except those who are sincere in their love for them and their affairs with them. As for those who are opposed to them, they are not worthy of this. It is stated that Jibra'îl ﷺ calls out every night: **"Cause such and such person to wake up [for night worship] and cause such and such person to continue sleeping."** A righteous person got up on a cold night wearing worn out clothes. The cold struck him and he began crying. Someone called out from the unseen: **"We enabled you to wake up [for night worship] and caused the others to continue sleeping. But now you are crying over us!"**

يـا حـسنهم والليـل قـد جـنهم ونـورهم يفـوق نـور الأنجـم
تـرنموا بالذكـر فـي لـيلهم فعيـشهم قـد طـاب بالتـرنم
قلـوبهم للذكـر قـد تفـرغت دمـوعهم كلؤلـؤ مـنظم
أسـحارهم بهـم لهـم قـد أشـرقت وخلـع الغفـران خيـر القـسم

"O how beautiful they are when the night pervades them. Their lustre outshines the light of the stars. They are chanting the praises of Allâh ﷻ at night, and their lives have become wholesome with this chanting. Their hearts are totally devoted to remembrance, and their tears are like strung pearls. Their pre-dawn is glittering brilliantly with them. The garments of forgiveness [which they received] are the best things in their lot."

The night is an oasis which all the people who seek Allâh ﷻ go to. They all have different purposes and needs. **"Each tribe recognized its drinking place."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 60)* The true lover enjoys himself through private conversation with his beloved. The person in fear humbles himself and begs for pardon, and cries over his sins. The hopeful person persists in asking for his wants. As for the poor heedless person, Allâh ﷻ was most kind to him by providing him with comfort in his deprivation and loss of his share. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ: **"Do not be like that person who used to engage in night worship and then gave it up."**(1)

Râbi'ah fell ill once so she began offering her night acts of worship during the day, and she recovered from her illness. She became attached to this [engaging in worship during the day] and gave up her night worship. One night she saw a dream in which she entered a huge green garden. The door to a house in the garden was opened for her. A bright light emanated from the house. It was so bright that it almost snatched away her eyesight. Servants whose faces were like pearls came out from the house with braziers in their hands. A woman who was with Râbi'ah asked them: **"Where are you going to?"** They replied: **"A certain person who killed a martyr in the ocean. We are going to burn him."** She said: **"Why don't you burn this woman?"** [Referring to Râbi'ah]. They looked at her and said: **"She had a share in that but she abandoned it."** The woman then turned towards Râbi'ah and said:

صـــلاتك نـــور والعـــباد رقـــود ونـــومك ضـــد للـــصلاة عنـــيد

"Your salâh while the people are asleep is light for you. Your sleep is a stubborn opponent of salâh."

There was an *'âlim* who used to engage in worship in the pre-dawn. He then remained sleeping for several nights [and did not wake up for this night worship]. He saw two men in his dream. They were standing over him and one said to the other: **"This person used to seek forgiveness in the pre-dawn and then gave it up. O you who had a heart, and then turned away. O you who had a special time with Allâh ﷻ, and then went away. The pre-dawn worship is feeling lonely over your absence. Fasting during the day is inquiring about you. The continuous nights [in which you**

(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (1152) and Muslim (1159).

remained asleep] are reprimanding you for having abandoned them."

تغيـــرتم عـــنا بـــصحبة غيـــرنا وأظهـــرتم الهجـــران مـــا هكـــذا كـــنا
وأقـــسمتم ألا تحولـــوا عـــن الهـــوى فحلـتم عـن العهـد القـديم ومـا حلـنا
ليالـــي كـــنا نـــستقي مـــن وصـــالكم وقلبـي إلـى تلـك الليالـي قـد حـنا

"You turned away from us for the company of others. You displayed your aloofness, but this is not how we were. You had taken an oath that you will not change your love away from us. But you have broken the old promise while we have not broken ours. Remember the nights when we used to ask you for a drink when we were in communion with you. My heart is yearning for those nights."

Someone said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"Such and such person remained asleep till the morning."** He replied: **"Satan urinated in his ear."**(1) Surîy as-Saqaṭî used to say: **"I saw benefits coming in droves in the darkness of the night. What a loss has been experienced by the person who lost the good of the night! The heedless people and those who spent their night sleeping have most certainly experienced loss and deprivation."**

A person was regular in night worship but remained sleeping one night. Someone came to him in his dream and said: **"Wake up and perform ṣalâh."** He then said to him: **"Don't you know that the keys to Paradise are with those who engage in night worship, and that they are its treasurers?"**

Another person was in the habit of waking up for night worship. He fell asleep one night and someone came to him in his dream and said: **"How is it that you displayed shortcomings in your proposal? Don't you know that when a person stands up to offer the *tahajjud ṣalâh* the angels say: 'The proponent has stood up for his proposal.'?"**

One of them saw a doe-eyed damsel of Paradise in his sleep, so he said to her: **"Accept my proposal of marriage for myself."** She said: **"Convey your proposal in my favour to my Lord and pay me my dowry."** He asked: **"What is your dowry?"** She replied: **"Lengthy periods of *tahajjud ṣalâh*."**

(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (1144) and Muslim (774).

Abû Sufyân ad-Dârânî fell asleep one night so a doe-eyed damsel of Paradise woke him up and said: **"O Abû Sufyân! You are sleeping while I am augmenting myself for you in my private chamber for the past 500 years?"**

One of them purchased a doe-eyed damsel of Paradise from Allâh ﷻ in exchange for a dowry of thirty completions [*khatam* of the Qur'ân]. He fell asleep one night before he could complete the thirty completions. He saw the damsel in his dream telling him:

أتخطب مثلي وعني تنام ونوم المحبين عني حرام
لأنا خلقنا لكل امرئ كثير الصلاة براه الصيام

"Do you propose to someone like me and then you sleep away from me? It is forbidden for those who love me to sleep away from me. We have been created for every person who offers salâh in abundance and who has become emaciated by fasting."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to knock on the door of Fâtimah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* and 'Alî ﷺ and ask: **"Are you not going to offer salâh?"**(1) A Hadîth states: **"When a person wakes up and gets his wife up as well, and they both offer salâh, they are both recorded among those males and females who engage in the abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ."**(2)

The wife of Habîb al-'Ajamî used to wake him up at night and say: **"The night has passed and there is a long road ahead of us. Our provisions for the journey are few, and the caravans of righteous people have gone ahead, while we are left behind."**

يا راقد الليل كم ترقد قم يا حبيبي قد دنا الموعد
وخذ من الليل وأوقاته وردا إذا ما هجع الرقد
من نام حتى ينقضي ليله لم يبلغ المنزل أو يجهد
قل لأولي الألباب أهل التقى قنطرة العرض لكم موعد

"O you who are sleeping at night! How much are you going to sleep? Wake up, O my beloved! The appointed time has approached. Take from the portions of the night an act of worship when the sleeping people are still sleeping peacefully.

(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (1127) and Muslim (775).

(2) Abu Dawoud checked it (1309) and Ibn Majah (1335).

The one who sleeps until the night expires will not reach his destination unless he strives. Say to the intelligent people – the people of piety – the bridge on which you have to present yourselves is your appointed place."

THE MERIT OF THE DAY OF 'ÂSHÛRÂ'

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ was asked about fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ' so he said: **"I did not see the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ seeking the merit of days except for this day, i.e. the day of 'Âshûrâ', and this month, i.e. Ramadân."**(1)

The day of 'Âshûrâ' enjoys great merit and immemorial sanctity. Fasting on this day because of its merits was well-known among the Prophets ﷺ. Nûh ﷺ and Mûsâ ﷺ used to fast on this day – we will explain this later – if Allâh ﷻ wills. Ibrâhîm al-Hajarî narrates from 'Iyâd who narrates from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The Prophets used to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' so you should also fast on this day."**(2) Narrated by Baqîy ibn Makhlad in his *Musnad*.

The people of the Book used to fast on this day. And so did the Quraysh during the days of *jâhilîyyah*. Dalham ibn Sâlih said: **"I asked** 'Ikramah: 'What is the story about 'Âshûrâ'?' He said: **"During *jâhilîyyah* the Quraysh committed a sin which they considered very serious. So they asked about repentance. They were told to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ', the tenth day of Muharram."**

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ approached fasting on this day in four ways:

(1) He himself used to fast on this day when he was in Makkah but did not order the people to fast. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"'Âshûrâ' was a day on which the Quraysh used to fast during** *jâhilîyyah*. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast on this day as well. When he came to Madînah, he kept fasting on this day and ordered others to fast as well. When the order to fast in the month of Ramadân was revealed, he confined himself to fasting in that month and stopped fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ'. Those who wanted, kept fast on that day. And those who did not, abstained from fasting on

(1) Al-Bukhari (2006) and Muslim (1132).

(2) As-Suyoutti mentioned it in Al-Durr Al-Manthur (6/345).

that day.[1] A narration of al-Bukhârî states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Whoever wills, may fast. Whoever wills, may abstain from fasting."**[2]

(2) When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came to Madînah, he saw the people of the Book fasting on this day and according respect to it. He liked to conform with them in matters which he was not ordered to abstain from. He kept fast on this day and ordered the people to do so. He stressed this order by fasting himself and encouraging them to the extent that they started making their children to fast on that day.

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came to Madînah and saw the Jews fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ'. He asked them: 'What is this day on which you fast?' They replied: 'This is a great day. It was the day in which Allâh ﷻ saved Mûsâ and his people, and drowned Pharaoh and his people. Mûsâ kept fast on this day to show his gratitude. We therefore fast on this day.' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'We are more rightful and more worthy of Mûsâ than you.' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ kept fast on this day and ordered others to fast on it."**[3]

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by some Jews who were fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ. He asked: **"What is the reason for fasting on this day?"** They replied: **"This is the day on which Allâh ﷻ saved Mûsâ ﷺ and Banî Isrâ'îl from drowning. This is the day on which He drowned Pharaoh. This is the day on which the ship [of Nûh ﷺ] anchored at Mt. Jûdî. So Nûh ﷺ and Mûsâ ﷺ kept fast on this day in gratitude to Allâh."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"We are closer to Mûsâ and more worthy of fasting on this day."** He thus ordered his Companions ﷺ to fast on this day.[4]

Salamah ibn al-Akwa' ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered a man from the Banû Aslam tribe saying: **"Make the following announcement to the people: 'Whoever ate anything [since the morning] must keep fast for the rest of the day.**

(1) Al-Bukhari (2002) and Muslim (1125).

(2) Al-Bukhari (2003).

(3) Al-Bukhari (2004) and Muslim (1130).

(4) Ahmad checked it in Al-Musnad (2/359, 360).

Whoever did not eat anything must continue fasting because today is the day of 'Âshûrâ'."(1)

Ar-Rabî' bint Mu'awwidh *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates: **"On the morning of the day of 'Âshûrâ', the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent a message to the Ansâr villages around Madînah saying: 'Whoever started the day fasting must complete his fast. Whoever ate anything must abstain for the rest of the day.' After receiving this order, we used to fast on this day and also make our small children to fast. We used to go to the musjid and make toys of wool for them. If any of them cried for food, we would give the toys to him which he would play with till the time of opening the fast."** Another narration states: **"If they asked us for food, we would give them toys to distract them until they completed their fast."**(2) There are numerous other Ahâdîth in this regard.

At-Tabarânî narrates that on the day of 'Âshûrâ', the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to call his suckling children and the suckling children of his daughter, Fâtimah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*, and place some of his saliva in their mouths. He would then say to their mothers: **"Do not feed them till the night."** His blessed saliva used to suffice them.(3)

The *'ulamâ'* differ as to whether fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ' was obligatory (*wâjib*) or *Sunnah mu'akkadah* (a stressed Sunnah) before the compulsion of fasting in Ramadân. Imam Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh* is of the opinion that it was obligatory at that time. This is also clear from the statements of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Abû Bakr al-Athram. Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* said: **"It was an emphasised desirable act, and nothing more."** This is also the opinion of many of our scholars and others.

(3) When fasting in Ramadân became compulsory, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stopped ordering his Companions ﷺ to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ', and stopped emphasising this on them. The Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* was quoted previously in this regard. Ibn 'Umar ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ kept fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' and ordered others to fast on this day.**

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(1) Al-Bukhari (2007) and Muslim (1135).

(2) Al-Bukhari (1960) and Muslim (1136).

(3) At-Tabarany narrated it in "Al-Awsat".

When fasting in Ramaḍân became compulsory, he gave up this."(1) 'Abdullâh ﷺ would not fast on this day unless it coincided with his habitual days of fasting.

A narration of Muslim *raḥimahullâh* states that the people of *Jâhilîyyah* used to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ', and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ together with the Muslims used to fast on this day before the compulsion of Ramaḍân. When fasting in Ramaḍân became compulsory, he said: **"'Âshûrâ' is a day like the other days of Allâh ﷻ. Whoever wills may fast on this day; and whoever wills may abstain from fasting."**(2) Another narration states: **"Whoever from among you would like to fast on this day may do so, and whoever dislikes, may abstain."**

Mu'âwiyah ﷺ narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: **"This is the day of 'Âshûrâ'. Allâh ﷻ did not prescribe fasting on this day for you, but I am fasting. Whoever wants to fast may do so, and whoever wants, may abstain from fasting."**(3) A narration of Muslim *raḥimahullâh* clearly ascribes this latter statement to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. A narration of an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* ascribes this latter statement to Mu'âwiyah ﷺ and not to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said with regard to the day of 'Âshûrâ': **"It is a day on which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast before the compulsion of Ramaḍân. When the compulsion of fasting in Ramaḍân was revealed, he stopped fasting."**(4) Another narration states: **"he stopped fasting on this day."** Jâbir ibn Samurah ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to order us to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' and encourage us to it. And we adhered to this with him. When the fast of Ramaḍân became compulsory, he neither ordered us nor prohibited us from fasting on this day. And we did not adhere to it with him."**(5)

Qays ibn Sa'd ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered us to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' before the compulsion of Ramaḍân**

(1) Al-Bukhari (1892) and Muslim (1126/119).

(2) Checked by Muslim (1126/117).

(3) Al-Bukhari (2003) and Muslim (1129).

(4) Muslim (1127).

(5) Muslim (1128).

could be revealed. When the compulsion to fast in Ramadân was revealed, he neither ordered us nor prohibited us."(1) Another narration states: **"We used to fast."**

All these Ahâdîth demonstrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not renew the order to fast on this day after the compulsion to fast in Ramadân. Rather, he left them as they were without prohibiting them from fasting. If his order to them to fast on this day before the compulsion of fasting in Ramadân was to demonstrate obligation, the question arises as to when an obligatory act is abrogated, does it remain desirable or not to practise that act? The differences of the *'ulamâ'* in this regard are well-known. If his order was to demonstrate emphasised desirability, it is said that the emphasis falls away but the desirability remains. It is for this reason that Qays ibn Sa'd ﷺ said: **"We used to fast."**

There are statements of Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ and Ibn 'Umar ﷺ which show that the original desirability of fasting on this day no longer applies. Sa'îd ibn al-Musayyib ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ'."** This is also related from Sa'd ibn Abî Waqqâs ﷺ, and the *mursal* Hadîth is more authentic according to ad-Dâraqutnî. The majority of *'ulamâ'* state the desirability of fasting on this day but without emphasis.

The following Companions ﷺ used to fast on this day: 'Umar ﷺ, 'Alî ﷺ, 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn 'Auf ﷺ, Abû Mûsâ ﷺ, Qays ibn Sa'd ﷺ, Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ and others. The following statement of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ demonstrates the validity of its desirability: **"I did not see the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ fasting a day seeking its merit except for the day of 'Âshûrâ' and the month of Ramadân."** Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ remained in the companionship of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ towards the latter part of his life and remembered the things which he did in the latter part of his life.

Abû Qatâdah ﷺ narrates that a person asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ', so he said: **"I have this expectation from Allâh ﷻ that it will atone for the sins of the past year."**(2) Abû Qatâdah ﷺ asked him about optional fasting. This is because he also asked him about fasting on the day of 'Arafah,

(1) Ahmad (3/422), An-Nasa'ei (5/49) and Ibn Majah (1828) checked it.

(2) Muslim (1162).

fasting perpetually, fasting one day and not fasting the next day, and fasting one day and not fasting for the next two days. It is thus gauged from this that he was asking about optional fasting.

Hafsah bint 'Umar *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*, the mother of the believers, said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not leave out fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ', the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah, and three days of every month."**(1) This Hadîth is also related by Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* with the following exception: **"One of the wives of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said..."**(2) In this narration, the name of the wife is not provided.

(4) Towards the end of his life, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made a firm intention not to keep this fast on its own but to add one day to it in order to act against the people of the Book. Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ kept fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' and ordered others to fast on this day, the Companions ﷺ said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! It is a day which is respected by the Jews and Christians.' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'Next year we shall keep fast on the ninth as well – if Allâh ﷻ wills.' But the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away before the next year."**(3)

Another narration of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If I am alive next year, I will most certainly fast on the ninth."** In other words, the day of 'Âshûrâ'. The narration of at-Tabarânî reads thus: **"Allâh willing – if I am alive next year, I will fast on the ninth in case I miss the day of 'Âshûrâ."**

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' and act against the Jews by fasting a day before it and a day after it."**(4) Another narration states: **"a day before it or a day after it."**

The word **"or"** is either to offer a choice between the two or it is to show doubt on the part of the narrator – whether the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said a day before it or a day after it. This Hadîth is narrated

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(1) An-Nasa'ei narrated it (4/220) and Ahmad (6/287).

(2) Abu Dawoud in As-Sunan (2437) and An-Nasa'ei (4/220).

(3) Muslim (1134/134).

(4) Ahmad's Musnad (1/241) and Al-Baihaqi checked it (4/287) and Al-Hindi in "Al-Kanz "(24221).

in another way: **"If I am alive, I will order fasting one day before it and one day after it."** That is, before and after the day of 'Âshûrâ'. Another narration states: **"If I am alive next year, I will most certainly fast on the ninth, and I will most certainly order fasting a day before it and a day after it."** That is, the day of 'Âshûrâ'. Both these traditions are narrated by Hâfiz Abû Mûsâ al-Madînî. There is an authentic statement of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ from the narration of Ibn Jurayj who said: **"'Atâ' informed me that he heard Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ saying with regard to the day of 'Âshûrâ': 'Act against the Jews, fast on the ninth and the tenth.'"**(1) Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said: **"I am of the same opinion."**

It is related with regard to Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that he kept fast on the ninth and tenth, and gave the reason that he feared missing the day of 'Âshûrâ'. Ibn Abî Dhi'b narrates from Shu'bah, the freed slave of Ibn 'Abbâs, that Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ used to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' while on a journey and used to keep fast on both days consecutively lest he were to miss it. Similarly, it is related with regard to Abû Ishâq that he kept fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' and one day after it, and said: **"I did it out of fear that I might miss it."** It is related that Ibn Sîrîn used to fast for three days as a precaution when there was a difference of opinion with regard to the sighting of the moon of that month.

It is related that Ibn 'Abbâs and ad-Dahhâk considered the day of 'Âshûrâ' to be the ninth of Muharram. Ibn Sîrîn said: **"They all considered the day of 'Âshûrâ' to be the tenth, except for Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ who said that it is the ninth."** In the narration of al-Maymûnî, Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said: **"I do not know whether it is the ninth or the tenth, but we fast on both days."** If there was any difference of opinion with regard to the sighting of the moon, he would fast for three days as a precaution. Ibn Sîrîn is also of the same opinion.

Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh*, Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Is-hâq *rahimahullâh* are of the opinion that fasting should be observed on the ninth and tenth. Imam Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh* considered it reprehensible (*makrûh*) to fast on the tenth alone. Ibn Abî az-Zinâd narrates from his father, who narrates from Khârijah ibn Zayd who narrates from his father, who said: **"The day of**

(1) It was checked by Abdul-Razzak (7839) and Al-Baihaqi in Al-Kubra (4/287).

'Âshûrâ' is not the day which the people refer to. It was the day on which the cover of the Ka'bah was put and the Abyssinians used to sing before the Prophet ﷺ. This day used to move about during the year. The people used to go to a Jew and ask him. When he passed away, they began going to Zayd ibn Thâbit and asking him."(1)

The above narration makes reference to the fact that the day of 'Âshûrâ' is not the one which is in Muharram. Rather, it is calculated according to the solar calendar, as is the case with the calculations of the Christians. This difference was never practised on by the Muslims of the past or of the present era.

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to count from the sighting of the moon of Muharram and then fast on the ninth.(2)

The single opinion of Ibn Abî az-Zinâd cannot be relied upon. He attributes all Ahâdîth to Zayd ibn Thâbit, and the last part of his tradition cannot be the statement of Zayd. It is probably the statement of someone after him. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

Some people of the past used to keep fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ while on a journey. Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ, Abû Is-hâq as-Sabî'î and az-Zuhrî are from among them. He said: **"The month of Ramadân has other days [in which a person can fast if he were to miss the fasts of Ramadân because of travelling]. But the day of 'Âshûrâ' will pass by [and one cannot make up for it. Therefore I fast on this day even when I am travelling]."** Ahmad *rahimahullâh* explicitly states that one should fast on this day even if he is on a journey.

'Abd ar-Razzâq narrates in his book from Isrâ'îl who narrates from Samâk ibn Harb from Ma'bad al-Qurashî who said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was at Qadîd when a person came to him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked him: 'Did you eat anything today?' – referring to the day of 'Âshûrâ. The man said: 'No. I only drank some water.' He said: 'Do not eat anything until sunset. Go and instruct the others to fast on this day.'"** This person was probably one of the residents of Qadîd.(3)

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(1) At-Tabarany in "Al-Kabir" (4876).

(2) Muslim (1133).

(3) It was checked by Abdul-Razzak in his Musanaf (7835).

It is narrated with regard to Tâ'ûs that he used to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' when he was not journeying, and abstained from fasting on this day when he was journeying.

One of the strangest things related with regard to the day of 'Âshûrâ is that wild animals and insects keep fast on this day. It is related that the *surad*[1] was the first bird to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ'. Al-Khatîb narrated this in his *Târîkh*. The chain of this narration is unknown.[2] It is related from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ as well. It is related from Fath ibn Shukhruf who said: **"I used to scatter** bread for ants every day, but when it was the day of 'Âshûrâ', they did not eat the bread.

It is said that Al-Qâdir Billâh, the 'Abbâsî caliph, also experienced this. He was astonished by this and asked Abû al-Hasan al-Qazwînî az-Zâhid about it. He said that ants fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ'. He saw some people slaughtering some animals so he asked them the reason for this. They informed him that the wild animals were fasting. They said to him: **"Come with us and we will show you."** They took him to a forest and made him stand at one spot. After *'asr*, the wild animals came from all directions. They surrounded the forest and raised their heads towards the sky. Not a single one of them ate anything. When the sun set, they all rushed together and began eating.

'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr said: **"Between India and China there was a place where there was a duck made of copper placed on pillars of copper. When it was the day of 'Âshûrâ', it would stretch out its beak and water would flow from it. This water used to suffice their agricultural crops and grazing livestock until the following year."**

One of the *'ulamâ'* of the past was seen in a dream and he was asked about his condition. He said: **"I was forgiven by virtue of my fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ' for sixty years."** Another narration adds: **"and a day before it and a day after it."**

'Abd al-Wahhâb al-Khaffâf mentions in *Kitâb as-Siyâm* that Sa'îd said that Qatâdah said: **"It used to be said that fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ' is an atonement for whatever a man lost from the**

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(1) A certain bird larger than a sparrow, having a large head, which preys upon sparrows.

(2) See "Al-La'aale' Al-Masnou'a (2/110).

zakâh of his wealth." It is related that the day of 'Âshûrâ' was the day of adornment on which was the appointed time between Mûsâ ﷺ and Pharaoh, and that it was their day of festivity.

It is related that Mûsâ ﷺ used to wear cotton on that day and apply the *ithmid* antimony to his eyes. During the era of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, the Jews of Madînah and Khaybar used to celebrate this day as a day of festivity. The people of *Jâhilîyyah* used to emulate them in this regard, and they used to cover the Ka'bah on this day. However, our Sharî'ah mentions contrary to all this. Abû Mûsâ ﷺ said: **"The day of 'Âshûrâ' was a day which the Jews respected and celebrated as a day of festivity. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: You must fast on this day.'"**(1) A narration of Muslim *rahimahullâh* states: **"The people of Khaybar used to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' and celebrate it as a day of festivity. They used to make their women wear their jewellery and finery. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'You must fast on this day.'"**(2) An-Nasa'î and Ibn Hibbân narrate the above as follows: **"So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'Act against them and fast on this day.'"**(3)

This shows the prohibition of celebrating this day as a day of festivity, and the desirability of fasting on the days of festivity of the polytheists. This is because fasting on such days refutes considering them to be days of festivity. They would thus coincide with them by fasting on that day plus another day with it – as mentioned previously. In this way, there is also opposition to the polytheists in the manner of fasting. In so doing, there remains no conformity with them whatsoever. The following Hadîth must be understood in the same light: Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast on Saturdays and Sundays the most, and he used to say: 'These are the days of celebration of the polytheists, and I love to oppose them.'"** By fasting on both days together, he would be absolving himself of similarity with the Jews and Christians in each group according respect to its day individually. His fasting on this day was an act of opposing them in

(1) Al-Bukhari (2005) and Muslim (1131).

(2) Muslim (1131/130).

(3) An-Nasa'ei in Al-Kubra (2849) and Ibn Hibban in his Ṣaḥiḥ (3628) and his editor said: Its Isnad is true according to Al-Bukhari.

celebrating this day. In this way, the present Hadîth is coincided with the Hadîth which prohibits fasting on Saturdays.

As for all the narrations which speak about the merits of applying antimony, dying the hair, and bathing on the day of 'Âshûrâ' – these are all fabricated and not authentic.

As for giving charity on this day, it is related that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ said: **"The person who fasts on the day of 'Âshûrâ' is as if he kept fast for the entire year. The person who gives charity on this day is as if he gave charity for the entire year."** Narrated by Abû Mûsâ al-Madînî.

As for spending more on one's family on this day, Harb said: **"I asked Ahmad about the Hadîth which states: 'The person who spends more on his family on the day of 'Âshûrâ'...' [Imam] Ahmad *rahimahullâh* did not consider this to be authentic."** Ibn Mansûr said: **"I asked Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*: 'Did you hear anything about this Hadîth: 'the person who spends more on his family on the day of 'Âshûrâ', Allâh ﷻ shall give him more for the entire year.'?"** He replied: **"Yes. Sufyân ibn 'Uyaynah narrated from Ja'far al-Ahmar from Ibrâhîm ibn Muhammad ibn al-Muntashir – who was from among the most superior people of his time – that he heard that the person who spends more on his family on the day of 'Âshûrâ', Allâh ﷻ shall give him more for the entire year.' Ibn 'Uyaynah said: 'We experienced this for the past fifty or sixty years, and he experienced absolute blessings.'"**

The words of Harb: **"[Imam] Ahmad *rahimahullâh* did not consider this to be authentic"**, are in reference to the Hadîth which is attributed to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ because its chain of narrators is not authentic. It is also narrated through other chains, but none of them are authentic.

Muhammad ibn 'Abdillâh ibn 'Abd al-Hakam is one of those who said this. Al-'Uqaylî said: **"It is not known."** The statement of 'Umar is quoted thus: **"Its chain has unknown narrators."**

As for observing this day as a day of mourning as is done by the Shî'ah because of the murder of al-Husayn ibn 'Alî ﷺ on this day, it is a deed of a person whose efforts are gone to waste in this world while he thinks that he is doing good. Neither did Allâh ﷻ nor the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ever order the days of calamities and deaths of the Prophets ﷺ to be celebrated as days of mourning, how can it be

permissible for those who are lower than them in status?

Virtues of the day of 'Âshûrâ'

It is a day on which Allâh ﷻ accepted the repentance of a nation. A Hadîth was quoted previously in which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to a person: **"If you want to fast in any month after Ramadân, fast in Muharram because it is the month of Allâh. It is a month in which Allâh ﷻ accepted the repentance of a nation and will accept the repentance of other nations [as well]."**(1)

Abû Is-hâq narrates from al-Aswad ibn Yazîd who said: **"I asked 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr about fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ'. He said: 'Muharram is the deaf month of Allâh ﷻ. It was the day on which the repentance of Âdam ﷺ was accepted. If you are able to fast on this day, you should most certainly do so."** This is also related on the authority of Shu'bah from Abû Is-hâq. Isrâ'îl narrated it from Abû Is-hâq as follows: **"A nation had committed a sin and repented on this day, and their repentance was accepted. If you are able to fast on this day, you should most certainly do so."**

Yûnus narrated the above from Abû Is-hâq as follows: **"Muharram is the month of Allâh ﷻ. It is the beginning of the year. It is the month in which books are written, history is recorded and coins are minted. In it is a day in which a nation repented to Allâh ﷻ and He accepted their repentance. You should never allow this day to pass without fasting in it. In other words, the day of 'Âshûrâ'."**

Abû Mûsâ al-Madînî narrated a Hadîth from Abû Mûsâ: **"This is a day on which Allâh ﷻ accepted the repentance of a nation, so engage in salâh and fasting on this day."** In other words, the day of 'Âshûrâ'. He said: **"It is a sound and rare Hadîth, and is not as he said."** It is also related from 'Alî who said: **"The day of 'Âshûrâ' is the day on which the repentance of the people of Yûnus ﷺ was accepted."**

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"It is the day on which the repentance of Âdam ﷺ was accepted."** Wahb narrates that Allâh ﷻ revealed to Mûsâ ﷺ saying: **"Order your people to gain proximity to Me [through worship] in the first ten days of Muharram. When it is the tenth day, they must come out to Me so that I may forgive**

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(1) Checked by Ahmad (1/154) and At-Tirmidhi (741).

them."

'Abd ar-Razzâq narrates from Ibn Jurayj from a person who narrated from 'Ikramah who said: **"It is the day on which Allâh ﷻ accepted the repentance of Âdam ﷺ, it is the day of 'Âshûrâ'."** 'Abd al-Wahhâb al-Khaffâf narrates from Sa'îd who narrates that Qatâdah said: **"We used to speak among ourselves that the day on which Allâh ﷻ accepted the repentance of Âdam ﷺ was the day of 'Âshûrâ', and the day on which he came down to earth was the day of 'Âshûrâ'."**

In the Hadîth of 'Alî ؓ, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"and will accept the repentance of other nations [as well]."** This is an encouragement for people to renew sincere repentance on the day of 'Âshûrâ', and instils hope for the acceptance of repentance in favour of the person who repents to Allâh ﷻ for his sins, just as Allâh ﷻ accepted the repentance of those before him. Allâh ﷻ says with regard to Âdam ﷺ: **"Then Âdam learnt from his Lord some words and Allâh turned towards him. Surely it is He who accepts repentance, the Merciful."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 37)* Allâh ﷻ says with regard to Âdam ﷺ and his wife that they both said: **"O our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be destroyed."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 23)*

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz wrote a letter to the cities saying: **"Say as your father Âdam ﷺ had said: 'O our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be destroyed."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 23)* Say as Nûh ﷺ had said: **"If You do not forgive me and show mercy to me, I will be from among the losers."** *(Sûrah Hûd, 11: 47)* Say as Mûsâ ﷺ had said: **"O my Lord! I wronged myself, so forgive me. And so, He forgave him."** *(Sûrah al-Qasas, 28: 16)* Say as Dhû an-Nûn [Yûnus ﷺ] had said: **"There is none worthy of worship except You. Glory be to You. I was most certainly of the wrongdoers."** *(Sûrah al-Ambiyâ', 21: 87)*

When a sinner confesses his sin with remorse over it, it is an accepted repentance. Allâh ﷻ says: **"There are others who have confessed their sins [after] having mixed a righteous deed with another that was evil. Soon Allâh will pardon them."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 102)* The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When a person**

confesses his sin and repents, Allâh ﷻ accepts his repentance."(1)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to commence his supplication with the following words: **"O Allâh! You are my Sustainer. There is none worthy of worship except You. I wronged myself and confess my sin. Forgive me, then, for none except You forgives sins."**(2) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ taught as-Siddîq ﷺ the following supplication which he must make in his salâh: **"O Allâh! I have wronged myself greatly, and none except You forgives sin. Forgive me, then, with forgiveness from You. Show mercy to me, surely You are all-forgiving, merciful."**(3)

Shaddâd ibn Aus ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The best form of seeking forgiveness is for a person to say: 'O Allâh! You are my Sustainer, there is none worthy of worship except You. You created me and I am Your servant. I shall remain on my covenant and promise as much as I can. I seek refuge in You from the evil which is committed. I come to You with Your bounties on me, and I come to You with my sins. Forgive me, then, surely none except You forgives sins."**(4) Confession wipes off perpetration. As a poet says:

فـإن اعتـراف المـرء يمحـو اقتـرافه كمـا أن إنكـار الذنـوب ذنـوب

"The confession of a person wipes off his perpetration. In like manner, denial of sins is a sin in itself."

It is said that when Âdam ﷺ was removed from Paradise, he cried over those memories for 300 years. It was most appropriate for him to cry because he was in an abode where there was no hunger, no nakedness, no thirst, and no suffering from the sun's heat. When he came down to earth, he suffered all these things. Whenever he saw Jibra'îl ﷺ, he would be reminded of those memories and cry so intensely that Jibra'îl ﷺ would start crying on seeing him in this condition. He would ask him: **"Why are you crying like this, O Âdam?"** He would reply: **"Why should I not cry when I have been removed from an abode of comfort to an abode of misery."** One of his children said to him: **"You are disturbing the inhabitants of**

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(1) A part of Hadith narrated by Al-Bukhari (4141) and Muslim (2770).

(2) Checked by Muslim (771) and Abu-Dawoud (760).

(3) Checked by Al-Bukhari (843) and Muslim (2705).

(4) Checked by Al-Bukhari (6306) and At-Tirmidhi (3393).

earth with your crying." He said: **"I am crying over the voices of the angels who are around the Throne."** Another narration states that he said: **"I am crying over the close proximity with my Lord, in an abode whose soil is wholesome, and in which I hear the voices of the angels."** Another narration states: **"I am crying over an abode which, if you were to see, your soul would die out of yearning for it."**

It is related that Âdam ﷺ said to his children: **"We were a progeny from the heavens. We were created as they were created and provided with food as theirs. Our enemy, Satan, beguiled us. We now have neither joy nor comfort. We only have grief and misery until we return to the abode from which we were expelled."**

فحـي علـى جـنات عـدن فإنهـا مـنازلك الأولـى وفـيها المُخَـيَّم
ولكنـنا سـبي العـدو فهـل تـرى نعـود إلـى أوطانـنا ونـسلم

"Let's prepare for the gardens of Eden because that is where your original abodes and encampments are. However, we have been beguiled by the enemy. Do you think we will return to our homelands and live peacefully?"

When Âdam ﷺ and Mûsâ ﷺ met, Mûsâ ﷺ reprimanded him for causing himself and his progeny to be expelled from Paradise. So Âdam ﷺ provided the proof of pre-destination.(1) Providing the proof of pre-destination over miseries is good, as stated by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"If anything afflicts you, do not say: 'Had I done it like this, this would have been its outcome.' You should rather say: 'It was the will of Allâh ﷻ, and He did as He willed."**(2) A poet says:

والله لـو لا سـابق الأقـدار لـم تـبعد قـط داركـم عـن داري
مـن قـبل الـنأي جـرية المقـدار هـل يمحـو العـبد مـا قـضاه الـباري

"Were it not for pre-destination, your houses would not have been so far from my house. Even before we could be distanced from each other, fate had destined this for us. Can a servant wipe out what the Creator destined?"

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (6614) and At-Tirmidhi (2134).

(2) Checked by Muslim (2664).

When the merits of Âdam ﷺ were displayed before the creations by the angels' prostration before him, his teaching and informing the angels of the names of everything, and they were listening attentively to him as a student listens to his teacher; they confessed their inability to possess his knowledge and acknowledged his merit. He and his wife were then made to live in Paradise. This caused jealousy on the part of Satan and he tried to harm them. It is the norm that when the merits of someone become manifest, people become jealous of him. A poet says:

لا مـــات حـــسادك خلـــدوا حتـى يـروا مـنك الـذي يكمـد

ولا بـــرحت الدهـــر فـــي نعمـــة فإنمـــا الكامـــل مـــن يحـــسد

"May those who are jealous of you not die. May they live forever so that they may see from you the things which causes distress to them. May time continue showering you with favours. Surely, the perfect person is the one whom people are jealous of."

Satan continued plotting against Âdam ﷺ until he caused his expulsion from Paradise. But the foolish one [Satan] did not understand that if Âdam ﷺ leaves Paradise, his merits will reach perfection. He will then return to Paradise more perfect than his previous condition. Satan was destroyed by self-conceit. It is for this reason that he said: **"I am better than him."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 12)* The merits of Âdam ﷺ reached perfection when he confessed against his self: **"They both said: 'O our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be destroyed.'"** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 23)* Each time Satan ignited the fire of jealousy against Âdam ﷺ, the fragrant wind of Âdam ﷺ blew from him and Satan got burnt.

وإذا أراد الله نـــــشر فـــــضيلة طـويت أتـاح لهـا لـسان حـسود

لـو لا اشـتعال الـنار فـيما جـاورت مـا كـان يعـرف طـيب عـرف العـود

"When Allâh wills a hidden merit to spread, He bestows it with the tongue of jealous people. Were it not for the fact that the fire ignites whatever is around it, the wonderful fragrance of *'ûd* (Indian aloes) would not have been known."

A person of the past said: **"Âdam ﷺ was expelled from Paradise because of a single sin. But you are committing numerous sins, and yet you want to enter Paradise!?"** A poet says:

تـصل الذنـوب إلـى الذنـوب وترتجي درج الجـــنان بهـــا وفـــوز العابـــد
ونـــــسيت أن الله أخـــــرج آدمـــــا مـــنها إلـــى الدنـــيا بـــذنب واحـــد

"You are committing sins after sins, yet you hope to enter Paradise through them, and hope to become an ardent worshipper?! You have forgotten that Allâh expelled Âdam ﷺ from Paradise and sent him to the world because of just one sin."

بفـــــرد خطيـــــئة وبفـــــرد ذنـــــب مـــن الجـــنات أخـــرجت البـــرايا
فقـل لـي كـيف تـرجو فـي دخـول إلـــيها بالألـــوف مـــن الخطايـــا

"It was because of a single mistake and a single sin that the creation was expelled from Paradise. Now you tell me, how can you hope to enter Paradise by committing thousands of sins?"

Be on your guard against this enemy who expelled your father from Paradise because he is striving in every way to prevent you from going back there. The enmity between you and him is very old. The only reason for his expulsion from Paradise and discharge from service was his haughtiness against your father and his refusal to prostrate to him when he was ordered to do so. He was divested of all mercy, lost all hope of returning to Paradise, and his eternal stay in the Hell-fire is certain. He is therefore striving to cause the progeny of Âdam ﷺ to remain eternally in the Hell-fire with him by beautifying polytheism to them. If he is unable to do this, he is satisfied with lesser acts of sinning and disobedience. Your Master warned you about him. The person who is warned has no excuse. You should therefore be on your guard: **"O children of Âdam! Do not allow Satan to entice you as he had removed your parents from Paradise."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 27)*

It is most astonishing for a person who recognized his Lord and yet disobeyed him; and he recognized Satan and yet obeyed him. **"Will you then take him and his offspring as friends apart from Me, although they are your enemies? What an evil exchange for the unjust!"** *(Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 50)*

رعـى الله مـن نهـوى وإن كـان مـا رعـى حفظـنا لـه العهـد القـديم فـضيعا
وصـاحبت قـوما كـنت أنهـاك عـنهم وحقـك مـا أبقـيت للـصلح موضـعا

"May Allâh guard the one whom we love even though he was unmindful. We upheld our covenant with him but he did not

uphold it. You joined the company of people whom I had prohibited you from. You certainly left no place for reconciliation."

When Âdam ﷺ came down to earth, he was promised a return to Paradise – he and whoever from his progeny who believed and followed the Messengers: **"O children of Âdam! If there come to you Messengers from among you relating to you My verses, then whoever fears and adopts righteousness, there shall neither be any fear on them nor shall they grieve."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 35)* The believers should therefore take the glad tidings of Paradise. It is their feudal estate and the document stating that it is their feudal estate came down with Jibra'îl ﷺ to Muhammad ﷺ: **"Give glad tidings to those who believed and did good deeds that for them are gardens beneath which rivers flow."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 25)*

This feudal estate went away from the person who left the obedience [of Allâh ﷻ]. As for the person who repents and believes, the feudal estate is returned to him. The believers in this world are on a journey of *jihad* in which they strive against the souls and desires. When the journey of *jihad* is over, they return to their original homeland in which they were in the loins of their father [Âdam ﷺ]. Allâh ﷻ guaranteed He shall return the person who wages *jihad* in His cause to his homeland together with the reward of booty which he acquired.

O assembly of Muslims! You have received a message from your father, Ibrâhîm ﷺ, sent with your Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"On the night when I** was taken to the heavens [the night of Mi'râj], I met Ibrâhîm ﷺ. He said: 'O Muhammad! Convey my *salâm* to your *ummah* and inform them that Paradise is a place which has sweet water and fertile soil, but it is barren. Its trees [which are to be planted in this barren land] are: *sub-hânallâh* (glory to Allâh), *al-hamdulillâh* (praise be to Allâh) and *Allâhu akbar* (Allâh is the greatest).(1)

Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Whoever says: *sub-hânallâh al-'azim wa bi-hamdihi* (glory and praise be to Allâh, the Almighty), shall have a date-palm planted for him**

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3426).

in Paradise."(1)

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Whoever says: *sub-ḥânallâh* (glory to Allâh), *al-ḥamdulillâh* (praise be to Allâh), *lâ ilâha illallâh* (there is none worthy of worship except Allâh), and *Allâhu akbar* (Allâh is the greatest), a tree will be planted in Paradise for him for each of these statements."**(2)

At-Tabarânî narrates from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ and Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ: **"Whoever says: *sub-ḥânallâh al-'aẓîm*, shall have a castle in Paradise built for him."**

Al-Hasan said: **"The angels are working for man in Paradise, planting trees and constructing buildings. At times they stop all activities. They are asked: 'Why have you stopped?' They reply: 'We are waiting for our wages to reach us.'"** Al-Hasan said: **"May my parents be sacrificed for you, send your wages to them through good deeds."** Someone said: **"I have heard that the abodes of Paradise are built through the remembrance of Allâh. When man stops remembering Allâh ﷻ, the angels stop building. When they are asked the reason, they say: 'We are waiting for our wages to reach us.'"**

The lands of Paradise are presently barren. Good deeds inhabit them. It is through good deeds that castles are built and trees are planted on the lands of Paradise. Once the planting and constructing is completed, its residents shift to it. A righteous person saw a person telling him in a dream: **"We have been ordered to complete the building of your abode. Its name is 'the abode of happiness'. So take glad tidings from this. We have been ordered to furnish and adorn it, and to complete all this within seven days."** The person passed away seven days later. Someone saw him in a dream and he said: **"I have been admitted into the abode of happiness, and I am most happy. Don't even ask about what is in it [because it is beyond description]. There is no one like the generous Allâh when an obedient person goes to Him."** One of them saw a dream in which he was admitted into Paradise and his houses and wives were presented to him. When he wanted to leave,

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(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3464) and An-Nasa'ei in Al-Yawm wal Layla (833).

(2) Checked by Ibn Majah in As-Sunan (3807).

his wives clung to him and said: **"By Allâh, we ask you to do good deeds because each time you do good deeds, our beauty increases."**

Those who do good deeds today are actually advancing the capital of their deeds for all which the souls desire and the eyes take delight in, until a time when they shall receive more in the market of Paradise. When their time comes, they shall enter the market and carry away whatever they desire without having to pay any cash. They will take equal to what they had advanced from the capital of their deeds, but without having to weigh and measure the goods. O you who is determined to advance something today for that time! Hasten in taking possession of the capital because any delay in taking possession of the capital renders the transaction invalid.

فللـــه واديهـــا الـــذي هـــو مـــوعد المـزيد لـوفد الحـب لـو كـنت مـنهم

فمـا شـئت خـذ مـنه بـلا ثمـن لـه فقـد أسـلف الـتجار فـيه وأسـلموا

"By Allâh, the valley in Paradise is the promised place for those who loved Him. If you were among them, you may take whatever you like from there without having to pay any price, because the traders have already advanced the money and handed it over."

A Hadîth states: **"Paradise says: 'O Lord! Bring to me my people and whatever You promised me. I now have too much of silk, silk brocade, pearls, corals, sapphires, silver, gold, pitchers of drinks, wine, honey and milk. Bring to me my people and whatever You promised me."**

A Hadîth states: **"Paradise intercedes to Allâh ﷻ in favour of the person who asks Allâh ﷻ for Paradise. It says: 'O Allâh! Admit him into Paradise.'"**(1) Another Hadîth states: **"Paradise opens at every pre-dawn and it is addressed thus: 'Increase in your fragrance for your inhabitants.' It increases in its fragrance, and that is the coolness which people experience at the time of pre-dawn."** The hearts of those who truly recognized Allâh ﷻ occasionally inhale the gentle breeze of Paradise. Anas ibn an-Nadr ﷺ said on the day of Uhud: **"O how excellent the fragrance of Paradise is! I am experiencing the fragrance of**

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2572) and An-Nasa'ei (8/279) and Ibn Majah (4340) and Ahmad (3/141).

Paradise coming from Uhud." He then advanced and fought until he was killed.(1)

تمر الصبا صبحا بساكن ذي الغضا ويصدع قلبي أن يهب هبوبها

قريبة عهد بالحبيب وإنما هوى كل نفس أين حل حبيبها

"The fresh morning breeze blows over the person living in the thicket. It breaks through my heart when it blows. Soon I will meet my beloved. The love of every person lies wherever his beloved lives."

There is so much of affection and wisdom in sending Âdam ﷺ to earth. Had he not come down, the jihad of the *mujâhidûn* and the striving of the ardent worshippers would not have become manifest. The sighs and moans of the repentant ones would not have ascended, nor would the tear drops of the sinners descended.

O Âdam! Although you may have been lowered from the abode of close proximity [to Me], **"I am near! I accept the supplication of the supplicant when he supplicates to Me."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 186)* Even though, you may be broken by your expulsion from Paradise, I am with those whose hearts are broken because of Me. If you are missing the chanting of those who are glorifying Me in the heavens, I have given you in return the ability to hear the sighing of the sinners on earth. The sighing of the sinners is more beloved to Us than the chanting of those who are glorifying Me. The chanting of those who are glorifying Me may well become adulterated with haughtiness, while the sighing of the sinners is adorned with their submission and humility. **"If you do not sin, Allâh ﷻ will take you away and bring another nation of people who commit sins, seek forgiveness, and are then forgiven."**

Glory to that Being who, when He is kind to His servant by putting him through tribulations, He turns them into rewards. When He disgraces a person, his excessive efforts do not benefit him, and they return as calamities to him. His proof was dictated to Âdam ﷺ and he was inspired with words which enabled the acceptance of his repentance: **"Then Âdam learnt from his Sustainer some words and Allâh turned towards him."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 37)*

Allâh ﷻ repulsed Satan despite his lengthy service to Him. All his deeds thus went to waste. **"He said: 'Then get out from here,**

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (4048) and Muslim (1903).

you are cursed. Upon you is curse till the day of reckoning.'" *(Sûrah al-Hijr, 15: 34-35)* If Allâh ﷻ were to apply His justice on a person, he will have no good deed left. If He were to apply His favour on a person, He will have no evil left.

يعطي ويمنع من يشاء كما يشا وهباته ليست تقارنها الرشا

"He gives and refuses to whomever He wills and as He wills. His gifts are not accompanied by bribes."

When Âdam's ﷺ merit became manifest over the creations on the basis of his knowledge - and knowledge is something which cannot be perfect without practising on its dictates, and Paradise is not the abode for deeds and striving, it is only an abode of comforts and witnessing [all the bounties] – he was told: **"O Âdam! Go down to** the fort of jihad, and strive against the armies of desires with earnestness and toiling, and shed tears of sorrow over your remoteness [from Paradise]. It is through your past life that you returned more perfect than the norm. A poet says:

عودوا إلى الوصل عودوا فالهجر صعب شديد
لو ذاق طعم الفراق رضوى لكاد من وجده يميد
قد حملوني عذاب شوق يعجز عن حمله الحديد
قلت وقلبي أسير وجد متيم في الجفا عميد
أنتم لنا في الهوى موال ونحن في أسركم عبيد

"Come back to union, come back. Separation is most difficult. If Radwâ were to get a taste of separation, it would collapse out of pain. They have made me bear such a punishment of yearning, that even steel is unable to bear such a weight. I said – while my heart is a prisoner of emotion, enthralled by the support of alienation. You are friends to us in love, while we are slaves in your captivity."

ON THE RETURN OF PILGRIMS

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"He who performs the pilgrimage of this House without committing any obscenity and immorality, comes out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him."**(1) Each one of the five

(1) Al-Bukhari (1521) and Muslim (1350).

pillars of Islam atones for sins and destroys mistakes. [The first pillar], **"there is none worthy of worship except Allâh..."** wipes out all sins and no deed can surpass it. The five daily salâhs, one Friday salâh to the next, and one Ramadân to the next are all atonements for the sins which are committed in the intervening periods provided the major sins which are not committed. Charity extinguishes sins just as water extinguishes fire. When a person performs hajj without committing any obscenity and immorality in it, he comes out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him. A group of *'ulamâ'* extracted the meaning of this Hadîth from this verse: **"But whoever hurries away in two days, there is no sin on him. And whoever stays on, there is no sin on him as well – for him who fears."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 203)* These *'ulamâ'* say that when a person completes his rites and returns, his sins fall off him if he fears Allâh in the fulfilment of his rites. This is irrespective of whether he hastened away in the first of the two days of departure, or remained behind until the second day.(1)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who completes his rights – while the Muslims were safe from his tongue and hands – shall have his past and future sins forgiven."**(2) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"A blessed hajj: there is no recompense for it except Paradise."**(3) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The hajj destroys all [the sins] which were committed before it."**(4) A blessed hajj thus atones for sins and ensures entry into Paradise.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about what a blessed hajj entails, so he said: **"Providing food and good speech."**(5) A blessed hajj is thus a combination of doing good deeds and abstaining from evil deeds. The best supplication which a pilgrim can make for himself and what others make for him is that his hajj must be a blessed one. It is for this reason that the pilgrim is ordered that when he completes his rites of hajj and commences coming out of his

(1) The days of departure refer to the second and third days of a pilgrim's stay in Mina. The stay in Mina is for three days. But a person could depart after the second day.

(2) Checked by Al-Hindi in "Al-kanz" (11810) and Ibn Oudai in "Al-Kamel" (6/2334).

(3) Al-Bukhari (1773) and Muslim (1349).

(4) Muslim (121).

(5) Checked by Ahmad (3/325).

ihram by pelting the Jamarah al-'Aqabah on the 10th of Dhû al-Hijjah, he must say: **"O Allâh! Make it a blessed hajj, an accepted effort, and a forgiven sin."** This is narrated from Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ and Ibn 'Umar ﷺ as their own statements. It is also narrated from them, but attributed to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. In like manner, when a person returns from hajj, one makes the supplication that Allâh ﷻ must make his hajj a blessed one. It is stated that when Âdam ﷺ made pilgrimage of the Ka'bah and completed his rites, the angels came to him and said: **"O Âdam! May your hajj be blessed. We had performed the pilgrimage to this House 2 000 years before you."**

It was the habit of the past people to supplicate for the person who returns from his pilgrimage. When Khâlid al-Hadhdhâ' performed hajj and returned, Abû Qilâbah said to him: **"May Allâh bless your deed."**

Signs of an accepted hajj

Someone said to al-Hasan: **"The reward for a blessed hajj is Paradise."** He said: **"The sign that it is blessed is that a person returns abstentious from the world and desirous of the Hereafter."** Someone said to him: **"The reward for a blessed hajj is forgiveness."** He said: **"The sign of that is that the person gives up the evils which he used to commit."** A blessed hajj is like the hajj of Ibrâhîm ibn Ad-ham with his righteous friend who accompanied him from Balkh. He returned abstentious from the world and desirous of the Hereafter. He left his kingdom, wealth, family, friends and country; and chose to live in a land of solitude. He was satisfied with eating from his own labour – either from harvesting crops or guarding orchards.

Ibrâhîm ibn Ad-ham went on hajj with a group of his companions. At the beginning of the journey he made a condition to them that no one would speak except for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, and no one will look at anything except for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. When they reached [Makkah] and circuited the Ka'bah, they saw a group of Khurâsânî people circuiting the Ka'bah. There was a handsome boy with them, and people were enchanted by looking at him. Ibrâhîm began looking stealthily at him and began crying. One of his companions asked him: **"O Abû Is-hâq! Did you not tell us that we should not look at anything except for the sake of Allâh?"** He replied: **"Woe to you! That is my son and all these people around him are my servants and attendants."** He then said these couplets:

هجـرت الخلـق طـرا فـي هـواك ويـتمت العـيال لكـي أراكـا
فلـو قطعتنـي فـي الحـب إربـا لمـا حـن الفـؤاد إلـى سـواكا

"I remained aloof from the entire creation out of love for You. I orphaned my children so that I may see You. Had You cut me into pieces for the sake of love, my heart would not have inclined towards anyone but You."

One of the predecessors said: **"Touching the Black Stone is an indication that the person will not go back to sinning."** He was making reference to the statement of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ: **"The Black Stone is the right hand of Allâh ﷻ on earth. Whoever touches and grasps it is as though he grasped the hand of Allâh ﷻ and kissed it."** 'Ikramah said: **"The Black Stone is the right hand of Allâh ﷻ** on earth. Whoever was not able to pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, but passed his hand over it [the Black Stone] has actually pledged allegiance to Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ.

It is related in a Hadîth that when Allâh ﷻ produced the progeny of Âdam ﷺ from the latter's loins and took the covenant from them, He wrote the covenant on a scroll and placed it in this Stone. Consequently, it says to whoever touches it: **"You must fulfil your covenant."** The person who touches the Black Stone is thus pledging allegiance to Allâh ﷻ that he is going to abstain from His disobedience and fulfil His rights. **"Now whoever breaks his word does so to his own detriment. And whoever fulfils whatever He has pledged to Allâh, He will give him a great reward."** *(Sûrah al-Fath, 48: 10)*

O you who made a covenant of repentance to Us! There are solemn covenants between you and Us:

The first of these covenants is the day when Allâh ﷻ asked you: **"Am I not your Lord? They replied: Indeed."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 172)* The greatest purpose of this covenant is that you worship none except Allâh. Acting in total accordance with it entails fearing Allâh ﷻ as He ought to be feared.

The second is the day when He sent His Messenger ﷺ to you and revealed the following to him in His Book: **"fulfil My covenant so that I may fulfil your covenant."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 40)*

Sahl at-Tusturî said: **"Whoever says: 'Lâ ilâha illallâh (there is** none worthy of worship except Allâh) has in fact pledged allegiance to

Allâh ﷻ. Now that he has pledged allegiance to Him, it is forbidden on him to disobey Him in any of His commands- whether in privacy or in public - to befriend His enemies, or to be antagonistic towards His friends.

يـــا بنـــي الإســـلام مـــن علمكـــم بعـــد إذا عاهـــدتم نقـــض العهـــود

كـــل شـــيء فـــي الهـــوى مستحـــسن مـــا خـــلا الغـــدر وإخـــلاف الوعـــود

"O children of Islam! Who taught you to break covenants after entering into them? Everything for the sake of love is considered good, apart from treachery and breaking of promises."

The third covenant is with regard to the person who performs the pilgrimage. When he touches the Black Stone, he is renewing his pledge and takes it upon himself to be loyal to his previous covenant. **"Of the believers are many men who have been true to the covenant which they made with Allâh."** *(Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 23)*

أحـــــسبتم أن الليالـــــي غيـــــرت عقـــد الهـــوى لا كـــان مـــن يتغيـــر

يفنـــي الـــزمان ولـــيس ننـــسى عهـــدكم وعلـــى محبـــتكم أمـــوت وأحـــشر

"Do you think that the nights changed the pact of love? May the person who changes pacts be destroyed. Time can pass away but we will not forget your covenant. It is with your love that I will die and be resurrected."

If your soul prompts you to break your covenant with your Master, say to it: **"I seek refuge in Allâh! The 'Azîz, my master, has kept me well. Without doubt, the unjust do not prosper."** *(Sûrah Yûsuf, 12: 23)*

A person passed by a desirable scene and the eye wanted to cast a glance at it, so he shouted out:

خلفت بدين الحب لا خنت عهدكم وذلـــك عهـــد لـــو عـــرفت وثـــيب

"I left a debt of love, and I will never betray your covenant. If only you knew, that is a very strong covenant."

A person of the past repented [to Allâh ﷻ] but then broke his covenant [of not sinning again]. He heard an unseen caller at night saying:

سـأترك مـا بينـي وبيـنك واقفـا فـإن عـدت عـدنا والـوداد مقـيم

تواصـل قـوما لا وفـاء لعهـدهم وتتـرك مثلـي والحفـاظ قـديم

"I will leave the covenant between me and you standing. If you return, we will return – and our love for each other will remain. Are you joining the ranks of a people who never fulfil their covenants, and leaving someone like me who upholds covenants since time immemorial?"

A person who repeatedly breaks his covenants cannot be trusted. A person of the past went to a sick person who was in much grief, and said to him: **"Make a firm pledge to Allâh ﷻ on repentance, perhaps He will give you respite from your illness."** He replied: **"Each time I fell ill, I made a firm pledge to Allâh ﷻ on** repentance and He gave me respite. On this occasion, when I was about to make a firm pledge as I used to in the past, someone from one end of the house shouted out saying: 'We gave you respite on several occasions and found you to be a liar.' He passed away soon thereafter.

لا كـان مـن يـنقض العهـد لا كـان مـا يـنقض العهـد إلا كـل خـوان

"May the person who breaks covenants be destroyed. None but a treacherous person breaks covenants."

تـرى الألـى بانـوا علـى العهـد كمـا كانـوا

أم الدهـر بهـم خانـا ودهـر المـرء خـوان

إذا عـز بغيـر اللـه يـوما معـشر هانـوا

"You see the people coming out of the covenant as they had been in the past. Is it time which has caused them to be treacherous? The time of a person is very treacherous. If a people ever get honour through anyone apart from Allâh, they have actually been disgraced."

The person who returns from hajj must uphold whatever covenants he made to Allâh ﷻ at the time when he was touching the Black Stone.

One of the people of the past performed the pilgrimage and spent the night in Makkah with some people. His soul prompted him towards evil. He then heard an unseen voice saying: **"Destruction to you! Have you not just performed the pilgrimage?"** Allâh ﷻ thus protected him from committing the sin. It is extremely abhorrent for a person who fulfils the five pillars of Islam to start destroying them with the pillars of sins. Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to a man: **"O such and such person! You are constructing and also demolishing."** In other words, you are doing good deeds and evil deeds. The man said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! I will now construct without demolishing."**

خـذ فـي جـد فقـد تولـى العمـر كـم ذا التفـريط قـد تدانـي الأمـر

أقـبل فعـسى يقـبل مـنك العـذر كـم تبنـي كـم تـنقض كـم ذا الغـدر

"Become serious because life has passed. How much of excesses are you going to approach?! Move forward [with good deeds], perhaps your excuses will be accepted. How much are you building? How much are you destroying? How many acts of treachery you are committing?"

The sign of acceptance of a good act is that it is followed by another good act. The sign of its rejection is that it is followed by an evil act. How excellent is a good act followed by a good act! How abhorrent is a good act followed by an evil act! A single sin committed after repentance is worse than seventy sins committed before repentance. A relapse is more difficult than the first time an illness is experienced. How repugnant is the humiliation of disobedience after the honour of obedience! Have mercy on yourselves! The honourable person in a community is disgraced through acts of disobedience. A wealthy person in a community is reduced to poverty through sins. Ask Allâh ﷻ for steadfastness till death. Seek refuge [in Allâh ﷻ] from a bad state of affairs after enjoying a good state of affairs. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* used to make the following supplication: **"O Allâh! Honour me through obedience to You, and do not disgrace me through disobedience to You."**

Ibrâhîm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullâh* generally made this supplication: **"O Allâh! Convey me from the humiliation of disobedience to the honour of obedience."** It is related in one of the divine traditions: Allâh ﷻ says: **"I am the Mighty [most honourable]. Whoever desires honour must obey Me."**

ألا إنمـا الـتقوى هـي العـز والكـرم وحـبك للدنـيا هـو الـذل والـسقم
ولـيس علـى عـبد تقـي نقيـصة إذا حقـق الـتقوى وإن حـاك أو حجـم

"Listen! Piety results in honour and dignity. Your love for this world brings about disgrace and illness. There is no defect in a pious servant provided his piety is genuine. [He has nothing to be ashamed of] even if he undertakes [such menial jobs like] weaving and cupping."

When the pilgrimage of a pilgrim is blessed, he is forgiven and also the person for whom he seeks forgiveness, and his intercession is accepted for whomever he intercedes. It is related that Allâh ﷻ says to the pilgrims on the day of 'Arafah: **"You may proceed. You are forgiven and also those in whose favour you intercede."** Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates that Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arî ﷺ said: **"The pilgrim intercedes in favour of 400 families from his tribe. Forty female camels which carry him are blessed with offspring. He comes out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him. When he returns from a blessed pilgrimage, his sins are forgiven and his supplications are accepted."**(1)

It is therefore desirable to meet the pilgrim when he returns, offer *salâm* (Islamic greeting) to him, and to ask him to seek forgiveness for you.

Meeting the pilgrim when he returns is a Sunnah.

'Abdullâh ibn Ja'far ﷺ narrates: **"When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to return from a journey, he would be welcomed by the children of his family. On one occasion he returned from a journey and I was the first child to be taken to him. He carried me and placed me in front of him. One of the sons of Fâtimah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* was brought and he was placed behind the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. We all three then entered Madînah on a single animal."**(2) There is a Hadîth which mentions the prohibition of three people sitting on a single animal. If it is authentic, the prohibition will be applied to three adults. This is because it will be difficult for an animal to carry three adults, as opposed to one adult and two children.

(1) Checked by Al-Bazzar (737).

(2) Muslim (2428).

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates: **"We returned from Makkah from a hajj or 'umrah journey. Some Ansârî children who used to welcome their families on their return welcomed us [as well]."**(1)

Similarly, it is Sunnah to offer *salâm* to the pilgrim when he returns, shake hands with him, and request his supplications.

There is a weak Hadîth from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ who narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When you meet the pilgrim [who has returned], offer *salâm* to him, shake hands with him, and ask him to supplicate in your favour before he enters his house because he is most certainly forgiven."**(2)

Habîb ibn Abî Thâbit said: **"I went out with my father to meet the pilgrims and greet them before they become contaminated [by sins]."**(3)

Mu'âdh ibn al-Hakam narrates that Mûsâ ibn A'yun narrates from al-Hasan who said: **"When the pilgrims depart, go to bid them farewell and supplicate in their favour. When they return, welcome them and shake hands with them before they start committing sins. Surely there are blessings in their hands."** Abû ash-Shaykh al-Asbahânî and others narrate from Layth from Mujâhid who said: **"'Umar ﷺ said: 'The pilgrim and whomever he seeks forgiveness for are forgiven during the remaining days of Dhû al-Hijjah, Muharram, Safar, and ten days of Rabî' al-Awwal.'"**

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates: **"O Allâh! Forgive the pilgrim and whomever the pilgrim seeks forgiveness for."**(4)

Abû Mu'âwiyah ad-Darîr narrates from Hajjâj from al-Hakam who said that Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"If the residents knew what rights returning pilgrims have over them, they would go to meet them when they return to the extent that they even kiss their riding animals. This is because they are the delegates of Allâh ﷻ among all the people."** A person who is severed [from the mercy of Allâh ﷻ] has no alternative but to remain attached to those who are connected to the mercy of Allâh ﷻ.

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(1) Checked by Al-Hakem (1/488) and he said: Ṣaḥiḥ.

(2) Al-Musnad (2/69).

(3) Al-Musnad (6018).

(4) Checked by Al-Hakem (1/441) and Al-Baihaqi in Ash-shou'ab (4112).

هـل الدهـر يـوما بوصـل يجـود وأيامـنا باللـوى هـل تعـود
زمـان تقـضى وعـيش مـضى بنفـسي والله تلـك العهـود
ألا قـل لـزوار در الحبـيب هنيـئا لكـم فـي الجـنان الخلـود
أفيـضوا عليـنا مـن المـاء فيـضا فـنحن عطـاش وأنـتم ورود

"Will time be generous enough to allow us to meet again? Will our days which we spent in Liwâ ever come back? It is a time which is spent and a life that has passed. By Allâh, I think of all the pledges which were made there. Listen! Say to those who visit the land of my beloved: 'Congratulations to you for you have acquired the gardens of eternity. Pour some water onto us for we are thirsty, while you have just returned from the watering place."

عارضـا بـي ركـب الحجـاز أسـائل متـى عهـده بأيـام سـلع
واسـتملا حـديث مـن سـكن الخـيـ ـف ولا تكتـباه إلا بدمعـي
فاتنـي أن أرى الـديار بطرفـي فلعلـي أرى الـديار بـسمعي
مـن معـيد أيـام جمـع علـى مـا كـان مـنها وأيـن أيمـا جمـع

"Two of my friends raised objections to me when I asked the caravan which returned from the Hijâz as to when they returned with the commodities [rewards of hajj]. These two friends became bored with the conversation of those who spent some time in [Musjid] al-Khayf. They are refusing to record it except with my tears. I lost the opportunity of seeing the [holy] lands with my own eyes. [I am speaking to these pilgrims] so that I may 'see' the lands with my ears. Who is there who can return the days of assembly [pilgrimage] with all that transpired there? How will those days of assembly ever come back?"

The meeting of beloveds is actually the joining of hearts. News about those lands is sweeter in the eyes of the lovers [of Allâh ﷻ] than engaging in night conversations.

إذا قـدم الـركب يمـمتهم أحيـي الوجـوه قـدوما ووردا
وأسـألهم عـن عقـيق الحمـى وعـن أرض نجـد ومـن حـل نجـدا
حدثونـي عـن العقـيق حديـثا أنـتم بالعقـيق أقـرب عهـدا
ألا هـل سـمعتم ضـجيج الحجـيج علـى سـاحة الخـيف والعـيس تحـدا

فذكـــــر المـــــشاعر والمـــــروتين وذكـــر الـــصفا يطـــرد الهـــم طـــردا

"When the caravans arrive, I will go out to meet them. I will greet the people on their arrival. I will ask them about the sanctified valley [Makkah], about the land of Najd and the people who settled in Najd. Tell me something about the [sanctified] valley because you have just returned from there. Did you hear the clamour made by the pilgrims on the plains of al-Khayf while the camels were urged on? Memories of the sanctified places, Marwah, and Safâ repulse all one's worries."

The spirits of acceptance emanate from the accepted servants of Allâh ﷻ, and the effulgence of connection [with Allâh ﷻ] glitter on those who are connected [to Allâh ﷻ].

واخجلـة المتوانـي عـند رؤيـة مـن قـد فـاز سـابقة مـن غيـر إقـصار
مـا لـي وإن بعـدت بـي عـن ديـارهم عوائـــق مـــن آثامـــي وأوزاري
إلا حنـــين إلـــيها كلمـــا خمـــدت نيـــرانه هاجـــه وجـــدي وتـــذكاري
ولا أزال وإن شـــطت وإن قـــربت أثني بجهـدي فـي جهـري وإسـراري
علـى نبـي لـه فـي الفـضل منـزلة علـياء يقـصر عـنها كـل مختـار
محمـــد موضـــح الإشـــكال... الآمـــال واضـــح أغـــلال وآصـــار
يـا سيد الرسـل يـا أسـمى الأنـام علي يـا خيـر الـورى يـا صـفوة الـباري
علـيك أزكـى سـلام الله مـا صـدحت ورقـاء أو سـحرت أنفـاس أسـحار

"O the shame of the person who was left behind when he looks at the person who went ahead and did not lag behind. Although I may be far from them, I have not been burdened by my sins and evils. I possess the sole desire to go there. Each time the fire of this desire subsides, my emotions and memories rekindle it. Whether it is scattered or nearby, I continue praising - loudly and silently – the Prophet who possesses a lofty position which no one else can reach. Muhammad – the one who clarifies all misgivings, fulfils all hopes, and removes all fetters and burdens. O leader of the Messengers! O the loftiest of the creation! O the best of all men! O the choicest of the Creator! May the purest peace of Allāh be on you for as long as the dove sings, and as long as the early dawn enchants."

It is only the person who is beloved [to Allâh ﷻ] and selected [by Him] who is given the opportunity of going to those lands repeatedly.

'Alî ibn al-Muwaffaq performed hajj sixty times. He said: **"After that, I sat in a room and reflected over my condition and my many visits to that place. I do not know whether my hajj was accepted or not. I then fell asleep and someone said to me in my dream: 'Do you not invite to your house only those whom you love?' I woke up and felt at ease once again."**

Every person who performs hajj is not necessarily accepted. Every person who performs salâh has not necessarily attached himself to Allâh ﷻ. Someone said to Ibn 'Umar ﷺ: **"There is such a large number of pilgrims!"** He said: **"They are so few!"** He then said: **"Those who arrived are many, but those who are real pilgrims are few."**

A person of the past performed the pilgrimage and passed away on his return journey. His companions buried him and forgot the hoe in his grave. They dug out the grave to take out the hoe and saw his neck and hands encircled in the ring of the hoe. They poured the soil back onto him and returned to his family. When they inquired about his condition, they said: **"He remained in the company of a person and stole his money. He had performed the pilgrimage from that [stolen] money."**

إذا حججت بمال أصله سحت فما حججت ولكن حجت العير

لا يقبل الله إلا كل صالحة ما كل مَن حج بيت الله مبرور

"If you performed hajj with wealth which was originally unlawful, you did not really perform hajj. Rather it was your camel [or any other conveyance] which performed hajj. Allâh ﷻ accepts nothing but what is virtuous. Every person who makes pilgrimage to the House of Allâh is not necessarily blessed."

Those whose pilgrimage is blessed are few in number. However, there are times when a sinner is given because of a good doer. It is related that Allâh ﷻ says on the night of 'Arafah: **"I have given to the sinner among you because of the good doer among you."** A person of the past went on pilgrimage. He slept one night and saw two angels descending from the skies. One of them said to the other: **"How many people performed pilgrimage this year?"** He said: **"600 000."** He asked: **"How many people's pilgrimage has been accepted?"** He replied: **"Six."** The man then woke up and was most disheartened by what he saw. The following night he saw the two angels descending and repeated the same conversation. One of them said: **"Allâh ﷻ gave to each of those six persons 100 000."** [In

other words, 599 994 sinners were forgiven because of these six persons]. A person of the past used to say in his supplication: **"O Allâh! If You do not accept me, then give me because of anyone else from Your creation."** If a person has some good deed which is not accepted, he may well be recompensed for what a calamity-stricken person is recompensed with, and mercy is thus shown to him.

A person of the past said in his supplication at 'Arafah: **"O Allâh! If You do not accept my pilgrimage, my tiredness and fatigue; do not let Your non-acceptance of me deprive me of the reward of my calamity."** Another person said: **"O Allâh! Show mercy to me, surely Your mercy is close to those who do good. If I have not done any good, You most certainly said: 'He is merciful to the believers.'** *(Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 43)* **If I am not like the believers, I am a thing, and You most certainly said: 'My mercy encompasses everything.'** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 156)* **If I am not a thing, I am a person who has been afflicted by the rejection of his deeds, tiredness and fatigue. Do not deprive me, then, of whatever mercy You promised the afflicted person."**

Hilâl ibn Yasâf said: **"I have heard that when a Muslim supplicates and it is not accepted, a good deed is recorded in his favour."** Narrated by Ibn Abî Shaybah. In other words, he receives the reward of the affliction for the non-acceptance of his supplication.

ومن كان في سخطه محسنا فكيف يكون إذا ما رضي

"If that Being is so affectionate when He is angry, how much more affectionate He will be when He is pleased!"

The return of pilgrims reminds us of our return to Allâh ﷻ. A person of the past was on a journey and then returned to his family who were most happy by his return. There was a pious woman present there and she began crying. She said: **"This person's returning [to us] reminded me of our return to Allâh ﷻ. There will be those who will be happy and there will be those who will be destroyed."**

A king said to Abû Hâzim: **"How will our return to Allâh ﷻ be like?"** Abû Hâzim replied: **"As for an obedient person's return to Allâh ﷻ, it will be like the return of a person who was absent from his family and he returns to them while they are yearning for him. As for the sinful person's return to Allâh ﷻ, it will be**

like the return of a fleeing slave to his angry master."

لعلـــك غـــضبان وقلبـــي غافـــل سـلام علـى الـدارين إن كـنت غـضبانا

"You are perhaps angry while my heart is heedless. May there be peace to both the worlds if You are angry."

It is related in one of the Israâ'îlî narrations that Allâh ﷻ says: **"Has not the yearning of the righteous to meet Me gone for too long? I am even more desirous of meeting them."** What a great difference there is between the following two groups: (1) **"They shall** not grieve in that great terror, and the angels shall receive them [saying]: **"This is your day which you were promised.'"** *(Sûrah al-Ambiyâ',21: 103)* (2) **"The day when they will be forcefully driven into Hell."** *(Sûrah ar-Tûr, 52: 13)*

'Alî ﷺ said: **"The angels shall meet them at the entrances to Paradise and say: 'Peace be upon you. You are pure people. So enter it, abiding therein forever.'"** *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 73)* Each youngster will meet the person whose needs he is appointed to fulfil and take him around just as children do when a friend from a distant land comes to their house. They say to him: **"Glad tidings to you because Allâh ﷻ prepared such and such things of honour for you."** One of the youngsters will go to the person's wives from among the doe-eyed damsels of Paradise and say to her: **"This is such and such person."** He will mention the person by the name which he had in this world. The damsels will ask: **"Did you really see him?"** The youngster will say: **"Yes."** They will try to conceal their joy until they go to the entrance of the door.

Abû Sulaymân ad-Dârânî said: **"The doe-eyed damsel of** Paradise will send one of her servant girls and say to her: 'Go and see what has happened to the friend of Allâh.' While this servant girl is gone, the damsel will feel that she is taking too long to return, so she sends another servant girl to check, and another one thereafter. In the meantime, the first one returns and says: 'I saw him at the scale [where deeds are weighed.' Then the second one returns and says: 'I saw him at the Sirâṭ [the bridge which extends over Hell and which every person will have to cross].' The third one returns and says: 'He has just entered through the door of Paradise.' The damsel tries to conceal her joy and waits at the entrance of Paradise. When he comes to her, she embraces him. The person inhales such a wonderful fragrance from her which never leaves his body.

قـــد أُزلفـــت جـــنة النعـــيم فـــيا طوبـــى لقـــوم يـــربعها نـــزلوا

أكـــوابها عـــسجد يطـــاف بهـــا والخمـــر والسلـــسبيل والعـــسل

والحـور تلقـاهم وهـن قـد كـشفت عـن الوجـوه بهـا الأسـتار والكلـل

"The Paradise of comfort will be brought near. Glad tidings to those who have settled down in its open spaces. Its tumblers are of gold which are filled with wine, *salsabîl* and honey. The doe-eyed damsels meet them while they have removed the drapes and thin veils, thereby exposing their faces."

SAFAR

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no such thing as a contagious [disease], there is no such thing as taking an evil omen [from an owl], and there is no such thing as *safar*."**(1) A Bedouin asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! How is it that a camel remains on the ground like a gazelle, a camel which is afflicted with scabies mingles with it and causes it to be afflicted by scabies as well?"** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Who is the one who caused the first animal to be afflicted by scabies?"** A contagious disease refers to a disease which is suffered by one person and other healthy people who come into contact with him contract that disease from him. The Arabs believed this to be the case with many diseases such as scabies. It is for this reason that the Bedouin asked about a healthy camel with whom a scabies afflicted camel intermingles and causes it to be afflicted with this disease as well. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ replied by saying: **"Who is the one who caused the first animal to be afflicted?"** What this means is that the first one was not afflicted because of a contagious disease but by the decision of Allâh ﷻ. Similar is the case with the second one and those that came after it.

There are many Ahâdîth in this regard which caused people to experience difficulty in understanding them. In fact, some of them feel that they are abrogated by the words **"There is no such thing as a contagious disease."** For example, Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"A person who has a sick camel should not go to a person who has a healthy camel."**(2) This prohibition is with regard to taking sick camels to a place where there are healthy camels.

Another example is the following statement of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"Flee from a leper as you would from a lion."**(3) And his statement with regard to a plague: **"If you hear of a plague in a**

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(1) Al-Bukhari (5770) and Muslim (2220).

(2) Al-Bukhari (5771) and Muslim (2221).

(3) Checked by Al-Bukhari, (5707) and Ahmad (2/433).

particular region, do not enter that region."(1) There is no meaning to applying the rule of abrogation to such Aḥâdîth as assumed by some people because his statement: **"There is no such thing as a contagious disease"** is an absolute statement which cannot be abrogated. Unless it is a prohibition of believing in the concept of a contagious disease, and not a refutation of it. However, it is possible to consider it an abrogation of the prohibition in these three Aḥâdîth and others of similar meaning. The correct opinion which the majority of *'ulamâ'* hold is that there is no abrogation whatsoever in all these Aḥâdîth. However, they differ with regard to the meaning of the statement: **"There is no such thing as a contagious disease."** The most obvious explanation in this regard is that it is a refutation of what the people of *Jâhilîyyah* believed in, viz. these diseases spread of their own accord without believing in the power of Allâh ﷻ in this regard. This is derived from his statement: **"Who is the one who caused the first animal to be afflicted?"** He is referring to the fact that the first animal was afflicted by the command and decision of Allâh ﷻ. Similar is the case with the second animal and those that followed it.

Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Nothing infects another."** He said this three times. A Bedouin said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! A spot of scabies is on the snout or tail of a large camel, and then the entire camel is afflicted by scabies."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"What caused the first spot to be afflicted? There is no such thing as a contagious [disease], there is no such thing as taking an evil omen [from an owl], and there is no such thing as *safar*. Allâh ﷻ created every thing, and pre-destined its life, its death and its sustenance."**(2) He thus informed the Bedouin that everything happens through the decree and decision of Allâh ﷻ. This is demonstrated in the following verse: **"No calamity can befall the earth nor your own selves which is not recorded in a book before We bring it into existence in this world."** *(Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 22)*

As for the prohibitions which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ issued with regard to sick camels being kept with healthy camels, fleeing from a leper, and entering a region which is afflicted by a plague – this involves keeping away from the causes which Allâh ﷻ created,

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (5728) and Muslim (2218).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2143) and Ahmad (1/440).

and which He appointed as causes for destruction and harm. Man is commanded to save himself from the causes of misery if he is safe from them. Just as he is ordered not to fling himself into water or the fire, or to enter beneath a demolition, or other factors which generally destroy or harm; similar is the case with remaining aloof from a sick person like a leper or entering a region which is afflicted by a plague. These are all causes of illness and destruction. Allâh ﷻ is the creator of the causes and the effects. There is no creator apart from Him, and there is none who decrees apart from Him.

Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* narrates a *mursal* Hadîth in his *Marâsîl* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by a leaning wall, so he quickened his pace and said: **"I fear sudden death."** This Hadîth is also narrated as a *muttasil* Hadîth, but the *mursal* Hadîth is more authentic. The effects are created by the causes which Allâh ﷻ appointed as causes. This is proven by the verse: **"When the winds have brought heavy clouds, We drive the clouds to a dead land. We then send down rain from that cloud. We then bring forth from there every type of fruit."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 57)* Another group of *'ulamâ'* says that Allâh ﷻ creates the effects at the time when the causes are created and not through the causes.

If a person's reliance on Allâh ﷻ and belief in His decree and decision is strong, and his soul is strong enough to engage some of these causes while having full reliance on Allâh ﷻ and having hope in Him that no harm will afflict him; then in such a situation it will be permissible for him to engage them. This is especially so if there is some general or specific benefit in this. The following Hadîth must be understood in this light: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ held the hand of a leper and put his hand with the leper's hand in the bowl [of food]. He then said: 'Commence eating in the name of Allâh, and have full trust and reliance on Allâh ﷻ."**(1) Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* adopted his stand on the basis of this Hadîth.

A similar Hadîth is narrated by 'Umar ﷺ, his son 'Abdullâh ﷺ and Salmân ﷺ. Similar narrations in this regard are the following: Khâlid ibn al-Walîd ﷺ with regard to consuming poison; Sa'd ibn Abî Waqqâs ﷺ and Abû Muslim al-Khawlânî walking over the sea with their army; and 'Umar ﷺ ordering Tamîm to return the fire which emanated from al-Harrah, and he went with it to the cave from which

(1) Checked by Abu-Dawoud (3925), At-Tirmidhi (1817) and Ibn Majah (3542).

it emanated. Such acts are only for special people whose faith in Allâh ﷻ, in His decree and decision is strong; and they possess strong trust and reliance on Allâh ﷻ.

An example of this is entering a barren land without provisions. This is lawful for a person whose conviction, and especially his reliance on Allâh ﷻ is strong. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Is-hâq *rahimahullâh* and other imams clearly state all this. The same ruling applies to not seeking a livelihood and not seeking medical treatment.

All this is permissible according to Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* for the person whose reliance on Allâh ﷻ is strong. Reliance is one of the strongest causes through which benefits can be attracted and harms can be repulsed. Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: **"Had Allâh ﷻ known that you can remove creations from your heart, He would have given you whatever you want."**

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* explained reliance as follows: **"It entails severing the gaze of despondency from the creations."** Someone asked him: **"What is the proof for this?"** He said: **"The** statement of Ibrâhîm ﷺ when he was thrown into the fire. Jibra'îl ﷺ came to him and asked: **"Do you have any need?"** He replied: **"I have no need from you."**

It is thus not lawful to abandon the outward causes. This is only lawful for the person who has something else in return through an internal cause, viz. absolute reliance. This is stronger than the outward causes and more beneficial. Reliance thus entails knowledge and practice. Knowledge in this regard refers to the heart's recognition that benefit and harm is from Allâh ﷻ alone. The general Muslims know this. But the practice of this entails the heart's confidence in Allâh ﷻ, and emptying it of everything apart from Him. This is difficult and is enjoyed by the special believers alone.

Causes are of two types:

(1) Causes of good. A person is ordered to rejoice at such causes, take glad tidings from them, but abstain from relying on them. Instead, he must rely on their Creator and Causer. This would establish reliance on Allâh ﷻ and faith in Him. Allâh ﷻ says with regard to sending the help of angels: **"Allâh merely did this as a glad tiding and so that your hearts may be reassured thereby. Help comes only from Allâh."** *(Sûrah al-Anfâl, 8: 10)* Included in this regard is taking glad tidings from good omens. This refers to a

good word which a needy person hears. The majority of people's hearts incline towards the causes and not the Causer. The few who do this place their trust on the cause and are then disappointed. All bounties are from Allâh ﷻ and from His bounties. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Whatever good reaches you, it is from Allâh."** *(Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 79)* **"Whatever bounty you have, it is from Allâh."** *(Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 53)* A poet says:

لا نلـــت خيـــرا مـــا بقـــيت ولا عدانـــي الدهـــر شـــرّ

إن كـــنتُ أعلـــم أن غيـــر الله يـــنفع ويـــضر

"I would never have acquired any good for the rest of my life nor would time have imposed any evil on me if I were to believe that someone other than Allâh has the power to benefit and harm."

Bounties are not attributed to the causes but to the One who caused and destined them. A Hadîth states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ led the people in the *fajr salâh* after it had rained the previous night. He then said: **"Do you know what your Lord said? He said: 'This morning there is from My servants he who believes in Me and he who disbelieves. As for the believer, he said: 'We have been provided rain by the grace and mercy of Allâh', he is the one who believes in Me and does not believe in the stars. As for the unbeliever, he said: 'We have been provided rain by such and such star', he is the one who does not believe in Me, but believes in the stars.'"**(1)

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no such thing as a contagious disease, there is no such thing as taking an evil omen [from an owl], there is no such thing as the effect of a star, and there is no such thing as *safar*."**

This shows that it refers to a negation of the effect of these causes in themselves without holding the belief that they are through the decree and order of Allâh ﷻ. If any person attributes any bounty to anyone apart from Allâh ﷻ while believing that it is not from Allâh ﷻ, then he is truly a polytheist. But if he believes that it is from Allâh ﷻ, it is a form of subtle polytheism.

(1) Al-Bukhari (1038) and Muslim (125).

(2) Causes of evil. These are attributed to nothing but sins. This is because all calamities are caused by sins. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Whatever harm afflicts you, it is from your self."** *(Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 79)* **"Whatever calamity befalls you, it is because of what your hands have earned."** *(Sûrah ash-Shûrâ, 42: 30)* They are thus attributed to none of the causes such as contagious diseases, etc. except sins. The order in this regard is to abstain from what is obvious of them and safeguard oneself to the extent promulgated by the Sharî'ah. For example, keeping away from a leper and sick person, or keeping away from an area afflicted by a plague. As for those which are subtle, we are neither ordered to safeguard ourselves against them nor abstain from them. This is included among taking evil omens which is prohibited. Taking evil omens is from among the practices of the polytheists and unbelievers. Allâh ﷻ speaks of these practices in the Qur'ân about the people of Pharaoh, Sâlih ﷺ, and the residents of the village to which Messengers came. It is established that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no such thing as an evil omen."**

A Hadîth states: **"The person who is caused to retract because of believing in an evil omen has actually yielded to polytheism."**(1) Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ narrates: **"Believing in an evil omen is from polytheism. Allâh ﷻ shall take each and every one of us through reliance."**(2)

Investigating the causes of evil by studying the stars and other similar things is included among prohibited evil omens. Those who study all this generally do not engross themselves in acts of obedience which actually repulse trials and tribulations. Instead, they instruct their adherents to remain confined in their homes and to give up moving about. Such steps cannot prevent fate and destiny from carrying out whatever is destined.

Then there are those who engross themselves in acts of disobedience. This only confirms the falling and fulfilment of the calamity. The Sharî'ah commands us to abstain from studying these phenomena, to turn away from them, and to rather engross ourselves in activities which would repulse calamities, e.g. supplication, remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, charity, absolute reliance on

(1) Checked by Ahmad (2/220).

(2) Checked by Abu-Dawoud (3910) and At-Tirmidhi (1614) and Ibn Majah (3038).

Allâh ﷻ, and belief in His decree and decision.

The *Musnad* of Ibn Wahb states that ʻAbdullâh ibn ʻAmr ibn al-ʻÂṣ ﷺ and Kaʻb ﷺ met each other. ʻAbdullâh ﷺ said to Kaʻb ﷺ: **"What do you have to say about the science of astrology?"** He replied: **"There is no good in it."** ʻAbdullâh ﷺ asked: **"Why is that?"** He said: **"You will see in it that which you dislike."** He was referring to evil omens. Kaʻb ﷺ asked: **"What if it happens?"** ʻAbdullâh ﷺ replied: **"O Allâh! There is no evil omen except what is decreed by You. There is no good except what is decreed by You. There is none worthy of worship except You."** ʻAbdullâh ﷺ said: **"There is no power and might except through You."** Kaʻb ﷺ said: **"'Abdullâh said these words. I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, this is the essence of reliance and the treasure of a person in Paradise. When any servant says these words and then continues with whatever he is doing, nothing will ever harm him."** ʻAbdullâh ﷺ asked: **"What if he does not continue and merely sits back?"** He replied: **"His heart has tasted the taste of ascribing partners with Allâh ﷻ."**

The *Marâsîl* of Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Every person will most certainly experience evil omens entering his heart. When he perceives this, he must say: 'I am the servant of Allâh ﷻ. Whatever Allâh ﷻ wills [shall come to pass]. There is no might except with Allâh ﷻ. It is only Allâh ﷻ who brings good and it is only He who takes away evil. I testify that Allâh ﷻ has power over everything.' He must then continue with whatever he is doing."**

ʻAbdullâh ibn ʻUmar ﷺ narrates: **"The person who is caused to desist from carrying out his task because of believing in evil omens has most certainly committed an act of polytheism. The atonement for this is that he must say: 'O Allâh! There is no evil omen except what is decreed by You. There is no good except what is decreed by You. There is none worthy of worship except You."**(1)

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* and Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh* narrate a Ḥadîth from ʻUrwah ibn ʻÂmir al-Qurashî who said that evil omens were mentioned before the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ so he said: **"The best of them is a good omen. They cannot revert a Muslim.**

(1) Al-Musnad (2/220).

When any of you sees anything disagreeable, he must say: 'O Allâh! None but You brings good, none but You repulses evil, and there is no power and might except from You."(1) Abû al-Qâsim al-Baghawî narrated the above, but with the words: **"They cannot harm a Muslim."**

Anas ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no such thing as an evil omen. Evil omens are against a person who believes in evil omens."** An-Nakha'î said that 'Abdullâh ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"Evil omens only harm those who believe in evil omens."** This refers to believing in prohibited evil omens. Believing in them entails his relying on whatever he hears or sees on which the evil omen is made to the extent that it prevents him from doing what he had intended. It may well be that he will be afflicted by something disagreeable. As for the person who relies on Allâh ﷻ and has confidence in Him – in the sense that he attaches his heart to Allâh ﷻ during times of fear and hope, severs himself from paying any attention to these dreadful causes, and says the above words [of supplication] which he has been ordered to say, and continues with his task – he will not be harmed by this in any way.

It is related that when Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ used to hear the cawing of a raven, he would say: **"O Allâh! There is no evil omen except what is decreed by You. There is no good except what is decreed by You."**

In like manner, when heavenly causes of terrifying punishments seemed to appear – for example, eclipse [of the moon or sun], the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered the doing of good deeds like salâh, supplication, charity and freeing of slaves until that is removed from the people. All of this shows that in the presence of disagreeable causes, the prescription of the Sharî'ah is for the people to become engrossed in actions from which it is hoped that the terrifying punishment will be repulsed. These are deeds of obedience, supplication, and placing full reliance and confidence in Allâh ﷻ. This is because all these causes are exigencies and not impositions. There are defences which can prevent them. They are good deeds, piety, and supplication. Reliance on Allâh ﷻ is one of the greatest ways of defence against them.

One of the logicians of the past said: **"The chanting of voices**

(1) Checked by Al-Baihaqi (8/139).

in the places of worship in different languages unties all the knots and complications caused by the celestial bodies and spheres." This he said on the basis of their belief in the celestial bodies. As for the belief of the Muslims, they believe that Allâh ﷻ alone does whatever He wills. However, He appoints causes for punishment and causes for mercy. Through the causes of punishment Allâh ﷻ instils fear in His servants so that they may turn in repentance to Him and submit themselves before Him. For example the solar and lunar eclipse. These are two of Allâh's many signs through which He instils fear in His servants to see who gets the ability to repent. It thus shows that their eclipse is a cause from which the falling of punishment is feared. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* to seek refuge from the evil of the moon. He said: **"It is the moon which goes away."**(1) Allâh ﷻ ordered us to seek refuge from the evil of the darkening night when it brings its darkness. It is at this time when the devils from among jinn and man begin spreading out. Seeking refuge from the moon is because it is a sign of the night. In this there is reference that the evil of the fearful night is not repulsed by the shining of the moon. The night does not become like the day by the shining of the moon. Refuge is therefore sought from the night even if it is a moonlit night.

Jâbir ﷺ narrates: **"Do not speak ill of the day, the night, the sun, the moon nor of the wind. They are sources of mercy for some people and sources of punishment for others."**(2) For example, the severity of the wind. The wind, as stated by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, is from the spirit of Allâh ﷻ. It comes with mercy, and with punishment as well. He ordered us that when the wind blows severely, we must ask Allâh ﷻ for its good and the good with which it is sent, and seek refuge from its evil and the evil with which it is sent. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw the wind or clouds, his face would change, and he would walk back and forth. When the rain came, he would feel at peace again and say: **"A nation was punished by the wind. Another nation saw the clouds and said: 'This is a cloud bringing rain to us!'"** *(Sûrah al-Ahqâf, 46: 24)*

The causes of mercy bring hope to Allâh's servants. For

(1) Like At-Tirmidhi (3366).

(2) Checked by Ibn Shaiba (1819) and Al-Hindi in Al-Kanz (21586) and At-Tabarany as in al-Majmaa' (7118).

example, fresh clouds, wholesome breezes, and the seasonal rains when there is a need for them. It is for this reason that when such rains fall, we say: **"O Allâh! Let these be rains of mercy and not rains of punishment."**

As for the person who fears the causes of harm after they have become attached to the causes which are prohibited, this does not help him in most cases. For example, an evil omen prevented a person from continuing with his task because he feared it afflicting him. Very often, such people are afflicted by whatever they feared. As stated by Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ and inferred from the previous Hadîth of Anas ﷺ. Or for that person who saves himself from the plague which afflicted his region and so he fled from it. Very rarely does it happen that such a person saves himself from it. Many past and latter nations fled from plagues but they still afflicted them, and their fleeing was of no avail to them. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Did you not see those people who came out of their homes, and they were thousands of them, for fear of death? Then Allâh said to them: 'Die.' Thereafter He revived them."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 243)* Many people of the past related that they fled from a plague but it afflicted them. A person of the past fled from a plague after it already landed. While he was travelling by night on his donkey, he heard someone saying:

لـــن يـــسبق الله علـــى حمـــار ولا علـــى مـــيعة مُطـــار

أو يأتـــي الحـــتف علـــى مقـــدار قـــد يـــصبح الله أمـــام الـــساري

"Allâh ﷻ can never be outrun if you are on a donkey or riding on the storax which is flying in the air. Death will certainly come at its appointed time. Allâh ﷻ is ahead of the travelling person."

The plague then afflicted this person and he died.

As for the Messenger of Allâh's ﷺ statement: **"there is no such thing as taking an evil omen [from an owl]"**, this is a rejection of what the people of *jâhilîyyah* used to belief that when a person passes away, his soul or bones become an owl, which is a flying bird. This belief is similar to the people who believe in the transmigration of souls. In other words, the souls of the deceased transfer to the bodies of animals without any resurrection and rebirth. These are all false beliefs which Islam came to nullify and refute.

The true teaching of the Sharî'ah in this regard is: **"The souls of the martyrs are in the bellies of green birds. They eat from the fruits of Paradise and drink water from the rivers of Paradise. They continue in this way until Allâh ﷻ shall return their souls**

to their bodies on the day of Resurrection."(1) It is also related that: **"The soul of a believer flies and attaches itself to a tree of Paradise until Allâh ﷻ returns it to its body on the day of Resurrection."**(2)

As for the Messenger of Allâh's ﷺ statement: **"and there is no such a thing as *safar*"**, there are differences in explaining this. Many past scholars said: **"*Safar* is an illness of the stomach."** It is said that it refers to worms which are as big as snakes in the stomach. They believed that these were contagious. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ refuted this belief.

Ibn 'Uyaynah *rahimahullâh* and Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* are among those *'ulamâ'* who held the above opinion. However, if this was the real meaning, it would have been included in his statement **"there is no such a thing as a contagious disease"**. It could be said that this entails a specification after a generalization, and he spoke about it in particular because it was popularly believed to be contagious.

Another group is of the opinion that *safar* refers to the month of Safar. They then have two different opinions about its explanation:

(1) It is a refutation of the *jâhilî* practice of moving this month back and forward. They used to consider Muharram as a lawful month [for fighting, etc.] while they considered Safar to be a sanctified month. This is the opinion of Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh*.

(2) It means that the people of *jâhilîyyah* used to take an evil omen [or bad luck] from Safar and say: **"It is a cursed month."** So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ refuted this. This is narrated by Abû Dâ'ûd from Muhammad ibn Râshid al-Mak-hûlî from whomever he heard saying this. This opinion is probably the most correct.

Many ignorant people take an evil omen from Safar. Some of them even prohibit travelling during this month. Taking an evil omen from Safar is from the category of prohibited evil omens. Similar is the case with taking an evil omen from any of the days such as Thursdays.

It is related in an unauthentic Hadîth that it is a day of continuous misfortune. In fact, the *Musnad* narrates from Jâbir ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ cursed the confederates (*Ahzâb*) on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. This supplication of his was

(1) As by Muslim (1887) and Abi Dawoud (2520).

(2) Checked by An-Nasa'ei (4/108) and Ibn Majah (4271).

accepted on Thursday between *zuhr* and *'asr* time. Jâbir ﷺ said: **"Whenever I faced any important and serious task, I waited for that time, supplicated to Allâh ﷻ, and found that it was accepted."** Or he said something similar.

Similar is the case with the *jâhilî* practice of taking an evil omen from getting married in Shawwâl. It is said that the origin of this is that a plague afflicted a place in Shawwâl in some year or the other. Many brides passed away in this plague. The people of *jâhilîyyah* thus took an evil omen from this.

The Sharî'ah refutes this. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ married me in Shawwâl and consummated the marriage in Shawwâl. Now which of his wives was more beloved to him than me?"** 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* preferred her women-folk marrying in Shawwâl.(1) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ married Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* in Shawwâl as well.(2)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no such thing as a contagious disease and there is no such thing as an evil omen. An evil omen is in a woman, in a house, and in an animal."**(3) Narrated from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

People differ in the meaning of this Hadîth as well. It is related with regard to 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* that she contested this Hadîth being the speech of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. She said: **"What he actually said was: 'The people of *jâhilîyyah* used to say that.'"** Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*. Ma'mar said: **"I heard someone explaining this Hadîth as follows: 'The bad luck in a woman is when she does not produce children. The bad luck in a horse is when it is not used for jihad in the course of Allâh ﷻ. The bad luck of a house is when one has bad neighbours."** This meaning is narrated through *marfû'* Ahâdîth through chains which are not authentic.

Others say that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no such thing as bad luck. If there is good in anything, it is in these three things."**(4) He mentioned the above three things. He said: **"This narration is closest to the principles of the Sharî'ah."** Ibn 'Abd al-Barr *rahimahullâh* also said this, but the chain of this narration does

(1) Checked by Muslim (1423) and At-Tirmidhi (1093).

(2) Checked by Ibn Majah (1991).

(3) Al-Bukhari (5772) and Muslim (2225).

(4) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2824) and Ibn Majah (1993).

not compare with that chain.

The correct explanation in affirming an evil omen in these three things [woman, house and animal] is what we had said with regard to the prohibition of a sick person going to a healthy person, fleeing from a leper and abstaining from entering a region that is afflicted by a plague. That is, these are three causes with which Allâh ﷻ decrees and attaches bad luck and good luck. It is for this reason that Allâh ﷻ prescribed that when a person acquires a wife, slave woman or animal, he must ask Allâh ﷻ for the good which is in them and the good which has been naturally placed in them, and seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from the evil which is in them and the evil which has been naturally placed in them. This is mentioned in the Hadîth of 'Amr ibn Shu'ayb who narrates from his father and then from his grandfather from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. This Hadîth is narrated by Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* and others.

Similarly, it is appropriate for a person who settles into a house to do the same. There was a group of people who inhabited a region and subsequently their numbers dropped and their wealth decreased. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered them to leave that region because it was considered to be a reprehensible place.(1)

Thus, it is not prohibited for man to leave something in which he does not find blessing, whether it is a house, wife or animal.

Similar is the case with a person who starts trading in a particular item and does not make any profit three times. He must change the item for something else. This is related from 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ. If he experiences blessings in selling a particular item, he must not change it for something else. The *Musnad* and *Sunan Ibn Mâjah* narrate from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*: **"If any of you obtains sustenance from a particular source, he must not give it up until it changes for him or it becomes disagreeable to him."**(2)

As for specifying an evil omen or bad luck to a specific time to the exclusion of any other time, e.g. to the month of Safar or any other time, this is incorrect. Every part of time is the creation of

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(1) Checked by Abu Dawoud (3924) and Al-Bukhari in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad (132) and Al- Baihaqi (8/140).
Al-Khattâbî and Ibn al-Athîr said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered them to shift from that place in order to cancel their notion that they were afflicted by these losses because of where they were living. Once they shifted from there, the cause of that notion would be severed and the doubts which pervaded them will be removed.

(2) Checked by Ibn Majah (2148) and Al-Baihaqi (6/125).

Allâh ﷻ. It is during time that the actions of man take place. Every time a believer occupies himself in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ is considered to be a blessed time for him. Every time a person occupies himself in the disobedience of Allâh ﷻ is considered to be an evil time for him. So in reality, an evil omen or bad luck actually entails the disobedience of Allâh ﷻ. Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"If there is any bad luck in anything, it is in what lies between the lips, i.e. the tongue."** He said: **"There is nothing that requires a longer period of imprisonment than the tongue."**

'Adîyy ibn Hâtim said: **"The good and evil in any matter lies between man's lips."** That is, his tongue. The *Sunan* of Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"A good natural disposition is a cause of increase. An evil natural disposition is bad luck. Obedience is a cause of increase in life, and charity guards against an evil death."** In this Hadîth, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ labels an evil natural disposition as bad luck. A Hadîth states: **"A person of an evil natural disposition shall not enter Paradise."**(1) This refers to a person who is unkind and oppressive to those who are under his authority. A Hadîth states: **"Charity repulses an evil death."**(2)

A Hadîth narrated by 'Alî ﷺ states: **"Hasten with charity because a calamity cannot cross it."**(3) Narrated by at-Tabarânî. Another Hadîth states: **"A misfortune is destined for every single day. Repulse the misfortune of that day through charity."** Charity thus prevents the affliction of a calamity after its causes are found. Similar is the case with supplication (*du'â'*).

A Hadîth states: **"A calamity and supplication meet at a point between the heavens and earth, and they fight against each other until the day of Resurrection."**(4) Narrated by al-Bazzâr and al-Hâkim.

Salmân ﷺ narrates: **"Nothing but supplication repulses divine decree."**(5) Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"Precaution does not benefit against divine decree, but Allâh ﷻ wipes out whatever He wills of decree through supplication."** He also said: **"Supplication repulses decree. When it repulses decree, this is also part of decree."** This

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (1946) and Ibn Majah (3691).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (664).

(3) Checked by Al-Baihaqi (4/189).

(4) Checked by Al-Hakem (1/492).

(5) Checked by At-Tirmidhi in Al-Sunan (2139).

is similar to what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said when he was asked whether medicines and incantations are of any avail against the decree of Allâh ﷻ. He said: **"They are part of the decree of Allâh ﷻ."**(1) 'Umar ﷺ said the same thing when he kept away from a plague and Abû 'Ubaydah ﷺ asked him: **"Are you fleeing from the decree of Allâh?"** He replied: **"I am fleeing from the decree of Allâh to the decree of Allâh."**(2) Allâh ﷻ decrees certain events and also decrees some of the things which repulse events before their occurrence.

In like manner, lawful *adhkâr* (words containing remembrance of Allâh ﷻ) also repulse calamities. 'Uthmân ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When a person says the following in the morning and evening, no calamity will afflict him. [The supplication is]:**

بِسْمِ اللهِ الَّذِيْ لَا يَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ، وَهُوَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ.

"In the name of Allâh with whose name nothing in the heavens and earth can harm. He is all-hearing, all-knowing."(3)

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Bad luck entails having a bad character."**(4) This is also narrated by al-Kharâ'iṭî and his words are: **"Good luck entails having good character."** In short, the only bad luck is in acts of disobedience and sins. This is because they make Allâh ﷻ angry. When Allâh ﷻ becomes angry at His servant, he experiences misfortune in this world and in the Hereafter. In like manner, if He is pleased with His servant, he experiences good fortune in this world and in the Hereafter.

Someone complained to a righteous servant about some people who were afflicted by a calamity, so he said: **"I feel that the bad luck of sins is the only reason for this calamity afflicting you."** Abû Ḥâzim said: **"Anything which diverts you from Allâh ﷻ - whether your wife, children or wealth – are all causes of bad luck against you."** A poet says:

فـلا كـان مـا يلهـي عـن الله إنـه يـضر ويـؤذي إنـه لمـشؤم

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2065) and Ibn Majah (4737).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (5729).

(3) Checked by Abu Dawoud (5088) and At-Tirmidhi (3388) and Ibn Majah (3869) and Al-Hakem (1/514).

(4) Al-Musnad (24428).

"May all that diverts one from Allâh ﷻ be destroyed. It is harmful, hurtful and is most certainly a bad luck."

In essence, bad luck is in disobedience while good luck is in the obedience and fear of Allâh ﷻ. A poet says:

إن رأيـــا دعـــا إلـــى طاعـــة الله لـــرأي مـــبارك مـــيمون

"Any view which calls to the obedience of Allâh ﷻ is a blessed and providential view."

The infection [or contagious disease] which destroys a person who goes near it are the acts of disobedience. Whoever goes close to sins, commits them, and persists in them is destroyed. Similar is the case with intermingling with those who commit sins. Any person who embellishes and beautifies sins, and invites others to them is actually a devil from among mankind. Such a person is more harmful than a devil from the jinn. A person of the past said: **"When you seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from the devil from jinn, this devil turns away from you. As for the devil from mankind, he does not leave you until he casts you into sin."**

A Hadîth states: **"A person shall be resurrected on the religion of his friend. You should therefore be careful as to who you befriend."**(1) Another Hadîth states: **"Remain in the company of none but a believer. None but a righteous person should eat your food."**(2) The following is attributed to 'Alî ﷺ:

فـــلا تـــصحب أخـــا الجهـــل وإيـــاك وإيـــاه
فكـــم مـــن جاهـــل أردى حكـــيما حـــين آخـــاه
يقـــاس المـــرء بالمـــرء إذا مـــا المـــرء ماشـــاه
وللـــشيء علـــى الـــشيء مقايـــيس وأشـــباه
وللقلـــب علـــى القلـــب دلـــيل حـــين يلقـــاه

"Do not be in the company of an ignorant person. Keep away from him and keep him away from you. Many an ignorant person brought about the downfall of a wise man when the latter befriended him. A person is measured by the person with whom he walks. A thing possesses criteria and similarities for another thing. The heart is a proof of another heart when it meets it." [In other words, birds of a feather flock together].

A sinful person is thus a cause of bad luck to himself and others

(1) Checked by Abu Dawoud (4833) and At-Tirmidhi (2380).

(2) Checked by Abu Dawoud (4832) and At-Tirmidhi (2403).

as well. This is because it may well happen that punishment may descend upon him and include other people as well. This is especially so with regard to people who do not reprimand him for his evils. Remaining aloof from him thus has two benefits. When evil increases, people in general are destroyed.

Similar is the case with places of vice. The punishments that befall such places demand that man remains distant from them and flees from them lest the punishment of Allâh ﷻ descends. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by the ruins of the Thamûd at al-Hijr, he said to his Companions ﷺ: **"When you pass by these people who were punished, you must most certainly cry lest the punishment which befell them befalls you as well."**(1)

A person from the Banî Isrâ'îl had killed 100 people. He went to an *'âlim* and asked him if there was any way of repentance for him. He replied: **"Yes."** He then ordered him to leave the evil village [in which he was living] and settle down in a good village. Death came to him while he was on his way to this new village. The angels of mercy and angels of punishment disputed with regard to his fate. Allâh ﷻ revealed to them saying: **"Measure the distance between the two** villages, see which of the two he is closer to and include him with it. They found him closer to the good village by a distance of a stone's throw. He was thus forgiven.(2)

Remaining aloof from [or emigrating from] places of vice and people of vice are from among the forms of emigration which we are commanded with. A true emigrant is the one who remains aloof from all which Allâh ﷻ prohibited him from. Ibrâhîm ibn Ad-ham *rahimahullâh* said: **"Whoever wants to repent must extract himself from evils and give up intermingling with those whom he had been intermingling with. If he does not do this, he will not be able to achieve his goal."**

Be on your guard against sins because they bring bad luck, their consequences are disastrous, their punishment is painful, the hearts which love them are sick, the souls which are inclined to them are not upright, freedom from them is a boon, independence from them is invaluable, being involved in them – especially after the appearance of grey hairs – is a mighty catastrophe.

طاعة الله خير ما اكتسب العبد فكن طائعا لله لا تعصينه

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (3381) and Muslim (2980).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (3470) and Muslim (2766).

ما هلاك النفوس إلا المعاصي فاجتنب ما نهاك لا تقربنه
إن شيئا هلاك نفسك فيه ينبغي أن تصون نفسك منه

"The obedience of Allâh ﷻ is the best thing which a person can earn. You should therefore be obedient to Allâh and never disobey Him. It is only sins which destroy people. So abstain from whatever you have been prohibited from, and never approach it. If anything entails your destruction, it is your duty to safeguard yourself against it."

O you who lost your heart! Search for it in the assembly of *dhikr*, perhaps you will find it there. O you whose heart is sick! Take it to the assembly of *dhikr*, perhaps it will be cured there. The assemblies of *dhikr* are hospitals for sins. The illnesses of the heart are treated there, just as physical illnesses are treated in the hospitals of the world. Refreshment for the hearts of believers lies in listening to words of wisdom just as the eyes of the people of this world experience refreshment in the gardens and orchards of this world.

This assembly of ours is present in the garden of humility. Our food in it is hunger, and our drink in it are tears. We have conveyed what we heard. We treat the illnesses which Jâlinûs and Baktîshû' failed to treat. We provide the antidote for sins and the separator of acts of disobedience. Whoever drinks this antidote will not return to disobedience. Many a person who fell unconscious because of sins regained his consciousness in this assembly. He recovered from the desires which poisoned him, and reached Allâh ﷻ - totally devoted to Him. The only thing is that if the doctor were to use for himself the medications which he prescribes to people, there would be people adhering to whatever he says.

O how life would be destroyed if the listener gains salvation while the speaker is destroyed! O how all our efforts would have gone to vain if the follower reaches [Allâh ﷻ] while the leader falls short.

وغير تقي يأمر الناس بالتقى طبيب يداوي الناس وهو سقيم
يا أيها الرجل المقوم غيره هلا لنفسك كان ذا التقويم
فابدأ بنفسك فانهها عن غيها فإن انتهت عنه فأنت حكيم
فهناك يقبل ما تقول ويقتدي بالقول منك وينفع التعليم
لا تنه عن خلق وتأتي مثله عار عليك إذا فعلت عظيم

"A non-pious person ordering the people to piety is like a sick doctor treating people. O you who are trying to straighten

others! Why don't you straighten yourself? Start with your self and stop it from its waywardness. If it desists from its waywardness, you will be wise enough [to stop others]. It is only then that what you say will be accepted, your statements will be followed, and your teaching will be beneficial. Do not prohibit [others] from doing something while you yourself commit it. It would be a serious blemish against you if you do this."

كـم ذا الـتمادي فـيها قـد جاءنـا صـفر شــهر بــه الفــوز والتوفـيق والظفــر

فابـدأ بمـا شـئت فمـن فعـل تـسر بـه يــوم المعــاد ففــيه الخيــر ينتظــر

توبــوا إلــى الله فــيه مــن ذنــوبكم مــن قــبل يــبلغ فـيكم حـده العمـر

"For how long are you going to continue in your sinful ways? The month of Safar has come. It is through this month that you can triumph, get inspiration and succeed. You must first do what you intend, whoever does thereafter [by emulating you], it will be a cause of joy for you on the day of Resurrection. It is on that day that you should await goodness. Repent to Allâh ﷻ in this month from your sins before your life reaches its end."

RABÎ‘ AL-AWWAL

THE BIRTH OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLÂH ﷺ

Al-'Irbâḍ ibn Sâriyah as-Sulamî ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"I was decreed by Allâh ﷻ in the original Book as the seal of the Prophets while Âdam ﷺ was still on the ground in his clay. I will give you an explanation of this. I am a product of the supplication of my forefather, Ibrâhîm ﷺ, the glad tiding which 'Îsâ ﷺ gave to his people, and the dream of my mother which she saw in which a light emanated from her and shone on the palaces of Syria. Other mothers of the Prophets were also made to see [such signs]."**(1) Narrated by al-Ḥâkim. He said: **"Its chain of narrators is authentic."**

A Ḥadîth of similar meaning is narrated by Abû Umâmah al-Bâhilîy through other *mursal* chains.

The purpose of this Ḥadîth is to demonstrate that the prophethood of Muḥammad ﷺ was mentioned and known before Allâh ﷻ created him and before He sent him as a living being into this world. This was recorded in the original Book even before the soul was blown into Âdam ﷺ. The **"original Book"** is explained as the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lauḥ al-Maḥfûẓ*) and the Reminder (*adh-Dhikr*). Allâh ﷻ says: **"Allâh wipes out whatever He wills and retains [whatever He wills]. And with Him is the original Book."** *(Sûrah ar-Ra'd, 13: 39)*

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ relates that he asked Ka'b ﷺ about the **"original Book"** and he said: **"It refers to the knowledge of Allâh ﷻ with regard to whatever He is going to create and whatever His creation is going to do. He said to His knowledge: 'Become a book', and it became a book."**

There is no doubt that the knowledge of Allâh ﷻ is since eternity. He has full knowledge of whatever He is going to do with regard to His creations. He then wrote all this in a book which He had before the creation of the heavens and the earth. Allâh ﷻ says:

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(1) Checked by Ahmad (4/127) and Al-Hakem (20/148).

“No calamity can befall the earth nor your own selves which is not recorded in a book before We bring it into existence in this world. Surely this is easy for Allâh.” *(Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 22)*

‘Imrân ibn Husayn ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“Allâh ﷻ was in existence and there was nothing before Him. His Throne was on the water. He recorded everything in *adh-Dhikr* and then created the heavens and the earth.”**

‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“Allâh ﷻ laid down the numbers of the creations 50 000 years before He created the heavens and the earth, and His Throne was on water.”**(1)

Among the things which He recorded in this *Dhikr* – the original Book – is that Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets. It was since that time that the creations moved from the level of knowledge to the level of recording. It is one of the external forms of existence. It is for this reason that Sa‘îd ibn Râshid said: **“I asked ‘Atâ’: ‘Was the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ a Prophet before he was created?’ He replied: ‘Yes, by Allâh, and 2 000 years before the creation of the world.”** Narrated by Abû Bakr al-Âjurî in the book *ash-Sharî‘ah*. As for the person named ‘Aṭâ’, it is obvious that he is ‘Aṭâ’ al-Khurâsânî. This is a reference to what we mentioned about recording his prophet-hood in the **“original Book”** before laying down the numbers of the creations.

In the Hadîth quoted at the beginning [of this chapter], the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“I was decreed by Allâh ﷻ in the original Book as the seal of the Prophets while Âdam ﷺ was still on the ground in his clay.”** This does not mean – and Allâh ﷻ knows best – that the fact that he was going to be the seal of the Prophets was only recorded at that time. It actually refers to the fact that it was recorded in the **“original Book”** in that condition before the blowing of the soul into Âdam ﷺ. While Âdam ﷺ was the first of the human race to be created.

Another Hadîth states that he was in that condition which affirmed prophet-hood in his favour. This is the third level, viz. moving from the level of knowledge, then recording, to the level of visual and external existence. It was at that time that the Messenger

(1) Muslim (2653).

of Allâh ﷻ was removed from the loins of Âdam ﷺ and given prophet-hood. His prophet-hood was now in existence externally after it had been recorded and decreed in the **"original Book"**. The Hadîth of Maysarah al-Fajr says that he said: **"I asked: 'O Messenger of Allâh! When were you a Prophet?' He replied: 'When Âdam was still between a spirit and a body.'"** Narrated by Ahmad and al-Hâkim.(1)

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said in a narration of Muhannâ that some of the narrators narrate it as: **"When were you recorded as a Prophet?"** If this narration is authentic, it – together with the Hadîth of al-'Irbâd ibn Sâriyah – will be taken to mean the obligation of his prophet-hood, its affirmation, and its external appearance. This is because **"recording"** is applicable for what is obligatory, either from the Sharî'ah, as in the verse: **"Ordained for you is fasting"** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 183)* or conceptually, as in the verse: **"Allâh has decreed: 'I shall certainly prevail, I and My Messengers.'"** *(Sûrah al-Mujâdilah, 58: 21)*

The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ states that the Companions ﷺ asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! When was prophet-hood ordained for you?"** He replied: **"When Âdam ﷺ was still between spirit and body."**(2)

Ibn Sa'd narrates from the narration of Jâbir al-Ju'fîy from ash-Sha'bîy who said: **"A man asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: 'When were you appointed as a Prophet?' He replied: 'When Âdam ﷺ was still between spirit and body. It was at the time when the covenant was taken from me.'"**(3) This narration shows that it was at this time when he was taken out of the loins of Âdam ﷺ, given prophet-hood, and his covenant was taken. This could be a proof that the extraction of the progeny of Âdam ﷺ from his loins and taking the covenant from them was done before the spirit was blown into Âdam ﷺ. This is narrated from Salmân al-Fârisî ﷺ and others of the past. This is further proven from the outward meaning of this verse: **"We created you, then We gave you your shapes. Thereafter We ordered the angels: 'Prostrate before Âdam.'"** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 11)*

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(1) Checked by Ahmad (5/59) and Al-Hakem (2/608).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3629) and Al-Hakem (2/609).

(3) Checked by Ibn Saa'd in his" Tabakat" (1/148).

Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* and others explain the above verse by saying that this means that the extraction of the progeny of Âdam ﷺ from his loins took place before ordering the angels to prostrate before him. However, the majority of past scholars are of the opinion that the extraction of the progeny of Âdam ﷺ from his loins took place after blowing the spirit into him. The majority of the Ahâdîth also point to this. Based on this, it is possible that Muhammad ﷺ was solely extracted from his loins before blowing the spirit into Âdam ﷺ. This is because Muhammad ﷺ was the purpose behind creating the human race. He is the core and essence of the human race. He was the means for its creation. It is therefore not far-fetched to say that he was extracted from the loins of Âdam ﷺ at the time of the latter's creation, but before the blowing of the spirit into him.

It is related that Âdam ﷺ saw the name of Muhammad ﷺ written on the Throne and that Allâh ﷻ said to him: **"Were it not for Muhammad, I would not have created you."**(1) Narrated by al-Hâkim in his *Sahîh*. This would mean that when Âdam ﷺ was shaped from clay, Muhammad ﷺ was extracted from him, given prophet-hood, and the covenant was taken from him. He was then returned to the loins of Âdam ﷺ until he came out at the time when Allâh ﷻ decreed that he should come out. This is affirmed by the narration of Qatâdah that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"I was the first of the Prophets to be created, and the last of them to be commissioned [as a Prophet]."**(2)

Another narration states: **"I was the first of people to be created."** Narrated by Ibn Sa'd and others. At-Tabarânî narrated it from Qatâdah from al-Hasan from Abû Hurayrah as a *marfû'* Hadîth. But the *mursal* Hadîth is more authentic. Another *mursal* narration of Qatâdah states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then recited this verse: **"We took from the Prophets their covenant and from you, and from Nûh, Ibrâhîm, Mûsâ and 'Îsâ, the son of Maryam."** *(Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 7)* Allâh ﷻ commences with Muhammad ﷺ before Nûh ﷺ although he was the first of the Messengers.

Muhammad ﷺ is the first of the Messengers to be created and the last of them to be commissioned. He was extracted from the loins

(1) Checked by Al-Hakem (2/615).

(2) Checked by Ibn saa'd in his Tabakat (1/96) and al-Hindi in "Al-Kanz" (31916).

of Âdam ﷺ when he was formed, he was given prophet-hood at that time, his covenant was taken from him, and he was returned to Âdam's ﷺ loins.

One cannot say that Âdam ﷺ was created before him because he was not alive at the time, he had no soul in him. On the other hand, Muhammad ﷺ was alive when he was taken out, given prophet-hood, and his covenant was taken from him. He is thus the first of the Messengers to be created and the last of them to be commissioned. He is the seal of the Prophets in the sense that his era came after all their eras. He is thus the one who followed their tracks. He is *al-'âqib* – the one who comes after the Prophets and follows in their tracks. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men. Rather, he is the Messenger of Allâh and the seal of all Prophets."** *(Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 40)*

Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"My similitude and that of the Prophets before me is like that of a person who built a house and made it very beautiful and attractive. However, he left out one brick from one corner of the house. People began walking around the house and admiring it, and they said: 'If only one brick was placed here?'"** Muslim *rahimahullâh* adds: **"I came and put a seal to the Prophets."**(1)

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates a similar Hadîth from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in which he said: **"The people began walking around it and said: 'Why is one brick not placed here?' I am that one brick, and I am the seal of the Prophets."**(2)

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* proves from the previously quoted narration of al-'Irbâd ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ remained on monotheism (*tauhîd*) ever since he was created. In so doing, Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* refutes what others claim in this regard. In fact, this Hadîth can be used to prove that he was born a Prophet. His prophet-hood was ordained to him from the time the covenant was taken from him when he was extracted from the loins of Âdam ﷺ. He was thus a Prophet from that time. However, the period of his appearance into the world was much later than that. But this does not preclude his being a Prophet before his appearance into this

(1) Al-Bukhari (3534) and Muslim (2287).

(2) Al-Bukhari (3535) and Muslim (2286).

world. For example, a person is appointed to a post and ordered to exercise his authority at some time in the future. His leadership is established from the time of his appointment even if exercising his authority comes at a later time.

Hambal said: I asked Abû ‘Abdillâh – i.e. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* – about those who allege that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was following the religion of his people before he was commissioned as a Prophet. He said: **“This is an evil statement. It is the duty of the person who makes such a statement to desist. One should not sit in his company.”** I said: **“Our critical neighbour, Abû al-‘Abbâs, makes such a statement.”** He said: **“May Allâh kill him!** What else can remain if someone alleges that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was following the religion of his people, while they were worshipping idols!?? Allâh ﷻ quotes the words of ‘Îsâ عليه السلام: **“and giving the glad tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name is Ahmad.”** *(Sûrah as-Saff, 61: 6)* I said to Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*: **“He also alleges that Khadîjah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* was also on that religion when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ married her before Islam.”** He said: **“As for Khadîjah, I cannot say anything. She was the first woman to believe him.”** He then said: **“People are making such innovative statements!! These people are involving themselves in controversy. Whoever likes controversy can never succeed. Allâh ﷻ is beyond such statements.”** He then provided some proofs which I cannot remember. He mentioned that when his mother gave birth to him she saw a light which illuminated the palaces of Syria. Is it not a fact that she saw this when she gave birth to him? And before he was commissioned as a Prophet, he was pure and purified from all idols. Is it not true that he abstains from eating anything which was slaughtered at **an altar?”** He then said: **“Beware of such controversial statements because no good can be expected from people involved in controversies.”** This is narrated by Abû Bakr ‘Abd al-‘Azîz ibn Ja‘far in the book *Kitâb as-Sunnah*.

The purpose of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* is to prove that the glad tidings of his prophet-hood were conveyed before the arrival of the Prophets who came before him. The signs which were witnessed during his birth show that he was a Prophet before his arrival into this world and before his birth. This is what the present Hadîth of al-‘Irbâd ﷺ proves. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mentions in this Hadîth that he had acquired his prophet-hood while Âdam عليه السلام was still on

the ground in his clay. This Hadîth uses the word *al-munjadal* which refers to someone who is thrown on the ground, lying on the ground, before the spirit could be blown into him. It is for this reason that a person who has been killed is referred to as *al-munjadal* (thrown to the ground). The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then proved this by the fact that he was mentioned first, his name was referred to, his prophethood was mentioned, and the lofty manner in which he appeared into this world. He mentioned this with three proofs, and this is what he meant by the words: **"I will give you an explanation of this."**

The first proof:

He was a result of the supplication of his forefather, Ibrâhîm ﷺ. He was making reference to the story which Allâh ﷻ related in the Qur'ân that when Ibrâhîm ﷺ and Ismâ'îl ﷺ completed the construction of the Ka'bah, they said: **"O our Sustainer! Accept from us. Surely You alone are the Hearer, the Knower. O our Sustainer! Make us obedient to You, and from our progeny as well make a group obedient to You, and show us the rites of hajj, and forgive us. Surely it is You alone who accepts repentance, the Merciful. O our Sustainer! Send to them a Messenger from among themselves, who will recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom, and purify them. Surely You alone are very mighty, very wise."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 127-129)*

Allâh ﷻ accepted their supplication and sent a Messenger from among the residents of Makkah who possessed these qualities and who was from the progeny of Ismâ'îl ﷺ - the very same Ismâ'îl ﷺ who had joined his father, Ibrâhîm ﷺ in making this supplication.

Allâh ﷻ did a great favour to the believers by sending this Prophet to them, with the qualities which Ibrâhîm ﷺ and Ismâ'îl ﷺ had supplicated for. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Allâh bestowed a favour on the believers when He sent in their midst a Messenger from among themselves - he recites to them His verses and purifies them [from polytheism and other evils], and teaches them the Book and things of benefit. And previously they were in manifest error."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 164)*

Allâh ﷻ says: **"It is He who raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom. And before this they were lying in manifest error. And He raised that Messenger for another people from among**

themselves who have not joined them as yet. He alone is mighty, wise. This is the bounty of Allâh which He gives to whomever He wills. And the bounty of Allâh is great." *(Sûrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 2-4)*

It is a known fact that no Messenger apart from Muhammad ﷺ was sent to Makkah possessing these qualities. He was from the progeny of Ismâ'îl ﷺ as the Prophets of the Banî Isrâ'îl were from the progeny of Is-hâq ﷺ.

Allâh ﷻ states that He bestowed a favour on the believers through this messenger-ship. There is no greater favour from Allâh ﷻ than His sending Muhammad ﷺ to guide towards the truth and the straight path.

In the above verse, Allâh ﷻ uses the words **"unlettered people"**. This refers to the Arabs. In so doing, He draws their attention to the value and greatness of this favour in the sense that they were unlettered, they had no book, and they had no vestiges of prophecies – all of which were with the people of the Book [Jews and Christians]. Allâh ﷻ thus favoured them with this Messenger and this Book until they became the most superior and most knowledgeable of all nations. They also recognized the deviation of the nations which deviated before them.

There are two benefits in the Messenger ﷺ being from among them:

(1)This Messenger was also unlettered like the nation to which he was sent. He never read any book nor did he ever write down anything. Allâh ﷻ says: **"You neither used to recite any book before this nor did you write it with your right hand."** *(Sûrah al-'Ankabût, 29: 48)* The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not leave his place of residence and go to some other people from whom he could have learnt something. Rather, he remained unlettered among an unlettered nation. He neither wrote nor read until he completed the age of forty years. He then came with this manifest Book, this splendid Sharî'ah and this upright religion regarding which the experts and intellectuals of this earth acknowledged that the universe never came across a constitution greater than this. In this is an obvious proof to his truthfulness.

(2)To draw attention to the fact that those to whom he was sent – who were unlettered – and especially the residents of Makkah, fully

knew his lineage, nobility, truthfulness, trustworthiness, and chastity. He grew up among them while all these qualities of his were well-known to them. They also acknowledged that he never ever spoke a lie. How, then, can it be possible for him to abstain from lying about people and then suddenly fabricate a lie against Allâh ﷻ?! This is absolutely baseless. It is for this reason that Heraclius had inquired about these qualities and used them as proofs for his truthfulness in his claims to prophet-hood and messenger-ship.

The words **"reciting to them His verses"** mean that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ recites to them the verses which Allâh ﷻ revealed to him. This refers to the Qur'ân which is the greatest of the heavenly books. This book contains sciences, words of wisdom, admonitions, stories, themes which create yearning and fear, incidents which took place in the past, incidents which will take place in the future – e.g. resurrection, Paradise, Hell-fire, etc. The extent to which all this is mentioned in the Qur'ân was not mentioned in any other book. Some *'ulamâ'* said: **"If this book was found written and bound in a book form in a deserted place on earth and no one knew who placed it there, all sound-minded people would have testified that it was sent by Allâh ﷻ, and that man does not have the ability to compose something like this. So if it comes at the hand of the most honest, virtuous and pious creation, and he says: 'This is the speech of Allâh', and he challenges the entire creation to produce a single chapter like it and they are unable to do this, how then can there be any doubt in it? It is for this reason that Allâh ﷻ said: 'This is a Book in which there is no doubt.'"** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 2)*

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Is it not sufficient for them that We sent down to you the Book that is recited to them?"** *(Sûrah al-'Ankabût, 29: 51)* If Muḥammad ﷺ had no miracles proving his truthfulness apart from this Book, it would have sufficed him. How, then, can there be any doubt about him when he produced numerous earthly and heavenly miracles?

The words **"purifying them"** mean that he cleanses and purifies their hearts from the filth of polytheism, sinning and deviation. The souls are purified when they are cleansed of all these impurities. When a person's soul is cleansed of all this, he is most certainly successful. Allâh ﷻ says: **"He who purified it has indeed achieved his goal."** *(Sûrah ash-Shams, 91: 9)* **"Successful indeed is he who purifies himself."** *(Sûrah al-A'lâ, 87: 14)*

The words **“teaching them the Book and wisdom”**: the Book refers to the Qur’ân. It means that he teaches them to read its words. The word **“wisdom”** means that he made them understand the meanings of the Qur’ân and to practise on its injunctions. Wisdom thus refers to understanding the Qur’ân and practising on it. It is therefore not sufficient to confine oneself to reciting the words of the Qur’ân until he knows its meaning and practises on its injunctions. The person who possesses all these qualities [recitation, understanding and practising] has in fact been bestowed with wisdom. Allâh ﷻ says: **“He bestows wisdom to whomever He wills. Whoever is bestowed with wisdom has been bestowed with abundant good.”** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 269)*

Al-Fudayl said: **“There are many *‘ulamâ’* but very few *ḥukamâ’* (people of wisdom).”** He said: **“The *ḥukamâ’* are the inheritors of the Prophets.”** Wisdom is thus beneficial knowledge which is followed by good deeds. It is a light which is cast into the heart through which the meaning of the knowledge which is revealed from the heavens is understood, and it encourages a person to follow it and practise on it. There are those who say: **“Wisdom [in this verse] refers to the Sunnah.”** This is also correct because the Sunnah explains the Qur’ân, expounds its meanings, and encourages a person to follow it and practise on it. So a *ḥakîm* (wise person) is an *‘âlim* who extracts subtle aspects of knowledge and benefits from his knowledge by practising on it. Abû al-‘Atâhiyah said:

وكيف تحب أن تدعى حكيما وأنت لكل ما تهوى ركوب

وتضحك دائبا ظهرا لبطن وتذكر ما عملت فلا تتوب

“How can you like to be addressed as a wise person when you do whatever you desire? You constantly laugh upside down and you make mention of all your evils without repenting.”

“And before this they were lying in manifest error.” This makes reference to the deviation in which these people were before this Book could be revealed to them. Allâh ﷻ looked at the inhabitants of earth at that time and detested them – the Arabs and non-Arabs – except for a few people from the people of the Book who were holding on to their religion without having changed and altered it. They were very few in number.

As for the majority of the people of the Book, they had changed and distorted their books. They introduced into their religion things

which were not part of it. In so doing, they went astray and led others astray. As for those who were not the people of the Book, they were in manifest error. The unlettered ones were polytheists who worshipped idols. The Mageans worshipped fire and claimed that there were two gods. Similar was the case with others. There were those who worshipped stars, and those who worshipped the sun or the moon. Allâh ﷻ guided the believers by sending Muḥammad ﷺ with guidance and the true religion. Allâh ﷻ enabled His religion to become victorious until it reached the east and west. Belief in the absolute oneness of Allâh ﷻ (*tauḥîd*) and practising justice pervaded the land after it had been filled with the darkness of polytheism and oppression.

The **"unlettered ones"** thus refers to the Arabs and **"others who have not joined them as yet"** refers to the Persians and Romans. The Persians were fire-worshippers, and the Romans were Christians. Allâh ﷻ guided all of them through Muḥammad's ﷺ call towards *tauḥîd*.

Someone saw Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* in a dream after his demise. The person asked him about his condition and he replied: **"Were it not for this Prophet, we would all have been fire-worshippers."** This is true what he said because were it not for the message of Muḥammad ﷺ, the people of Iraq would have remained fire-worshippers; the people of Syria, Egypt and the Romans would have remained Christians; and the people of the Arabian peninsular would have remained polytheists, worshipping idols. However, Allâh ﷻ showed mercy to His servants by sending Muḥammad ﷺ and rescuing them from deviation. Allâh ﷻ says: **"We sent you solely as a mercy to the worlds."** *(Sûrah al-Ambiyâ', 21: 107)* It is for this reason that Allâh ﷻ says: **"This is the bounty of Allâh which He gives to whomever He wills. And the bounty of Allâh is great."** *(Sûrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 4)* Whoever receives a share of Islam has acquired a great bounty, and the favour of Allâh ﷻ upon him is indeed great. How great, then, is the need for him to be thankful for this favour, ask for its continuity, remain steadfast on it till death, and then die on it? It is in this way that the favour and bounty will be complete.

Ibrâhîm ﷺ is thus the imam of the *ḥunafâ'* (those who turned away from everything and devoted themselves to Allâh ﷻ alone), while Muḥammad ﷺ and the Prophets ﷺ before him are ordered to follow him. Allâh ﷻ made Ibrâhîm ﷺ the imam of the people. He and

his son, Ismâ'îl ﷺ, supplicated to Allâh ﷻ asking Him to send a Messenger from the people of Makkah who possessed these qualities. Allâh ﷻ accepted their supplication and made this Prophet from the progeny of Ismâ'îl ibn Ibrâhîm, just as the two had supplicated. It was this Prophet [Muhammad ﷺ] who brought to the fore the religion of Ibrâhîm ﷺ after it had become faint and concealed from the people. It is for this reason that he is referred to as being closest to him. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Among people those who were closest to Ibrâhîm were those who were with him, and this Prophet, and those who believed in this Prophet."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 68)*

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Every Prophet has a close friend from among the Prophets, and my close friend is Ibrâhîm."**(1) He then recited the above verse. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was closest to the progeny of Ibrâhîm ﷺ both in appearance and in spirit. In fact, he was most similar to him in his close friendship with Allâh ﷻ. He said: **"Allâh ﷻ took me as a close friend just as He took Ibrâhîm ﷺ as a close friend."**(2)

The second proof:

The glad tidings which were conveyed by 'Îsâ ﷺ who was the last of the Prophets from the Banî Isrâ'îl. Allâh ﷻ says: **"When 'Îsâ,** the son of Maryam, said: **"O Banî Isrâ'îl! I am a Messenger of Allâh to you, confirming the Taurâh before me, and giving the glad tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name is Ahmad."** *(Sûrah as-Saff, 61: 6)*

'Îsâ ﷺ used to encourage others to follow Muhammad ﷺ. He used to say: **"He will be sent with a sword, but that should not prevent you from following him."** It is related that he said: **"I shall depart and the one after me will come. He will not praise you with his call, but he will unsheathe the sword and you will enter his religion voluntarily and under compulsion."**

The *Musnad* relates from Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said that Allâh ﷻ addressed 'Îsâ ﷺ saying: **"I shall send a nation after you. When they experience anything which they like, they will praise [Me] and be grateful. When they experience anything disagreeable, they will expect reward for it and**

(1) At-Tirmidhi checked it (2995) and Ahmad (3790, 4077).

(2) Al-Hakem checked it (3/177) and Ibn Majah (141).

exercise patience. This, notwithstanding the fact that they have neither forbearance nor knowledge." Îsâ ﷺ asked: **"O Lord! How is this possible if they have neither forbearance nor knowledge?"** Allâh ﷻ said: **"I shall give them of My forbearance and My knowledge."**

Ibn Is-ḥâq said: **"A knowledgeable person informed me that** Îsâ ﷺ said: **"The most beloved of all nations in the sight of Allâh ﷻ is the nation of Muḥammad ﷺ."** He was asked: **"What is their merit which you are talking about?"** He said: **"*Lâ ilâha illallâh* was not subdued on the tongues of any nation as it was on their tongues."**

The third proof:

The third proof which demonstrated his prophet-hood before his appearance into this world was the dream which his mother saw wherein light which illuminated the palaces of Syria emanated from her. He mentioned that the mothers of the Prophets are made to see such dreams. If the dream which is mentioned here refers to a dream which a person sees while sleeping, then it is related that at the beginning of her pregnancy with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, Âminah bint Wahb saw herself being given the glad tiding that when she gives birth to him, a light which will illuminate the palaces of Syria shall emanate from her.

At-Ṭabarânî narrates on the authority of Abû Maryam al-Kindî that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: **"What was the first thing about your prophet-hood?"** He replied: **"Allâh ﷻ took a covenant from me as He took the covenants from the other Prophets."** He then recited this verse: **"We took from the Prophets their covenant and from you and from Nûh..."** *(Sûrah al-Ahzâb, 33: 7)* And the glad tidings which were conveyed by Îsâ ﷺ. The mother of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw in her dream that a light emanated from before her with which the palaces of Syria were illuminated. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: **"And beyond that."** He said this two or three times.

If the dream referred to was something which was seen with the physical eyes [during consciousness], as stated by Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ with regard to the verse: **"The vision that We showed you was merely to test the people."** *(Sûrah Banî Isrâ'îl/al-Isrâ', 17: 60)*, that it refers to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ physically seeing it on the night of Mi'râj,

then it has also been narrated that Âminah saw this at the time of his birth.

Ibn Is-ḥâq said: **“Âminah bint Wahb used to relate that when she was pregnant with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, [an angel] came to her and said: ‘You are bearing the leader of this nation. When he is born, you must say: ‘I place him in the refuge of the One [Allâh] from the evil of every jealous person.’ A sign of this is that when he is born, a light will come out with him. This light will illuminate the palaces of Buṣrâ in Syria. When he is born, name him Muḥammad. His name in the Taurâh is Aḥmad. The inhabitants of the heavens and earth praise him. His name in the Injîl is Aḥmad. The inhabitants of the heavens and earth praise him. His name in the Qur’ân is Muḥammad.’”**

Ibn Sa‘d[1] narrates from al-Wâqidî through several chains that Âminah bint Wahb said: **“When I fell pregnant with him – the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ - I did not experience any difficulty even till the time when I gave birth to him. When he separated from me, a light which illuminated the east and west came out with him. He then fell to the ground, leaning on his hands. He took a handful of sand and raised his head towards the heavens.”** Another Ḥadîth states: **“He fell on his knees, and a light which illuminated the palaces of Syria and its market places came out with him. This light illuminated all this to such an extent that I could even see the necks of the camels in Buṣrâ. And his head was raised towards the heavens.”**

Al-Bayhaqî narrates from ‘Uthmân ibn Abî al-‘Âṣ ﷺ who said: **“My mother related to me that she witnessed Âminah bint Wahb giving birth to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. She said: ‘Every single thing in the room was illuminated. I was watching the stars coming closer and closer to the extent that I said to myself: ‘They will fall on me.’”**[2]

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* narrates the Ḥadîth of ‘Utbah ibn ‘Abd as-Sulamî about the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that his mother said: **“I saw a light which illuminated the palaces of Syria emanating**

(1) Ibn Saa‘d in "At-Tabakat" (1/98).

(2) Checked by Al-Baihaqi in "Dalaa‘el An-Nobowwa" (1/112).

from me."(1)

Ibn Is-ḥâq narrates from Jahm ibn Abî Jahm from ‘Abdullâh ibn Ja‘far from someone who narrates from Ḥalîmah *raḍiyallâhu ‘anhâ* – his foster mother – that Âminah bint Wahb informed her saying: **"When I fell pregnant with him, I never experienced any pregnancy easier than this nor any pregnancy more blessed than this. I saw a light like a star coming out of me when I gave birth to him. This light illuminated the necks of the camels in Buṣrâ."**(2)

The appearance of this light at the time of his birth is an indication of the light which he came with in order to guide the people on earth, and with which the darkness of polytheism was removed. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Surely there has come to you, from Allâh, a light and a manifest Book. Through which Allâh guides those who became subservient to His pleasure to the paths of peace, and He removes them from darkness into light with His order, and He leads them to the straight path."** *(Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 15-16)* **"Therefore those who believed in him, kept company with him, helped him, and followed the light that was sent down with him – it is they who have attained their goal."** *(Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 157)* This same meaning is conveyed in the following famous couplets which were said by his uncle, ‘Abbâs ﷺ:

وأنــت لمــا وُلــدتَ أشــرقت الــ ـــ أرض وضـــاءت بـــنورك الأفـــقُ

فـنحن فـي ذلـك الـضياء وفـي الـ ـــ ـــنور وســـبل الرشـــاد نختـــرق

"When you were born, the earth was illuminated, and the horizons were glittering with your light. We are now traversing in that light, illumination, and paths of rectitude."

As for the palaces of Buṣrâ being illuminated by his light, this is a reference to the special light which Syria received from the light of his prophet-hood. Syria was the centre of his authority. Ka‘b ﷺ states that the following is mentioned in the previous books: **"Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allâh, his birth shall be in Makkah, his place of emigration shall be Yathrib [Madînah], and his authority shall extend to Syria."** The prophet-hood of Muḥammad ﷺ thus commenced from Makkah, and his authority

(1) Checked by Ahmad in his Musnad (4/127).

(2) Checked by Ibn Isaac in "As-sira" (1/165).

extended till Syria. It is for this reason that he was taken on the night journey (Isrâ') to Syria – to Bayt al-Maqdis – just as Ibrâhîm ﷺ had emigrated to Syria before him.

A scholar of the past said: **"Every Prophet was commissioned** [as a Prophet] from Syria. If he was not commissioned from there, he emigrated there. Towards the end of time, knowledge and *îmân* will remain firm in Syria. The light of prophet-hood will be brightest there over all the other Islamic lands.

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates a Hadîth from 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ and Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ, while al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates it from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"I saw the spine of the book being removed from under my pillow. I followed it with my eyes and saw that it was a shining spine which was being taken to Syria. Listen! When trials and tribulations occur, îmân will be in Syria."**(1)

The *Musnad*, at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There will be emigrations after emigrations. The best people on earth shall be those who remain adherent in the place to which Ibrâhîm ﷺ emigrated."**(2) That is, Syria.

It is in Syria that 'Isâ ﷺ will descend at the end of time. He is the one who gave the glad tidings of Muhammad ﷺ. When he descends, he will affirm the religion of Muhammad ﷺ and rule by it. He will not accept any other religion from anyone. He will break the cross, kill the pig, apply the *jizyah*, and offer salâh behind the imam of the Muslims. He will say: **"This nation is a combination of imams to each other."** This is a reference to the fact that he is following their religion and not cancelling it. Towards the end of time, Syria will be the place of resurrection.(3) People from around the world will thus be taken to it before the day of Resurrection. The best people on earth will emigrate to the land to which Ibrâhîm ﷺ emigrated. It is obviously the land of Syria. As was mentioned previously that the best on earth shall be those who remain most adherent to the land to which Ibrâhîm ﷺ emigrated.

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(1) Checked by Ahmad (4/198) and Al-Hakem (4/509).

(2) Checked by Abu Dawoud (2842), Ahmad (2/199) and Al-Hakem (4/486). and Al-Munthery mentioned it in At-Targhib (4/61) Hadith (7).

(3) As in Hadith Maymounah to Ibn Majah (1407) And Ahmad (6/463).

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Go to Syria because it is the prime land of Allâh ﷻ on earth. His choicest servants are selected for this land."**(1) Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh*, and by Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* in their *Sahîh*. Abû Umâmah said: **"The Final Hour will not take place until the good people of Iraq emigrate to Syria, and the evil people of Syria emigrate to Iraq."** Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The Final Hour will not take place until a fire appears from the land of Hijâz and the necks of camels in Busrâ are illuminated by it."**(2)

This fire appeared from the Hijâz near Madînah, and the necks of the camels of Busrâ were seen by the light which emanated from this fire. This was in the year 654 A.H. It was after this that the catastrophe of Baghdad took place, the caliph and most of the residents of Baghdad were killed. The destruction of the land of Iraq took place at the hands of the Tartars, and the good people of Iraq emigrated to Syria at that time. As for the evil people, a fire will appear towards the end of time and drive them by force towards Syria so that all the people may assemble at Syria before the Final Hour.

Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The tent of the Muslims on the day of the fierce battle will be at al-Ghûtah which is to one side of the city called Damascus. It is one of the best cities of Syria."**(3) It is also narrated by al-Hâkim with the words: **"It will be the best abodes of the Muslims on that day."**(4)

Brothers! Whoever is a member of this *ummah* is from among the best nations in the sight of Allâh ﷻ. He says: **"You are the best of nations chosen for mankind."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 110)* The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"You surpass seventy nations. You are**

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(1) Checked by Abu Dawoud (2483) and Ahmad (5/33) and Al-Hakem (4/510) and he said: this hadith's Isnad is correct and they did not check it and Ad-Dahaby agreed with him and Al-Munthery mentioned it in At-Targhib (4/60) Hadith (2).

(2) Al-Bukhari (7118) and Muslim (2902).

(3) Checked by Abu Dawoud (4298).

(4) Al-Mustadrak (4/486).

the best and most honourable of them in the sight of Allâh ﷻ."(1)

Since this unlettered Messenger and Prophet was the best and most superior of all creations, his *ummah* is the best and most superior of all nations. If a person is from the best of nations and claims to follow the best of creations [Muhammad ﷺ] – and especially the one who inhabits the best abodes of the Muslims at the end of time – he will have to be embellished with good qualities, and remain aloof from evil qualities. It is most detestable for him to be from among the evil people while claiming allegiance to the best of nations and following the best of Messengers.

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Surely those who believed and did good deeds, they are the best of creation."** *(Sûrah al-Bayyinah, 98: 7)* The best of people are those who believed in Allâh ﷻ and did good deeds.

Allâh ﷻ says: **"You are the best of all nations which has been sent into the world - you enjoin good and forbid evil, and you believe in Allâh."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 110)*

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The best of people is the one who possesses a deep understanding of the religion of Allâh, maintains ties of kinship, commands good and prohibits evil."**(2) Another narration states: **"The best of people is the one who abstains from lying the most, who maintains ties of kinship the most, who commands good the most, and who prohibits evil the most."**(3) He said: **"The people are like mines: the best of them during *jâhilîyyah* shall be the best in Islam, provided they possess deep understanding [of Islam]."**(4)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The best of people is the one who has a long life and good deeds. The worst of people is the one who has a long life and evil deeds."**(5) He said: **"The best of you is the one from whom good is hoped for, and from whose**

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3001) and Ibn Majah (4287, 4288), Ahmad (19511), Ad-Darimy (2760).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (43216).

(3) Al-Baihaqi narrated it in "Al-zuhd Al-kabir" (877), At-Tabarany in "Al-kabir" (24/257), Al-Khara`ety in "Makarem Al-Akhlaq" as well as in "Kanz al-Oummal" (10/182) and Ibn Shaiba (8/351, 15, 174).

(4) Checked by Al-Bukhari (3383) and Muslim (2526).

(5) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2330), Ahmad (19902) and Ad-Darimy (2742).

evil one feels secure. The worst of you is the one from whom there is no hope for good, and there is no security against his evil."(1) He said: **"Should I tell you who is the best of you?"** The Companions ﷺ replied: **"Indeed."** He said: **"Those who when people see them, they are reminded of Allâh ﷻ. Should I tell you who is the worst of you?"** The Companions ﷺ replied: **"Indeed."** He said: **"Those who carry tales, who cause separation between beloveds, who seek misery for the pious."**(2)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The worst of people in the sight of Allâh ﷻ is the person whom people abandon in order to save themselves from his immorality."**(3) He said: **"The worst of people in the sight of Allâh ﷻ on the day of Resurrection shall be the person who was two-faced: he goes to one group of people with one face, and to another group with another face."**(4) He said: **"The worst of people in the sight of Allâh ﷻ is the person who recites the Book of Allâh but does not desist from [the prohibitions] which are in it."**(5) He said: **"The worst of people on the day of Resurrection shall be the person who destroyed his Hereafter for the world of others."**(6)

The actions of the *ummah* are presented to the Prophet ﷺ in the Barzakh (period between the grave and Hereafter). A person should therefore be ashamed of any action being presented to his Prophet which the latter prohibited him from. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stood up during the Farewell Pilgrimage, he said: **"I will be waiting ahead of you at the Fountain (the Haud al-Kawthar – the fountain of abundance) and I will display your large numbers before the other nations. You should therefore not disgrace me on that day."**(7) He is making reference to the fact that he is ashamed of the evils of his *ummah* when they are presented to him.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Some of my followers will be**

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(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2263) and Ibn Hibban (527, 528).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (6/459).

(3) Checked by Al-Bukhari (6054) and Muslim (2591).

(4) Checked by Al-Bukhari (6058) and Muslim (2526).

(5) Checked by An-Nasa'ei (6/11).

(6) Checked by Ibn Majah (3966).

(7) Checked by Ibn Majah (3057) and Ad-Darakotny (18612).

taken towards the left [towards Hell]. I will say: 'O Lord! These are my followers.' I will be told: 'You do not know what they did after you.' I will say: 'Away with, away with the person who changed after me.'"(1) The best of this *ummah* are those who were present in the first era. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The best of eras is my era, then those who come after them, then those who come after them."**(2) He said: **"I was sent in the best eras of the human race, an era after an era, until I came in the era in which I was sent."**(3)

Allâh ﷻ praises his Companions ﷺ in several places in His Book: **"Muhammad, is the Messenger of Allâh. And those who are with him, they are strong against the unbelievers and soft-hearted amongst themselves."** *(Sûrah al-Fath, 48: 29)* **"Allâh was certainly pleased with the believers when they began pledging their allegiance to you under that tree."** *(Sûrah al-Fath, 48: 18)* Allâh ﷻ mentions the companionship of as-Siddîq ﷺ specifically: **"he was saying to his companion: 'Do not grieve, surely Allâh is with us.'"** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 40)*

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ presented the **"bride"** of Islam and displayed her to the people from her private chamber, Abû Bakr ﷺ took out all his wealth and showered it on this **"bride"**. 'Umar ﷺ took out half his wealth in support of him. 'Uthmân ﷺ undertook to pay for the **"wedding feast"** and provided the means for the army [going to Tabûk]. 'Alî ﷺ realized that the world is the succeeding **"wife"** of this **"bride"** and that the two can never be together. He therefore issued three divorces to the world.

All praise is due to Allâh ﷻ who chose us for this mercy, poured this bounty onto us, and gave us these numerous merits through the blessedness of our Messenger ﷺ. He said to us: **"You are the best of all nations which has been sent into the world."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 110)*

Does any nation have someone like Abû Bakr ﷺ; like 'Umar ﷺ who, when he took a particular path, Satan would flee from that path; like 'Uthmân ﷺ who remained most patient under the most restrictive times; like 'Alî ﷺ who was a deep ocean of knowledge, like

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (6584).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (2651) and Muslim (2535).

(3) Checked by Al-Bukhari (3557).

Hamzah ﷺ or al-‘Abbâs ﷺ? Does any nation have anyone like the two friends, Talhah ﷺ and az-Zubayr ﷺ, or someone like Sa‘d ﷺ and Sa‘îd ﷺ? Never! Where will they ever get someone like these personalities? Or do they have anyone like Ibn ‘Auf ﷺ and Abû ‘Ubaydah ﷺ? Or any other two for that matter? If you consider anyone similar to them, you have certainly erred in your calculation.

Where do the other nations have ascetics like Uways, ardent worshippers like ‘Âmir ibn ‘Abd Qays, or a fearful person like ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz? It is impossible! There can be no better criterion than the light of the sun.

Do the other nations have *‘ulamâ’* like Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh*, Mâlik *rahimahullâh*, or the upright ash-Shâfi‘î *rahimahullâh*? How can you even praise him when he is beyond praise? How excellent his foundation and construction was! Do the other nations have anyone higher than al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* and more eminent than him? Or anyone like Ibn Sîrîn *rahimahullâh* who was known for his abstention? Or anyone like Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* who was clothed with fear [of Allâh ﷻ] and knowledge? Or anyone like [Imam] Ahmad *rahimahullâh* who sacrificed and dedicated his life for Allâh ﷻ. By Allâh, none of the nations have anyone like Ibn Hambal *rahimahullâh*. Raise your voice and say this, and there is no harm in saying it: **“You are the best of all nations which has been sent into the world.”** *(Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 110)*

لاح شيب الرأس مني فنصح بعد لهو وشباب ومرح
إخوتي توبوا إلى الله بنا قد لهونا وجهلنا ما صلح
نحن في دار نرى الموت بها لم يدع فيها لذي اللب فرح
يا بني آدم صونوا دينكم ينبغي للدين ألا يطرح
واحمدوا الله الذي أكرمكم بنبي قام فيكم فنصح
بنبي فتح الله به كل خير نلتموه ومنح
مرسل لو يوزن الناس به في التقى والبر خفوا ورجح
فرسول الله أولى بالعلى ورسول الله أولى بالمدح

“The grey hairs on my head have appeared and now we come to our senses after a life of amusement, youthfulness and enjoyment. O brothers! Come, let us repent to Allâh ﷻ because we played around too much and we were ignorant of what was

beneficial for us. We are in an abode where we see death leaving no joy for any person of intelligence. O man! Safeguard your religion because it is unbecoming for a religion to be discarded. Thank Allâh ﷻ who honoured you with a Prophet who came to you and advised you. [Thank Allâh ﷻ who honoured you] with a Prophet at whose hands Allâh ﷻ opened and gave every good which you acquired. He was a Messenger who, if his piety and righteousness were to be weighed against that of the entire creation, theirs will be light and his will be heavy. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is most worthy of greatness. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is most worthy of praise."

ALSO ON THE BIRTH OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLÂH ﷺ

Abû Qatâdah al-Anṣârî ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about fasting on a Monday, so he said: **"It is the day on which I was born and the day on which I received prophethood."**

It is almost unanimously accepted among the *'ulamâ'* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was born on a Monday. This is said by Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ and others. It is related from some scholars that he was born on a Friday. This is a disreputable and rejected opinion. It is related with regard to Abû Ja'far al-Bâqir that he abstained from saying anything in this regard, and said: **"None except Allâh ﷻ knows that."** The reason for his saying this is that he did not receive any reliable information in this regard. He thus abstained from saying anything.

As for the majority of the *'ulamâ'*, they received information in this regard and they said as per whatever information they received. It is also related with regard to Abû Ja'far that he agreed with their opinion that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was born on a Monday. He did this in order to coincide with all the *'ulamâ'*. The Ḥadîth of Abû Qatâdah ﷺ shows that he was born during the day on a Monday. It is also related that he was born at the time of sunrise on that day.

Abû Ja'far ibn Abî Shaybah narrates in his *Târîkh*, and Abû Nu'aym narrates in *ad-Dalâ'il* through a weak chain on the authority of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ ﷺ who said: **"There was a monk at Marr aẓ-Ẓahrân by the name of 'Îṣ. He was from Syria and he used to say: 'O people of Makkah! Soon there will be a child born**

to you to whom the Arabs will pledge allegiance, and he will control the non-Arabs of his time.' Whenever any child was born in Makkah, he would inquire about him."

When it was the morning on which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was born, 'Abdullâh ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib went to Îs and stood in his monastery. He then called out: **"O 'Îs!"** He replied: **"Who is there?"** He said: **"I am 'Abdullâh."** He came to him and said: **"You are the child's father. The child regarding whom I had spoken about has been born on Monday. He shall be commissioned as a Prophet on a Monday, and he will pass away on a Monday."** He said: **"A child was born to me this morning."** He asked: **"What name did you give him?"** He said: **"Muhammad."** The monk said: **"By Allâh, I had hoped that the child is born to your family. This is because of three qualities which we recognize in him, and these three qualities are found in him: (1) his star rose last night, (2) he was born today, (3) his name is Muhammad. Let's go see him because he is the one about whom I used to speak about."**

There are narrations which indicate that he was born at night. The previous session mentioned some traditions which could be used as proofs for this.

The *Sahîh* of al-Hâkim mentions on the authority of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* who said: **"There was a Jewish trader in Makkah. When it was the night on which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was born, he said: 'O Quraysh! Has a child been born to you this night?' They replied: 'We do not know of him.' He said: 'The Prophet of this last nation was born tonight. There is a sign between his shoulders. It has a dense growth of hairs which have the scent of a horse.' They went out with the Jew until they went to his [Prophet's ﷺ] mother and said: 'Show us your son.' She showed him to them. They exposed his back and saw that sign which he had described. On seeing this, the Jew fell unconscious. When he recovered, they asked: 'What is it with you?' He said: 'By Allâh, prophet-hood has now left the Banî Isrâ'îl.'"** This Hadîth shows that he was born with the seal of prophet-hood between his shoulders. This seal of prophet-hood was one of the signs of his prophet-hood through which the people of the Book used to recognize him and inquire about him; and they used to ask to see it.

It is related that when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was at Tabûk,

Heraclius sent someone to go and look at the seal of prophet-hood and come back and describe it to him. A Hadîth of Abû Dharr ﷺ and ‘Utbah ibn ‘Abd ﷺ from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ states that the two angels who had split his chest and filled it with wisdom were the very same who set the seal of prophet-hood on him. This contradicts that above Hadîth of ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*. It is related that this seal was raised from his shoulders after his demise. However, the chain of this Hadîth is weak.

Many strange signs describing his birth are related. One of them is the one narrated from Âminah bint Wahb who said: **“When I gave birth to him, he did not fall as normal children do. Rather, he fell with his hands placed on the ground, and his head facing towards the heavens.”** It is also related that he took a handful of soil when he fell to the ground. Some trackers said: **“If it is a true omen, he shall be victorious over the world.”** It is related that he was placed under a bowl which became cracked, and they found him looking towards the heavens.

The narrations differ as to whether he was born circumcised or not. It is related that he was born circumcised with his umbilical cord cut off. In fact, al-Hâkim said: **“There are *mutawâtir*[1] narrations in this regard.”** It is also related that his grandfather circumcised him. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* remains silent in this regard.

Al-Marwazî said: **“Abû ‘Abdillâh was asked: ‘Was the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ born circumcised?’ He replied: ‘Allâh ﷻ knows best.’ He then said: ‘I do not know.’”** Abû Bakr ‘Abd al-‘Azîz ibn Ja‘far – who was from among our Hambalî scholars – said: **“It is related that he was born circumcised with his umbilical cord cut off. But Abû ‘Abdillâh was not certain enough to authenticate this Hadîth.”**

The month of his birth

There are differences of opinion in this regard. It is said that he was born in Ramadân. This is related from ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr through a chain which is not authentic. It is said that he was born in Rajab, but this is not authentic. It is said that he was born in Rabî‘ al-Awwal, and this is the popular opinion among people. In fact, Ibn

(1) A Hadîth in which the narrators of each era are such a large number that it is impossible for all of them to collude to fabricate a lie.

al-Jauzî and others report unanimity in this regard. However, it is the opinion of the majority of the *'ulamâ'*. They then differ as to the day of the month. Some of them say: **"It is not known. He was born on a Monday in the month of Rabî' al-Awwal without specifying which day of the month it was."**

The majority say that it was a specific day. They then differ and say: the 2nd, 8th, 10th, 12th, 17th, 18th, 21st. It is said that these last two opinions are not correct. The popular and majority opinion is that he was born on a Monday on the 12th of Rabî' al-Awwal. This is the opinion of Ibn Is-hâq and others.

The year of his birth

The majority say that it was in the Year of the Elephants. Qays ibn Makhramah, Qubâth ibn Ashyam and Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ are among those who hold this view. It is related that Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said that he was born on the day of the Elephants. It is said that this narration is false, and that the authentic narration from him is that he was born in the Year of the Elephants.

There are some *'ulamâ'* who state that there is unanimity in this regard and that any opinion in conflict with this is incorrect. It is popularly known that he was born fifty days after the incident of the Elephants. There are other opinions in this regard: fifty five days after this incident, one month after this incident, and forty days after this incident. It is also said that he was born ten years after the Year of the Elephants, twenty three years after, and forty years after. It is also said that he was born fifteen years before the Year of the Elephants. These opinions are incorrect according to the majority of the *'ulamâ'*. And some of them are not authentic from whom they are narrated.

Ibrâhîm ibn al-Mundhir al-Hizâmî said: **"There is no doubt whatsoever among any of our *'ulamâ'* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was born in the Year of the Elephants."** Khalîfah ibn Khayyât said: **"This is unanimously accepted."** The incident of the elephants was a prelude to his prophet-hood and a lead up for his appearance and commissioning. Allâh ﷻ relates this incident in His Book: **"Have you not seen how Allâh dealt with the people of the elephant? Did He not confound their plotting? And He sent upon them flying creatures, flocks after flocks. Pelting them with stones of baked clay. He thus made them like straw that has been eaten down."** *(Sûrah al-Fîl, 105: 1-5)* The question: **"Have**

you not seen how Allâh dealt with the people of the elephant?" is a self-imposing question for anyone who hears this address. It shows that this incident was well-known among them, they knew about it, and that knowledge about it was not concealed from the Arabs, especially the Quraysh and the residents of Makkah. This was an incident which was commonly known to them, and they composed many poems in reference to it.

‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: **"I saw the one who led the elephants and the one who herded them in Makkah. They were blind and were begging for food."** [An indication of the punishment which was meted out to them in this world].

This incident demonstrates the greatness of Makkah, its sanctity, and the sanctity of the House of Allâh which is in this city. The birth of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ soon thereafter is an indication of his prophet-hood and messenger-ship. He was sent to demonstrate the greatness of this House, pilgrimage to it, and salâh in its direction. This city was his hometown and birthplace. When he invited its residents towards Allâh ﷻ, they compelled him to leave it because of the **"harm"** which they experienced at his hands. Allâh ﷻ then gave him victory over them and enabled him to enter the city with force. He took control of the city and its residents came under his authority. He then showed his kindness to them, freed them and pardoned them. The Prophet’s ﷺ possession of this city, his control over it, and his *ummah’s* control over it after him are all indications of the authenticity of his prophet-hood. This is because Allâh ﷻ restrained anyone who intended harm to this city and destroyed such a person. He then gave authority over it to His Messenger ﷺ and his *ummah*. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh restrained the elephants from Makkah and gave authority to His Messenger and the believers over it."**(1)

The sole objective of the Messenger ﷺ and his *ummah* was to respect, honour and uphold the sanctity of the House. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ disapproved of those who made the following statement on the day of the conquest of Makkah: **"Today the Ka‘bah will become lawful to us."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said in reply: **"Today the sanctity of the Ka‘bah will be**

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (112) and Muslim (1355).

upheld."(1)

The people of *jâhilîyyah* had altered the religion of Ibrâhîm ﷺ and Ismâ'îl ﷺ through their polytheistic innovations and changes to some of the rites of hajj. Allâh ﷻ therefore gave possession of Makkah to His Messenger ﷺ and his *ummah* who purified it from all this and returned it to the pure religion of Ibrâhîm ﷺ. It was he and his son, Ismâ'îl ﷺ, who had supplicated to Allâh ﷻ to send to them a Messenger who would recite His verses to them, purify them, teach them the Book and wisdom. Allâh ﷻ thus sent Muhammad ﷺ from the progeny of Ismâ'îl ﷺ with these very qualities. He purified the House and its environs of polytheism and returned the religion to the pure religion of Ibrâhîm ﷺ, and to *tauhîd* (absolute monotheism) for which this House was built. **"When We prepared for Ibrâhîm the site of this House, [We said]: 'Associate nothing with Me. Keep My House purified for those who circuit it, for those who stand upright [in prayer], for those who bow down and for those who prostrate."** *(Sûrah al-Hajj, 22: 26)*

As for the Qarâmitah who took possession of the House thereafter, this was a punishment because of the sins of people. Their possession of it did not reach the stage where they destroyed it, damaged it, or prevented people from visiting it and making pilgrimage of it – as would have been the case with the people of the Elephants had they been able to destroy it and prevent people from the pilgrimage. The Qarâmitah took away the Black Stone and door of the Ka'bah, they killed pilgrims and confiscated their wealth; but they were unable to completely stop the people from performing the pilgrimage, nor were they able to completely destroy the Ka'bah – as was the intention of the people of the Elephants. Allâh ﷻ then disgraced them, humiliated them, exposed them, and exposed their conspiracies.

The Grand House continued enjoying greatness, visits, hajj, 'umrah, and salâh towards it. All praise is due to Allâh ﷻ that none of this was abandoned. The most that the Qarâmitah could do was that they threatened the pilgrims of Iraq until they stopped going on pilgrimage for a few years and then returned once again. Allâh ﷻ continued testing His believing servants with whatever tribulations He willed, but His religion is still existing and protected. A group

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (4280).

from the *ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ is still upholding it. This group is not harmed by anyone who abandons them. This shall continue until the order of Allâh ﷻ descends. Allâh ﷻ says: **"They desire to extinguish the light of Allâh with their mouths and Allâh refuses except that He brings His light to perfection even though the unbelievers abhor it. It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the true religion in order to give it supremacy over every religion even though the polytheists abhor it."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 32-33)*

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ informed us that the hajj and 'umrah to this House will continue even after the appearance of Ya'jûj and Ma'jûj.(1) It will continue in this way until the Abyssinians destroy it(2) and cast its bricks into the ocean. This will happen after Allâh ﷻ sends a gentle breeze which takes away the souls of all the believers, and not a single believer remains on earth.(3) The Qur'ân will be taken away from the hearts and pages. No Qur'ân, no îmân and no good will remain on earth.(4) The Final Hour will take place after that and will only apply to the evil people.(5)

The second part of the Hadîth which was quoted at the beginning of this session states: **"and the day on which I received prophet-hood."** In other words, he was made a Prophet on a Monday.

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was born on a Monday, received prophet-hood on a Monday, emigrated from Makkah to Madînah on a Monday, entered Madînah on a Monday, passed away on a Monday, and the Black Stone was raised on a Monday."**(6) Ibn Is-hâq states that prophet-hood came down to him on a Friday. The Hadîth of Abû Qatâdah refutes this.

There are differences of opinion with regard to which month prophet-hood commenced. Some say Ramadân and others say Rajab. But this is not authentic. Some say it was Rabî' al-Awwal. Others say

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (1593).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (1596).

(3) Checked by Muslim (2907).

(4) Checked by Ibn-Majah (4049).

(5) Checked by Muslim (2949).

(6) Al-Musnad (1/277) and it includes Ibn Luhaie'a.

that it was on a Monday on the 8th of Rabî‘ al-Awwal.

As for the Isrâ’ (Night Journey), it is said that it took place in Rajab but many scholars consider this to be a weak opinion. Some say that it was in Rabî‘ al-Awwal. This is the opinion of Ibrâhîm al-Ḥarbî and others.

As for his entry into Madînah and demise, both these were unanimously in Rabî‘ al-Awwal, with differences in specifying which day of the month.

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about fasting on Mondays, he said: **“It is the day on which I was born and the day on which I received prophet-hood.”**(1) In this there is a reference to the desirability of fasting on the days in which the bounties of Allâh ﷻ are showered on His servants. The greatest bounty of Allâh ﷻ on this *ummah* was bringing Muḥammad ﷺ to them, appointing him as a Prophet, and sending him to them. Allâh ﷻ says: **“Allâh bestowed a favour on the believers when He sent in their midst a Messenger from among themselves.”** *(Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 164)*

The favour of sending Muḥammad ﷺ to this *ummah* is far greater than the creation of the heavens and the earth, the sun and moon, the winds, the night and day, the sending down of rain, the growing of plants, and various other favours and bounties. This is because all these bounties included those of the human race who rejected Allâh ﷻ, His Messengers, and meeting Him [in the Hereafter]. They thus returned the bounty of Allâh with unbelief.

As for the bounty of sending Muḥammad ﷺ, it was through it that the good of this world and the Hereafter was completed, and through it the religion of Allâh ﷻ which He selected for His servants was perfected. Accepting him [as a Prophet of Allâh] was the cause of their fortune in this world and in the Hereafter. Therefore, it is a meritorious act to fast on a day in which these bounties are renewed by Allâh ﷻ upon His believing servants. This actually entails showing gratitude for the times in which bounties are showered. A parallel to this is fasting on the day of ‘Âshûrâ’ when Allâh ﷻ saved Nûḥ ﷺ from drowning, saved Mûsâ ﷺ and his people from Pharaoh and his people, and drowned the latter in the ocean. Nûḥ ﷺ and Mûsâ ﷺ

(1) Checked by Al-Baihaqi (4/300) and At-Tabarany in his "Tarikh" also means "History" (2/293) and Ahmad (5/297).

kept fast on this day as a way of showing their gratitude to Allâh ﷻ. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ also kept fast on this day in emulation of the Prophets of Allâh. He said to the Jews: **"We have more right over Mûsâ than you."** He kept fast on this day and ordered others to do so as well.(1)

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to wait to keep fast on Mondays and Thursdays.(2) This is related about him from the Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*, Abû Hurayrah ﷺ and Usâmah ibn Zayd ﷺ. The Hadîth of Usâmah ﷺ states that he asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about it and he said: **"These are two days on which the deeds are presented to the Lord of the worlds. I would like my deeds to be presented while I am in a state of fasting."**(3)

The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ states that when he was asked about this, he said: **"These are two days in which every Muslim is forgiven. However, two Muslims who are not in talking terms with each other are not forgiven. Allâh ﷻ says [to the angels]: 'Leave them until they reconcile.'"**(4)

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates: **"The doors of Paradise are opened on Mondays and Thursdays. Every person who does not ascribe partners with Allâh ﷻ is forgiven, except the person who severed relations with his brother. The angels are ordered: 'Delay the matter of these two until they reconcile.'"**(5)

The Hadîth of Abû Umâmah ﷺ states: **"The deeds are raised on Mondays and Thursdays. Those who seek forgiveness are forgiven, and those who bear malice towards each other are left because of their malice."**(6) Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The deeds of man are presented to Allâh ﷻ on the evening of every Thursday – the night preceding Friday. The deeds of a person who severed ties of kinship are**

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (2004) and Muslim (1130).

(2) Checked by Ibn Majah (1738) At-Tirmidhi (752) and Ahmad (22082).

(3) Checked by Abu Dawoud (2436), An-Nasa'ei: (4/517), Ahmad (5/200) and Ad-Darimy.

(4) Checked by Ibn Majah (1740).

(5) Checked by Muslim (2565) and Abu Dawoud (4916).

(6) Checked by At-Tabarany (9776).

not accepted."(1)

One of the Tâbi‘ûn used to cry to his wife on Thursdays and she used to cry to him. He would say to her: **"Our deeds are to be presented before Allâh ﷻ today. O you who are faking your deeds, to whom are you faking your deeds when the watcher [Allâh ﷻ] is watching? O you who are procrastinating by having long hopes! For how long are you going to procrastinate when life is so short?"**

صـــروف الحـــتف متـــرعة الكـــئوس تـــدار علـــى الـــرعايا والـــرءوس
فـــلا تتـــبع هـــواك فكـــل شـــخص يـــصير إلـــى بلـــى وإلـــى دروس
وخـــف مـــن هـــول يـــوم قمطريـــر مخـــوف شـــره ضـــنك عـــبوس
فمالـــــك غيـــــر تقـــــوى الله زادا وفعلـــك حـــين تقبـــر مـــن أنـــيس
فحـــــسنه ليعـــــرض مـــــستقيما ففـــي الإثنـــين يعـــرض والخمـــيس

"The adversities of death have their cups full, and they are passed around the masses and the leaders [i.e. everyone has to taste death]. Do not follow your desires, for each person is going to reach death and be wiped out. Fear the terror of the calamitous day whose evil is terrorizing, wretched and dismal. You have no provision except the fear of Allâh and your deeds when you are placed in the grave away from all friends. Make good your deeds so that they may be presented [in the court of Allâh ﷻ] as upright deeds. It is on Mondays and Thursdays that deeds are presented [to Allâh ﷻ].

THE DEMISE OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLÂH ﷺ

Abû Sa‘îd al-Khudrîy ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sat on the pulpit and said: **"Allâh ﷻ gave a servant the choice to choose between the attractions of this world and anything else which he likes with what He has in store for him. The servant chose what Allâh ﷻ has in store for him."** On hearing this, Abû Bakr ﷺ began crying and said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! May our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you."** Abû Sa‘îd ﷺ says: **"We were astonished by this statement [of Abû Bakr ﷺ], and some people said: 'Look at this old man: the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is informing us about a servant whom Allâh ﷻ gave the choice to choose between whatever attractions of this world he likes and**

(1) Checked by Ahmad (48412).

what Allâh has in store for him, and he is saying: ‘May our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you.’" Abû Sa‘îd ﷺ said: **"It was the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ who was given the choice, and Abû Bakr ﷺ was the only one who understood this."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who was most generous to me with his companionship and wealth was Abû Bakr. If I were to take a bosom friend from the inhabitants of earth, I would take Abû Bakr as my bosom friend. However, the friendship of Islam surpasses everything. All the windows leading to the musjid must be shut, except for the window of Abû Bakr."**(1) May Allâh ﷻ be pleased with him.

Death is decreed against every living being, whether the Prophets, Messengers, or anyone else. Allâh ﷻ said to His Prophet ﷺ: **"Without doubt you also have to die and they will also die."** *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 30)* **"We did not grant any human before you [the ability] to live forever. If you then die, will they live forever? Every soul shall taste death. We test you through evil and good by way of trial. It is to Us that you shall be returned."** *(Sûrah al-Ambiyâ', 21: 34-35)* **"Muhammad is but a Messenger. Many Messengers have passed before him. So if he dies or is killed, will you turn back on your heels? And whoever turns back on his heels will never harm Allâh in any way. And Allâh shall reward the grateful."** *(Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 144)*

Allâh ﷻ created Âdam ﷺ from the soil of earth and blew of His spirit into him. His soul in his body and the souls of his progeny in their bodies were given as loans in this world. Allâh ﷻ decreed on Âdam ﷺ and his progeny that He will take back his and their souls from these bodies, and return the bodies from what they were created, viz. the soil. He promised that the bodies will be removed from the ground a second time and the souls will be returned to the bodies a second time. These will be given in their ownership [and not loaned to them as previously], and they will not be taken back in the everlasting abode.

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Therein shall you live and therein shall you die, and there from shall you be brought forth."** *(Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 25)* **"It is from this earth that We created you, and therein We return you, and from it We shall remove you a second time."**

(1) Al-Bukhari (3654) and Muslim (2382).

(Sûrah Tâ Hâ, 20: 55) **“Allâh brought you forth from the earth like a plant. He will then return you to it and bring you forth afresh.”** *(Sûrah Nûh, 71: 17-18)*

Allâh ﷻ demonstrated to us a proof in this world on returning the bodies from soil by causing plants to grow from the ground, and giving life to the dead land through rain. He demonstrated to us the proof for returning the souls to their bodies after they had separated themselves by taking away their souls in their sleep and returning them to them when they wake up. Allâh ﷻ says: **“Allâh takes away the lives when the time for their death arrives, and those that do not die, He takes them away in their sleep. Then He withholds those upon whom He decreed death and conveys others till an appointed time. In this are signs for those who ponder.”** *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 42)*

The *Musnad* of al-Bazzâr relates: Anas ﷺ narrates that when they fell asleep in salâh, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to them: **“O people! These souls are loaned to the bodies of man. Allâh ﷻ withholds them if He wills and lets them go if He wills.”**(1)

استعدي للموت يا نفس واسعي ... لنجاة فالحازم المستعد

قد تيقنت أنه ليس للحي ... خلود ولا من الموت بد

إنما أنت مستعيرة ما سو ... ف تردين والعواري ترد

“O soul! Prepare for death and hasten for salvation for an intelligent person is he who is prepared. It is an absolute fact that there is no eternity for any living thing, and that there is no escape from death. You are merely loaned and you shall soon be returned. Loaned items have to be returned.”

Another said:

فما أهل الحياة لنا بأهل ... ولا دار الفناء لنا بدار

وما أموالنا والأهل فيها ... ولا أولادنا إلا عواري

وأنفسنا إلى أجل قريب ... سيأخذها المعير من المعار

“The people in life are not really our families. A temporary abode is not really an abode for us. Our wealth, families and

(1) Mentioned by Al-Okaily in "Ad-Do‘afaa‘ (3/330) and Az-Zayla‘y in "Nasb ar-Raya" (2/159).

children in this world are nothing but loans to us. Our souls are to reach a limit soon. The Being who loaned all this to us shall soon take back whatever He loaned."

The separation of the soul from the body occurs after a severe pain which is experienced by both the soul and the body. This is because the soul became attached and affiliated to this body. Its affinity with it, its intermingling with it, and its entry into it are so intense that they both have become like a single thing. They do not separate from each other except through severe toiling and great pain. Man has never tasted a pain like this in his life. Allâh ﷻ makes reference to this: **"Every soul shall taste death."** *(Sûrah Âl ‘Imrân, 3: 185)* Ar-Rabî‘ ibn Khathîm said: **"Engage in abundant remembrance of death because you have never tasted anything like it before."**

This pain increases when the person who is in the throes of death realizes that when the soul departs from his body, it will be reduced to a filthy corpse which insects will eat and soil will wear out until it is reduced to soil. Furthermore, the soul which leaves him does not know where its abode is going to be – in Paradise or in Hell? If the person was a sinner who persisted in sinning till his death, he may well be convinced that his soul is going to the Hell-fire. His regret and pain will thus be multiplied. Together with this, it may well be that he is shown his abode in the Hell-fire and he sees it visually or is informed of where it is. He thus experiences the misery of death, its severe pain, and the knowledge of his evil destination. This is what Allâh ﷻ refers to when He says: **"When the shank is wrapped around the shank."** *(Sûrah al-Qiyâmah, 75: 29)* – as explained by many past scholars. The person thus experiences the pangs of death with the remorse of all that he missed. Don't even ask about his miserable condition!

Allâh ﷻ refers to this as a *sakrah* (stupor) because the pain of death and everything else which accompanies it causes a person to be become stupefied and lose his intellect in most cases. Allâh ﷻ says: **"The stupor of death has certainly arrived."** *(Sûrah Qâf, 50: 19)*

ألا للمـــوت كـــأس أي كـــأس وأنـــت لكأســـه لا بـــد حاســـي

إلـــى كـــم والممـــات إلـــى قـــريب تذكـــر بالممـــات وأنـــت ناســـي

"Listen! Death has a cup, and what a cup it is! And you have no alternative but to drink from that cup. For how long are you

going to procrastinate whereas death to a close person is reminding you of your own death. Yet you are forgetful of it!?"

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered us to engage in abundant remembrance of death. He said: **"Engage in the abundant remembrance of the thing which puts an end to all pleasures."** That is, death.(1)

A Ḥadîth states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed by an assembly where the people were laughing aloud. He said to them: **"Mix your assembly by thinking of the thing which spoils all pleasures."** – death. There are several benefits in engaging in the abundant remembrance of death. Some of them are:

It encourages a person to prepare for death before its arrival, it curtails ones hopes, it makes him content with little sustenance, it causes him to be abstinent in this world while yearning for the Hereafter, it makes the hardships of this world insignificant, it prevents one from greed, haughtiness, and expansion in the pleasures of the world. Abû Dharr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The scriptures of Mûsâ ﷺ were filled with admonitions: 'I am astonished at the person who is convinced of death, yet he rejoices! I am astonished at the person who is convinced of the Hell-fire, yet he laughs! I am astonished at the person who is convinced of fate, yet he plans and plots! I am astonished at the person who looks at the world and how quickly it overturns people, yet he feels at peace with it!'"**(2)

It is related that the treasure which belonged to the two youngsters [mentioned in Sûrah al-Kahf] was actually a large tablet of gold on which the above was written.

Al-Ḥasan said: **"This death has destroyed the comforts of those who are in comforts. You should therefore seek a life in which there is no death."** He said: **"Death disgraced this world and left no joy in it for an intelligent person."** Another said: **"The remembrance of death snatched away the pleasure of every life and the joy of every comfort."** He then began crying and said: **"O how I desire an abode in which there is no death!"**

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(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2307) and he said: This is a good Hadith, Ṣaḥiḥ Gharib and An-Nasa'ei: (4/4) and Ibn Majah (4258), Ahmad (7865).

(2) Checked by Ibn-Hibban in his Ṣaḥiḥ (361).

اذكـــر المـــوت هـــاذم اللـــذات وتهـــيأ لمـــصرع ســـوف يأتـــي

“Remember death, the destroyer of all pleasures, and prepare for the ruin which is bound to come.

يـا غافـل القلـب عـن ذكـر المنـيات عمـا قلـيل سـتُلقى بـين أمـوات
فاذكـر محلـك مـن قـبل الحلـول بـه وتـب إلـى الله مـن لهـو ولـذات
إن الحمـام لـه وقـت إلـى أجـل فاذكـر مـصائب أيـام وسـاعات
لا تطمـئن إلـى الدنـيا وزينـتها قـد آن للمـوت يـا ذا اللـب أن ياتـي

“O you who are heedless of remembering death! Soon shall you be cast among the dead. So think of your abode before you go to it, and repent to Allâh for all your play and pleasures. The fate of death has a certain time, so remember the afflictions of days and hours. Do not be at peace with the world and its attractions. O intelligent person! The time of death has arrived.”

Someone said: **“There are two things which severed all the pleasures of the world from me: remembrance of death and standing before Allâh ﷻ.”**

وكـيف يلـذ العـيش مـن كـان موقـنا بـأن المـنايا بغـتة سـتُعاجله
وكـيف يلـذ العـيش مـن كـان موقـنا بـأن إلـه العـرش لا بـد سـائله

“How can a person who is convinced that death will come upon him suddenly ever enjoy life? How can a person who is convinced that the Lord of the Throne is going to question him ever enjoy life?”

Abû ad-Dardâ’ ﷺ said: **“Death is sufficient as an admonisher, and time is sufficient as a separator. Today we are in our homes, tomorrow we shall be in our graves.”**

اذكـــر المـــوت ولازم ذكـــره إن فـي المـوت لـذي اللـب عبـر
كفـى بالمـوت فـاعلم واعظـا لمـن المـوت علـيه قـد قُـدِر

“Remember death and remember it constantly. Surely there are lessons in death for a person of intelligence. Death is sufficient as an admonisher for the person on whom death is destined.”

Man's heedlessness with regard to death although it is bound to come is most astonishing. Having high hopes are certain to make man heedless.

كلـــــــنا فـــــــي غفلـــــــة والمـــــوت يغـــــدو ويـــــروح
لبنـــــي الدنـــــيا مـــــن المـــــوت غـــــــــبوق وصـــــــــبوح
سيـــــــصير المـــــــرء يـــــــوما جـــــسدا مـــــا فـــــيه روح
بـــــين عينـــــي كـــــل حـــــي علـــــم المـــــوت يلـــــوح
نُـــــحْ علـــــى نفـــــسك يـــــا مـــــسكين إن كـــــنت تـــــنوح
لـــــتموتن ولـــــو عُمِّـــــرتَ مـــــا عُمِّـــــر نـــــوح

"We are all heedless while death comes in the morning and evening. The people of this world have an evening and morning meal of death [i.e. someone or the other tastes death in the morning and evening]. There will come a day when a person will be a body without a soul. On the forehead of every living creature there is a glittering sign of death [announcing that he is bound to die]. O you poor person! If you want to wail and mourn, then wail and mourn over your own self. You will most certainly die even if you are given a life as long as the life of Nûh ﷺ."

Death is something which is naturally abhorred because of the severity and intense misery which it comes with. It is for this reason that every Prophet did not die until he was given a choice. It is for this reason that there is hesitation about this with regard to a believer, as in the Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ says: 'I did not hesitate about anything which I was to do as much as I hesitated in taking away the life of My believing servant. He dislikes death and I dislike to cause him pain, but there is no alternative to it.'"**(1)

Ibn Abî Mulaykah said: **"When Ibrâhîm's ﷺ life was taken away, Allâh ﷻ asked him: 'How did you find death?' He replied: 'O my Lord! It was as if my soul was being extracted with the afterbirth.' Allâh said: 'In fact We had lightened your death for you.'"** Abû Is-hâq said: **"Mûsâ ﷺ was asked: 'How did you find the taste of death?' He said: 'It felt like a skewer which was plunged into wool and then pulled out with force.' Allâh said: 'In**

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (6502).

fact We had lightened your death for you.’”

It is related that when ‘Îsâ ﷺ used to think of death, his skin would drip blood. He used to say to his disciples: **“Supplicate to Allâh ﷻ to lighten death for me because I have become so fearful of death that this fear is putting me on the verge of death.”**

How can anyone desire to live forever when every single Prophet passed away?! How can a person feel safe from the attack of death when the chosen and beloved servants of Allâh ﷻ were not safe from it! How preposterous! How preposterous!

قد مات كل نبي ... ومات كل نبيه
ومات كل شريف ... وعاقل وسفيه
لا يُوحِشَنْك طريق ... كل الخلائق فيه

“Every Prophet died and so did every distinguished person. Every honourable person died, and so did every intelligent and foolish person. Do not let this path [of death] make you feel lonely because the entire creation is on this path.”

The first time the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ informed of the end of his life by the approach of his time was with the revelation of Sûrah an-Naṣr. Ibn ‘Abbâs ﷺ was asked: **“Did the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ know when he is going to pass away?”** He replied: **“Yes.”** He was asked: **“How did he know?”** He said: **“Allâh ﷻ placed the sign of his** death in this sûrah: **‘When there comes the help of Allâh and victory’, i.e. the victory of the conquest of Makkah, ‘and you see people entering the religion of Allâh in droves’** *(Sûrah an-Nasr, 110: 1, 2)* This was the sign of his demise. He had also announced his death to Fâṭimah *raḍiyallâhu ‘anhâ.*

The meaning of this sûrah is: O Muḥammad! Since Allâh ﷻ enabled you to conquer the lands and people began entering your religion to which you invited them in droves, your time has drawn near. You should therefore prepare to meet Us by engaging in Our praise and seeking forgiveness. You have fulfilled your purpose of conveying the message. What We have for you is better than this world. You should therefore prepare to shift to Us. Ibn ‘Abbâs ﷺ said: **“When this sûrah was revealed, the demise of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was announced. He therefore began toiling even more in matters of the Hereafter.”**

It is related that he engaged in such ardent worship that he became like a worn out water skin. He used to recite the Qur'ân once every year to Jibra'îl ﷺ but recited it two times that year. He used to remain in seclusion (*i'tikâf*) during the last ten days of every Ramadân but remained for twenty days that year.(1) He also engaged in additional remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and seeking forgiveness from Him.

Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"Towards the end of his life, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ would not stand, sit, come, and go without saying: '*Sub-hânallâh wa bi hamdihi* (glory and praise be to Allâh)'. I mentioned this to him and he said: 'I have been ordered to do this.' He then recited this sûrah [Sûrah an-Nasr]."**(2) 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"Before his demise, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to say this in abundance: '*Sub-hânallâhi wa bi hamdihi, astaghfirullâha wa atûbu ilayh* (Glory and praise be to Allâh, I seek forgiveness from Allâh and repent to Him).' So I said to him: 'You are making a supplication which you never used to make before.' He said: 'My Lord informed me that I will see a sign in my *ummah* and when I see it, I must sing His praise and seek His forgiveness. I have seen this sign.' He then recited this sûrah [Sûrah an-Nasr]."**(3)

If the leader of all the obedient servants is ordered to conclude his deeds with good, what can be said of the condition of the sinner who is contaminated with sins and is in need of purification? What can be said of the one who has not been warned of his approaching end through revelation? What can be said of the one who has been warned through his grey hairs and his friends have been snatched away by death?

كفى مؤذنا باقتراب الأجل شباب تولى وشيب نزل
ومـوت اللذاذة هل بعده بقاء يـوملـه مـن عقل
إذا ارتحلتْ قرناء الفتى على حكم ريب المنون ارتحل

"The departure of youth and the arrival of grey hairs are sufficient announcers of the approaching death. When the

(1) As it is known for Al-Bukhari (4998).

(2) Checked by At-Tabary in his explanation (30/216), Ibn Kathir in his Explanation (4/563) and they said: strange.

(3) Checked by Muslim (484).

pleasures have died, can a person of intelligence hope for any existence thereafter? When the friends of a person have departed by the order of death, it is as though he too has departed [his turn is soon to come].”

Wuhayb ibn al-Ward said: **“Allâh ﷻ has an angel in the heavens who announces every day and night: ‘O you who are in their fifties! The time for harvesting the crop has approached. O you who are in their sixties! Come forward to give your account. O you who are in their seventies! What have you sent forth, and what have you left behind? O you who are in their eighties! You have no excuse [you had plenty of time to prepare].’”**

Wahb said: **“An announcer calls out: ‘O you who are in their sixties! Consider yourselves to be among the dead.’”**

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“Allâh ﷻ excuses a person to whom he gave a long life until he reaches the age of sixty.”**(1) Another Hadîth states: **“An announcement shall be made on the day of Resurrection: ‘Where are those who reached sixty years of age?’ It is the age regarding which Allâh ﷻ said: ‘Did We not grant you a life so that whoever was to ponder could ponder therein?’** *(Sûrah Fâtir, 35: 37)***.”**(2)

Another Hadîth states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“The age of the people of my *ummah* shall be between sixty and seventy. A minority among them shall live beyond that.”**(3) Another Hadîth states: **“The battle ground of death is between sixty and seventy.”**(4) Another Hadîth states: **“There is a time of harvesting for everything, and the time of harvesting for my *ummah* shall be between sixty and seventy.”** It was during this period that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away.

Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* said: **“Whoever reaches the age which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ reached must set aside a shroud (*kafan*) for himself.”**

وإن امـــرأ قـــد ســـار ســـتين حجـــة إلـــى مـــنهل مـــن ورده لقـــريب

(1) Al-Bukhari (6419).

(2) Checked by At-Tabarany in Al-Awsat (7925).

(3) Checked by At-Tirmidhi in As-Sunan (3550) and Ibn Majah (4236).

(4) Checked by Abo Ya‘la in his Musnad (6543).

"Once a person reaches the age of sixty, he has drawn very close to his watering place."

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* asked a person: **"How old are you?"** He replied: **"Sixty years old."** He said: **"You have been travelling towards your Lord for the past sixty years. You shall soon reach your destination."** The man said: **"To Allâh we belong and to Him is our return."** Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: **"When a person knows that he belongs to Allâh and he is to return to Him, he must know that he is going to be made to stand before him and he is to be questioned. He should therefore prepare answers for the questions."** The man said: **"What is the way out?"** He said: **"It is very easy."** The man asked: **"What is it?"** He said: **"Do good for the rest of your life and you will be forgiven for what has passed. If you do wrong for the rest of your life, you will be taken to task for what passed and what you did for the remaining time as well."**

خـذ فـي جـد فقـد تولـى العمـر كـم ذا التفـريط قـد تدانـى الأمـر

أقـبل فعـسى يُقـبَل مـنك العـذر كـم تبني، كـم تـنقض، كـم ذا الغـدر

"Commence in earnestness because your life has turned away. How much of excesses are you going to commit when the time has come so near? Come forward [and do good], perhaps your excuse will be accepted. How much are you going to build, how much are you going to break, and how much are you going to go back on your word?"

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ constantly mentioned the approach of his death towards the end of his life. When he delivered his sermon during the Farewell Pilgrimage, he said to the people: **"Learn your pilgrimage rites from me, perhaps I will not meet you after this year."**(1)

He began bidding farewell to the people and they therefore said: **"This is the farewell pilgrimage."** When he was returning from his pilgrimage and going to Madînah, he assembled the people at an oasis called Khumm – which was on his path between Makkah and Madînah – and addressed them saying: **"O people! I am a mortal like you. The messenger [angel of death] of my Lord may soon**

(1) Muslim (1297).

come to me and I will accept his call."(1)

He then encouraged them to adhere to the Qur'ân and advised them to be good to his family. When his final illness commenced, he was given the choice between meeting Allâh ﷻ and the attractions of this world and remaining in the world for as long as Allâh willed. He chose to meet Allâh ﷻ. He addressed the people and indicated this subtly to them.

His illness commenced towards the end of Safar, and the period of his illness extended for thirteen days, as is popularly believed. Others say that it lasted for fourteen days, others say twelve days, and yet others say ten days. But the last opinion is a rare opinion.

The sermon which he delivered to the people in the Hadîth of Abû Sa'îd ﷺ which we are discussing at present was delivered at the beginning of his illness.

The *Musnad* and *Sahîh* of Ibn Hibbân relate that Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîy ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came to us during his final illness with a bandage tied around his head. He stood on the pulpit and said: 'A servant has been offered the world and its attractions but he chose the Hereafter.' None of the people except Abû Bakr ﷺ realized what he said. He therefore said: 'May my parents be sacrificed for you. We are prepared to sacrifice our wealth, lives and children for you.' He then got down from the pulpit and was never seen on it again.'"**(2)

Abû Muwayhibah narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ went out to al-Baqî' (the graveyard of Madînah) one night and sought forgiveness for those buried at al-Baqî'. He said: **"Congratulations to you, you did not experience what people had to experience: trials and tribulations have advanced like pieces of a dark night, they are following one after the other and the next tribulation is worse than the former one."** He then said: **"O Abû Muwayhibah! I was given the treasures of the world, then eternity, and then Paradise. I was then given the choice between all that and meeting my Lord. I chose to meet my Lord."** He then turned away and he began experiencing the pain in which Allâh ﷻ took his life

(1) Muslim (2408).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (3/9).

away.(1)

When the Messenger's ﷺ recognition of Allâh ﷻ strengthened, his love and desire to meet Him increased. When he was given the choice to choose between remaining in this world and meeting his Lord, he chose meeting Him over the treasures of the world and remaining in it.

Ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* was asked: **"Can a lover be satisfied with anything less than having the opportunity of seeing his beloved?"** He replied [with the following poem]:

والله لـــــو أنـــــك توجتنـــــي بـــتاج كـــــرى ملـــك المـــشرق
ولـــو بأمـــوال الـــورى جـــدت لـــي أمـــوال مـــن بـــاد ومـــن قـــد بقـــي
وقلـــت لـــي لا نلتقـــي ســـاعة اختـــرت يـــا مـــولاي أن نلتقـــي

"I take an oath by Allâh, that if you were to make me wear the crown of Khusroes, the king of the east, if you were to give me all the wealth of the people – the people of all those who passed away and those who are still present – and you said to me: 'We will not be able to meet for a short while', O my Master! I would give preference to meeting You [and would be prepared to forego all these riches]."

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mentioned on the pulpit that he was given the choice of choosing between meeting Allâh ﷻ and remaining in this world – and he mentioned this in subtle terms – the meaning of these words remained concealed from many of those who heard them. None but his special friend understood the purpose of what he was saying: **"the second of the two when both of them were in the cave..."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 40)* He [Abû Bakr ﷺ] was the most knowledgeable of the *ummah* with regard to the aims and objectives of the Messenger ﷺ. When he understood the purpose of this reference, he began crying and said: **"We shall sacrifice our wealth, selves and children for you."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ put his fears at rest and began praising him on the pulpit so that all the people may know his merits and there will be no differences with regard to his eligibility for the caliphate. He said: **"Abû Bakr was the one who favoured me the most with his companionship and**

(1) Checked by Ahmad (03/488).

wealth."(1)

Another narration states: **"We recompensed all those who helped us except for Abû Bakr. His help was such that Allâh ﷻ will recompense him for it on the day of Resurrection. No one's wealth ever helped me the manner in which Abû Bakr's wealth helped me."**(2)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If I were to take anyone on earth as a close friend, I would have taken Abû Bakr. However, the friendship of Islam supersedes all."** Since the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the close friend of Allâh ﷻ, it was not appropriate for him to adopt any creation as a close friend. A close friend (*khalîl*) is the one in whom the love of his friend flows in him as the soul flows through him. And this is not suitable for any human. A poet says:

قد تخللت مسلك الروح مني وبذا سمي الخليل خليلا

"You are within me as my soul is within me. It is on this basis that a *khalîl* (close friend) is known as a *khalîl*."

It is because of this meaning that it is said that Ibrâhîm عليه السلام - *al-Khalîl* - was ordered to sacrifice his son not to shed the blood of his son but to empty the place of true friendship from anyone who is not supposed to be competing for that place.

أروح وقد ختمت على فؤادي بحبك أن يحل به سواكا

فلو أني استطعت غضضت طرفي فلم أنظر به حتى أراكا

"I am moving around while having sealed my heart with Your love, preventing anyone else to get there. If I was able to, I would have lowered my gaze and not looked at anyone until I look at You alone."

Another narration states [with regard to Abû Bakr رضي الله عنه]: **"Close off all the entrances of the musjid leading to the streets except for the entrance of Abû Bakr."**

In this there is reference to the fact that Abû Bakr رضي الله عنه is to be the imam after the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. This is because the imam needs to live in the vicinity of the musjid and have free access to it

(1) Checked by Muslim (2382) and At-Tirmidhi (3660).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3661), Ibn Majah (94) and Ahmad (7397).

[whenever he likes], as opposed to others. This is for the benefit of the Muslims who frequent the musjid for ṣalâh. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then emphasised this point by clearly issuing an order that Abû Bakr ﷺ must lead the people in ṣalâh. When hesitation in this regard was displayed, he became angry and said: **"Order Abû Bakr to lead the people in ṣalâh."** He thus appointed him alone to the position of leading the people in ṣalâh. He retained his free access from his house to the place of ṣalâh, while shutting off the access of others. This is a clear reference to appointing him as his caliph over the *ummah* to the exclusion of others. It is for this reason that the Companions ﷺ said at the time of the pledge of allegiance to Abû Bakr ﷺ: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was pleased with him for our religious affairs [referring to his leadership in ṣalâh], why should we not be pleased with him for our worldly affairs?"** When Abû Bakr ﷺ said: **"I am annulling the pledge which you gave me, 'Alî ﷺ said: 'We will neither allow you to annul it nor ask you to annul it. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ put you forward, who can remove you?'"**

When the mat of prophet-hood was folded and put away from earth with the demise of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, there remained no position on the surface of the earth which was more perfect than the position of *ṣiddîqîyyah* (from *ṣiddîq* – the truthful one). Abû Bakr ﷺ was at the head of the *ṣiddîqîn* and therefore had the right to succeed the Messenger ﷺ and stand in his place.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had intended writing a decree in favour of Abû Bakr ﷺ so that there are no differences with regard to his succession. He then changed his mind because he knew that no one else could take that position. He said: **"Allâh ﷻ and the believers refuse to have anyone else but Abû Bakr."** Another probable reason for not recording this decree was so that no one should be under the false premise that he specified his succession as a recompense for all his assistance to him. All positions of authority are not intended to be of benefit to the person who is appointed to that position but for the general benefit of the Muslims.

The headache which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ experienced was the first thing of his illness. It is for this reason that when he addressed the people, he tied an oily bandage around his head.(1)

(1) Al-Bukhari (3800).

Headaches and migraines used to vex him a lot during his life, and he used to experience their pain for several days. A headache is from among the signs of the people of îmân and people of Paradise. It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ described the inmates of the Hell-fire saying: **"They are the ones whose heads do not pain."** When a Bedouin came to him, he said to him: **"O Bedouin! Did you ever experience this pain?"** He asked: **"What pain?"** He said: **"The veins which strike a person on his head."** He said: **"I never experienced this."** When the Bedouin departed, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Whoever would like to see a person from the inmates of the Hell-fire should look at this person."**(1) Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Nasa'î *rahimahullâh.*

Ka'b ؓ said: **"I find the following in the Taurâh: 'Were it not for the grief of My believing servant, I would have tied the unbeliever's head with a steel bandage so that he never gets a headache."** 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came to me on the day on which his illness started. I said: 'O my head is paining!' He said: 'I wish that when you had that [headache as severe as mine], I would be alive so that I could prepare you and bury you [when you pass away].' I said: 'If I were to pass away, you will go to one of your other wives [and not even bother about me]. He said: 'In fact, it is my head which is really paining. Call your father and brother so that I could write a decree in favour of Abû Bakr. I fear that someone might say something, and others may have some hopes [for the caliphate]. But Allâh ﷻ and the believers will have none but Abû Bakr.'"**(2)

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrates a similar Hadîth as follows: 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"O my head is paining!"** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If that were to happen while I was alive, I would seek forgiveness for you and supplicate in your favour."** 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"O how sorrowful! By Allâh I think that you want me to die. If that were to happen, you will go to one of your other wives that very same day [and forget about me]."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Rather it is my head which is really paining."** He then related the rest of the

(1) Checked by Ahmad (2/232) and An-Nasa'ei in Al-Kubra (7491).

(2) Checked by Muslim (2387) and Ahmad (3416).

Hadîth.

'A'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates: **"It was the practice of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that when he used to pass by my door, he would say something with which Allâh ﷻ benefited me. One day he walked past but did not say anything. This happened two or three times. I said [to my slave girl]: 'O girl! Place a pillow for me at the door.' I then wrapped my head with a bandage. He passed by my door and said: 'O 'Â'ishah! What is wrong with you?' I said: 'I have a headache.' He said: 'O how my head is also paining!' He then continued on his way. Some time later he was brought, carried in a sheet, and he came into my room. He then called for his other wives and said: 'I am in pain.' He also said: 'I cannot come to all of you. Permit me to stay with 'Â'ishah.'"**(1)

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ returned from a funeral at al-Baqî', and I had a headache. I was saying: 'O how my head is paining!' He said: 'In fact, how my head is paining!' He then said: 'You have nothing to worry about. If you were to pass away before me, I would bathe you, enshroud you, perform the salâh over you, and bury you.' I said: 'Do you think I believe that you will do that? Instead, you will return to my house and spend the night with one of your other wives.' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ smiled and his final illness commenced thereafter."**(2)

It becomes clear that his illness started off as a headache and it was accompanied with a fever. His fever intensified during his illness. He would sit in a tub and seven water skins would be poured onto him so that he could experience some coolness. He was wearing a garment of velvet, [and his temperature was so high] that anyone who touched him above this garment would feel the heat. When he was asked about this, he said: **"The afflictions are intensified against us and the rewards are multiplied in our favour."**(3) He said: **"My illness is equal to the illness of two of you."**(4)

Because of the severity of the pain which he experienced, he

(1) Checked by Ahmad (6/219).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (6/228) and Ibn Majah (1465).

(3) Checked by Ibn Majah (4024).

(4) Checked by Al-Bukhari (5648).

used to lose consciousness, then regain consciousness. This happened on more than one occasion. Once he lost consciousness and they thought that it was because of pleurisy. They therefore administered *ladûd*[1] to him. When he regained consciousness, he disliked what they did and ordered that the same treatment be meted out to the person who administered *ladûd* to him. He said: **"Allâh ﷻ will not allow it [pleurisy] to get the better of me. Rather, it is because of something which I ate in Khaybar."** In other words, the poisoned sheep which was presented to him by a Jewish woman in Khaybar and of which he ate a little used to affect him at times. He said during his final illness: **"The morsel of food from Khaybar still vexes me occasionally, and now the time has come for my aorta to break."**[2] Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ and others used to say: **"He passed away a martyr from that poison."**

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates: **"I did not see anyone experiencing more pain than the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He had seven dinars at the time of his illness. He used to tell the family to give the dinars in charity. He would then fall unconscious and the family would become occupied with tending to him. He then asked for the dinars, placed them in his palm and said: 'What does Muhammad think about his Lord? What if he were to meet Allâh while still possessing these?' He then gave them all in charity."**[3] What can be said of the position of the person who meets Allâh ﷻ while he has the unlawful (*harâm*) blood and wealth of the Muslims? How is his Lord going to treat him when the family of the Messenger ﷺ did not have sufficient oil to light the lamp?

When his pain intensified on Sunday night [night preceding Monday], 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* sent the lamp to one of the other wives saying: **"Pour a few drops of oil from your butter-fat container into our lamp because the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is experiencing new pangs of death."** 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* had a course-fabric sarong which was made in Yemen, and a sheet made of felt. She used to take an oath in the name of Allâh ﷻ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away in these.

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(1) A medicine that is administered to a person by drawing his tongue to one side, and pouring it the other side, between the tongue and side of the mouth.

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (4428).

(3) Checked by Ahmad (6/104).

Fâṭimah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* came to visit him when he was ill. He whispered something to her and she began crying. He then whispered again and she began laughing. When she was asked about it, she said: **"I cannot disclose the secret of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ."** She was asked about it after he passed away and she said: **"He informed me that he is going to die in that illness, so I began crying. He then informed me that I will be the first of his family to join him, and that I am the leader of the women of the universe, so I began laughing."**

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was in the throes of death, he experienced much pain. So 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"I will not be envious of anyone on whom the pangs of death are lightened after I saw the severity which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ experienced."**

She said: **"There was a bowl of water next to him. He used to dip his hand into it and wipe his face with the water, and say: 'O Allâh! Help me against the pangs of death.'"**(1) She said: **"He began saying: '*Lâ ilâha illallâh* – there is none worthy of worship except Allâh. There are most certainly pangs for death.'"**(2) A *mursal* Ḥadîth states that he said: **"O Allâh! You take the soul from between the nerves, trachea, and nails. O Allâh! Help me, then, against death and make it easy for me."**(3) When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ became more serious, he was overcome by pain. Fâṭimâh *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"O what pain my father is suffering!"** He said to her: **"Your father will experience no pain after this day."**(4) A Ḥadîth of Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* states that he said to Fâṭimah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ*: **"There has come to your father something which Allâh ﷻ will not allow anyone to let pass. It is death for the day of Resurrection."**(5) His soul was not taken away until he was given another opportunity to choose between this world and the Hereafter.

'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to say: 'No Prophet's soul was taken away until he was first**

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (978) and Ibn Majah (1623).

(2) Checked by Al-Baihaqi in "Ad-Dalaa'el" (7/207) and Al-Bukhari (4449).

(3) Checked by Al-Hindi in "Al-Kanz" (3768).

(4) Checked by Al-Bukhari (4462).

(5) Checked by Ibn Majah (1629) and Ahmad (12026).

shown his abode in Paradise and then given the choice.’[1] When death descended and his head was on my thigh, he lost unconsciousness for some time and then recovered. He remained staring at the ceiling and said: ‘O Allâh! To the Highest Companionship (ar-Rafîq al-A‘lâ).’[2] And I thought to myself that now he is not going to choose us [i.e. he does not want to remain with us, but wants to go to Allâh ﷺ]. And I realized that it was the Hadîth which he used to relate to us and that it is correct. It was the last word which he uttered.”

Another narration states that he said: **“O Allâh! Forgive me, have mercy on me, and convey me to the Highest Companionship.”**[3]

Another narration states that a severe hoarseness afflicted him, and I heard him say: **“with those whom Allâh favoured: the Prophets, the *siddîqîn*, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent is their company.”** *(Sûrah an-Nisâ’, 4: 69)* ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: **“I realized that he was now given the choice.”** These narrations are related from al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and others.

There are narrations which indicate that his soul was taken away, he then saw his abode in Paradise, his soul was returned to him, and then he was given the choice. ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ* said: **“The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to say: ‘The soul of every Prophet is taken away, he sees the rewards, the soul is then returned to him, and he is then given the choice of having it returned to him until he is taken [to Allâh].’ I remembered these words of his. I had embraced him to my chest and was looking at him until his neck drooped. On seeing this, I said to myself: ‘He has passed away.’ She said: ‘I recognized what he had said. I then looked at him and saw him looking up and staring. I thought to myself: ‘By Allâh, he is not going to choose us now.’ And he said: ‘With the Highest Companionship in Paradise ‘with those whom Allâh favoured: the Prophets, the *siddîqîn*, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent is their company.’”**[4]

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(1) Checked by Muslim (1894) Ahmad (8916).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (4437).

(3) Checked by Muslim (2444).

(4) Al-Musnad (24335).

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ lost consciousness while his head was in my lap. I began passing my hand over his head and supplicating for his recovery. When he regained consciousness, he said: 'No. I am asking Allâh ﷻ for the Highest Companionship with Jibra'îl, Mîkâ'îl and Isrâfîl.'"**(1) Another narration states that she was reading certain supplications during his final illness so he said to her: **"Raise your hand from me because it was benefiting me until a certain time."**(2)

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"When the Prophets disliked death, Allâh ﷻ made that easy for them with the meeting with Allâh ﷻ, and with every reward and honour which they liked. It was thus made so easy for them that the soul of one of them would be removed from his side and he will be enjoying it because of the rewards which he saw."**

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Death will be made easy for me because I saw the whiteness of the palm of 'Â'ishah in Paradise."**(3) A similar narration is related by Ibn Sa'd and others: **"She was shown to me in Paradise so that my death will be made easy for me. It's as if I can see her palm."**(4) That is, the palm of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ loved 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* intensely to the extent that he could not do without her. She was shown to him in Paradise so that his death will be easy for him. This is because life becomes wholesome when lovers meet. Someone asked him: **"Who do you love the most?"** He replied: **"'Â'ishah."** The person asked: **"What about from among the men?"** He replied: **"Her father."**(5) It was because of his intense love for her that when at the beginning of his illness she said: **"O how my head is paining!"** He said: **"I wish it was when I was alive so that I could perform the funeral salâh over you and bury you."** This weighed heavily on her and she assumed that he wanted to be away from her. Whereas he actually wanted her to pass away before him so that they

(1) Al-Baihaqi narrated it in "Ad-Dalaa'el" (7/210) and Ibn Kathir in "Al-Bidaya wal Nihaya" (3/52).

(2) Al-Musnad (6/261).

(3) Al-Musnad (6/138).

(4) Ibn Sa'ed in his "Tabakat" (8/65).

(5) Checked by Al-Bukhari (4358) and Muslim (2384).

could meet [in Paradise] quickly.

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* had chewed and softened a *miswâk* with her saliva for him and gave it to him. He cleaned his teeth with it in the best manner possible extended his hand to return it to her. But his hand was too weak to do this and it fell from his blessed hand. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* used to say: **"Allâh ﷻ enabled my saliva to mix with his saliva on his last day in this world and first day of the Hereafter."** This Hadîth is narrated in *Sahîhayn*.

Al-'Uqaylî narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to her during his illness: **"Bring me a fresh *miswâk*, chew it and give it to me, and I will chew it so that my saliva may mix with yours, and it will make my death easier for me."**(1)

Ja'far ibn Muhammad relates from his father: **"Three days before** the demise of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, Jibra'îl عليه السلام came to him and said: 'O Ahmad! Allâh ﷻ sent me specifically to you to honour you, and pay tribute to you. He is asking you about something which He knows better than you. He wants to know: 'How are you?' He replied: 'O Jibra'îl! I feel grieved and saddened.' He came to him the next day, asked him the same question and he gave the same reply. He then came to him the third day, asked him the same question and he gave him the same reply. The angel of death then sought permission to enter. Jibra'îl عليه السلام said: 'O Muhammad! Here is the angel of death seeking permission to come to you. He never sought permission to go to any human before you nor will he seek permission to go to any human after you.' He said: 'Permit him to come in.' The angel of death entered, stood before him, and said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! O Ahmad! Allâh sent me to you and ordered me to obey you in whatever you order. If you order me to take your soul away, I will take it away. If you order me to leave it, I will leave it.' He asked: 'Will you really do that, O angel of death?' He replied: 'I have been ordered to obey you in whatever you order me to do.'

Jibra'îl عليه السلام said: 'O Ahmad! Allâh is yearning to meet you.' He said: 'O angel of death! Do what you have been ordered to do.' Jibra'îl عليه السلام said: 'Peace be on you O Messenger of Allâh. This is the last time I have come to earth, I only used to come because of you.' The mourners came and they heard voices but could not see anyone. They were saying: 'Peace be on you O family of the Prophet! May

(1) A Zubbaidy mentioned it in "Ethaf As-Sada Al-Muttaqin (10/288).

Allâh's mercy and blessing be on you. **'Every soul has to taste death and you shall receive your full compensation on the day of Resurrection.'** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 185)* Allâh ﷻ has mourners for every calamity, a replacement for every destruction, and a compensation for every loss. You should therefore place your trust in Allâh, and have hope in him because a truly afflicted person is the one who is deprived of reward. Peace be on you. May Allâh's mercy **and blessing be on you."**

He unanimously passed away on a Monday in Rabî' al-Awwal. He had lifted the curtain [between his house and the musjid] on that day when the people were offering salâh behind Abû Bakr ﷺ. The Muslims realized that the joy which they experienced at looking at him on that day would be short-lived. When they looked at him, his face appeared beaming like the page of a book. They thought that he was coming for the salâh, but he indicated to them: 'Remain in your place.' He then lowered the curtain.(1)

He passed away on that day. [But prior to that], the Muslims thought that he had recovered from his illness when he regained consciousness on Monday. Abû Bakr ﷺ therefore went to his house in as-Sunh which was outside Madînah. But the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away at mid-morning on that day. Others say that he passed away after mid-day. But the first opinion is more authentic. He passed away at mid-morning on Monday at about the same time when he first entered Madînah when he had emigrated to it.

The scholars differ on specifying the day of that month. The following opinions are normally given: the 1st, 2nd, 12th, 13th and 15th. It is popularly believed by people that he passed away on the 12th.

As-Suhaylî and others refuted this last opinion because the Farewell Pilgrimage in 10 A.H. was on a Friday, and the first of Dhû al-Hijjah of that year fell on a Thursday. When this happens, a Monday cannot be the 12th of Rabî' al-Awwal irrespective of whether the three months – Dhû al-Hijjah, Muharram and Safar – are all counted as complete months [30 days], incomplete months [29 days], or some of them are counted as complete months and others as incomplete months.

However, a good reply has been given to this: Ibn Is-hâq narrated that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away on the twelfth

(1) Al-Bukhari (680).

night of Rabî‘ al-Awwal. And this is possible because the Arabs count the calendar according to nights and not days. However, they only count such a night after its day has passed. The day is thus subservient to the night. When any night passes without its day passing, that night is not counted. Similar is the case when they mention a number of nights – they are actually referring to the nights together with the days which follow them. So when they say: **"Ten nights"**, they mean ten nights with their days. From here, the correctness of the majority becomes obvious, viz. the period of waiting (*‘iddah* – after the demise of the husband) is four months and ten nights together with their days, and that the tenth day is part of the entire period. However, al-Auzâ‘î does not hold this view.

The majority of the scholars hold the same view with regard to the months of hajj: they are Shawwâl, Dhû al-Qa‘dah and ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah; and that the tenth day is included in this. However, Imam ash-Shâfi‘î does not hold this view.

Therefore, the Monday on which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away was the 13th of that month, but because his day had not passed as yet, the historians did not count that night. They counted the night of the eleventh with its day, which is actually the twelfth. It is for this reason that Ibn Is-hâq said: **"He passed away when twelve nights of Rabî‘ al-Awwal passed."** Allâh ﷻ knows best.

There are differences of opinion with regard to the time of his burial: he was buried immediately – but this is unlikely – on the thirteenth night, on the thirteenth day, on the fourteenth night.

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ passed away, the Muslims were distressed. There were those who were astounded and confused. There were those who just sat down and could not stand up. There were those who became tongue-tied and were unable to talk. There were those who refuted his death completely and said: **"He was raised to Allâh as Mûsâ was raised."** ‘Umar ﷺ was among these people. When Abû Bakr ﷺ heard the news, he hastened and entered the house of ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was covered. He removed the cloth from his face, bent down, and kissed his face several times, while he was crying and saying: **"O my beloved Prophet! O my beloved friend! O my chosen friend!"** He then said: **"To Allâh we belong and to Him is our return. By Allâh, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ has passed away."** He said: **"By Allâh,**

Allâh ﷻ will not allow you to die two deaths. As for the death which was prescribed to you, you have met it."

Abû Bakr ﷺ then entered the musjid while 'Umar ﷺ was addressing the people who were assembled around him. Abû Bakr ﷺ began speaking. He testified in the oneness of Allâh ﷻ and prophethood of Muḥammad ﷺ, and praised Allâh ﷻ. The people turned towards him and left 'Umar ﷺ. He said: **"Whoever was worshipping Muḥammad should know that Muḥammad has died. Whoever was worshipping Allâh should know that Allâh is alive and never dies."** He then recited this verse: **"Muhammad is but a Messenger. Many Messengers have passed before him. So if he dies or is killed, will you turn back on your heels?"** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 144)* All the people were now convinced of his passing away, and it was as though they had never before heard this verse which Abû Bakr ﷺ recited. The people realized the import of this verse from him and they all began reciting it.

Fâṭimah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"O my beloved father! You have responded to the call of your Lord. O my beloved father! The Paradise of Bliss (Firdaus) is your abode. O my beloved father! We shall convey the news of your death to Jibra'îl. O my beloved father! Your Lord is now closest to you."** She lived for six months thereafter and she never laughed during that period. She was most worthy of living like that:

على مثل ليلى يقتل المرء نفسه وإن كان من ليلى على الهجر طاويا

"It is for a person like Laylâ that a person kills himself, even if he has to starve himself for his separation from her."

Every calamity is insignificant in the face of this calamity.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said during his illness: **"O people! When any person or any believer is afflicted by a calamity, he must take solace from the calamity of my passing away and overcome the calamity which has afflicted him. No person in my *ummah* will be afflicted by any calamity as serious as my passing away."**(1)

Abû al-Jauzâ' said: **"There was a person in Madînah. Whenever a calamity afflicted him, his brother would come to**

(1) Checked by Ibn Majah (1599).

him, shake his hands and say: ‘O servant of Allâh! Place your trust in Allâh. There is surely an excellent example for us in the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.’”

اصـــبر لكـــل مـــصيبة وتجلـــد وعلـــم بـــأن المـــرء غيـــر مخلـــد
واصـــبر كمـــا صـــبر الكـــرام فإنهـــا نـــوب تـــنوب الـــيوم تكـــشف فـــي غـــد
وإذا أتـــتك مـــصيبة تـــشجي بهـــا فاذكـــر مـــصابك بالنبـــي محمـــد

“Remain patient and firm over every calamity. You should know that man is never going to live forever. Remain patient as the honourable people remained patient. It is a calamity which comes today and departs tomorrow. When any calamity distresses you, think of the calamity which afflicted you by the passing away of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.”

Another poet said:

تذكـــرت لمـــا فـــرق الدهـــر بينـــنا فعـــزيت نفـــسي بالنبـــي محمـــد
وقلـــت لهـــا إن المـــنايا ســـبيلنا فمـن لـم يمـت فـي يـومه مـات فـي غـد

“When time separated us two, I consoled myself with the passing away of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. I said to my self: ‘Death is our way. The one who does not die today is bound to die tomorrow.’”

Inanimate objects used to feel the pain of separation from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. What, then, can be said about the hearts of the believers?!

There was a tree trunk [in the Musjid-e-Nabawî] against which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to lean when he used to deliver his sermon. When a pulpit was built for him, the tree trunk missed him and began crying out like a child. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ went to it and embraced it. It then calmed down gradually as a child calms down after crying for some time. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“Had I not embraced it, it would have continued crying till the day of Resurrection.”**(1)

When al-Hasan used to relate this Hadîth, he would cry and say: **“This was a piece of wood which yearned for the Messenger of**

(1) Al-Bukhari (3583).

Allâh ﷻ. You are more worthy of yearning for him."

It is related that Bilâl ﷺ used to call out the *adhân* after the demise of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ but before his burial. When he used to say: **"*Ash-hadu anna Muḥammadan Rasûlullâh* – I testify that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allâh"**, the musjid would reverberate with crying and weeping. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was buried, Bilâl ﷺ gave up calling out the *adhân*.

لـــو ذاق طعـــم الفـــراق رضـــوى لكـــاد مـــن وجـــده يمـــيد
قـــد حملونـــي عـــذاب شـــوق يعجـــز عـــن حملـــه الحديـــد

"If the Mt. Radwâ [a mountain in Madînah] were to experience this separation, it would have tilted out of emotion. They have made me to bear the torment of yearning. This weight is so heavy that even steel is unable to bear it."

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was buried, Fâṭimah *raḍiyallâhu ‘anhâ* asked: **"How did you have the courage to throw the soil on the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ?"**(1)

Anas ﷺ said: **"When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ entered Madînah [for the first time], everything glittered. When it was the day when he was buried, everything became dark. We did not even dust our hands yet from burying the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and we found our hearts to have changed."**(2)

ليـــبك رســـول الله مـــن كـــان باكـــيا فـــلا تـــنس قبـــرا بالمدينـــة ثاويـــا
جـــزى الله عـــنا كـــل خيـــر محمـــدا فقـــد كـــان مهـــديا وقـــد كـــان هاديـــا
وكـــان رســـول الله روحـــا ورحمـــة ونـــورا وبـــرهانا مـــن الله باديـــا
وكـــان رســـول الله بالخيـــر آمـــرا وكـــان عـــن الفحـــشاء والـــسوء ناهـــيا
وكـــان رســـول الله بالقـــسط قائمـــا وكـــان لمـــا اســـترعاه مـــولاه راعـــيا
وكـــان رســـول الله يدعـــو إلـــى الهـــدى فلبـــى رســـول الله إلـــيه داعـــيا
أيُنـــسى أبـــر الـــناس بالـــناس كلهـــم وأكـــرمهم بيـــتا وشـــعبا ووواديـــا
أينـــسى رســـول الله أكـــرم مـــن مـــشى وآثـــاره بالمـــسجدين كمـــا هـــيا

(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (4462) and Ibn Majah (1630).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3618) and Ibn Majah (1631).

تكـــدر مـــن بعـــد النبـــي محمـــد ... عليه السلام كل ما كان صافيا

ركـــنَّا إلـــى الدنـــيا الدنـــية بعـــده ... وكـــشفت الأطمـــاع مـــنا مـــساويا

وكـــم مـــن مـــنار كـــان أوضـــحه لـــنا ... ومـــن علـــم أمـــسى وأصـــبح عافـــيا

إذا المـــرء لـــم يلـــبس ثـــيابا مـــن التقـــى ... تقلـــب عـــريانا وإن كـــان كاســـيا

وخيـــر خـــصال المـــرء طاعـــة ربـــه ... ولا خيـــر فـــيمن كـــان لله عـــصيا

“If anyone has to cry, he must cry over the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He must not forget the grave which is in Madînah. May Allâh ﷻ reward Muhammad ﷺ with every good on our behalf. He was most certainly guided and he guided others. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was a mercy and a beneficence. He was a light and a clear proof from Allâh. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to command good, and prohibit immorality and evil. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to uphold justice, and when his slave asked him for reprieve, he reprieved him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to invite towards guidance. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ continued inviting towards his call. Can the person who was most affectionate towards people be ever forgotten? Can the one who was from the noblest family, mountain pass and valley ever be forgotten? Can the Messenger of Allâh who was the noblest of all who walked on earth ever be forgotten? His relics in the two musjids [of Makkah and Madînah] are as they were. Everything that was pure became soiled after the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. We became inclined towards this base world after his demise, and our greed has exposed our evils. How many lighthouses he lit for us, and how many flags were raised by day and night! If a person does not wear the garments of piety, he will be naked even if he is wearing clothes. The best quality of a person is obedience to his Lord. There is no good in the person who is disobedient to Allâh.”

RAJAB

Abû Bakrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ delivered a sermon during the Farewell Pilgrimage. He said in it: **"Time has turned around as it was the day Allâh ﷻ created the heavens and the earth. The year has twelve months, four of them are sanctified, and three of which are consecutive. They are: Dhû al-Qa'dah, Dhû al-Hijjah, and Muharram. And the Rajab of the Mudar tribe which is between Jumâdâ [al-Ukhrâ] and Sha'bân."**

Allâh ﷻ said: **"The number of months in the sight of Allâh is twelve months, [laid down] in the decree of Allâh on the day He created the heavens and the earth. Among them four months are sacred. This is the straight religion. Therefore, do not wrong yourselves therein."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 36)* Allâh ﷻ informs us that ever since He created the heavens and the earth, He created the night and day moving around in the cosmos. He created the sun, moon and stars which are in the heavens. He caused the sun and moon to move in the cosmos. It is from them that we get the darkness of the night and brightness of the day. It is since that time that He made the year comprising twelve months according to the lunar calendar.

Thus, according to the Sharî'ah, the year is calculated according to the movement and rise of the moon. Not by the sun and its movements as done by the Jews and Christians.

From these months, Allâh ﷻ appointed four as sacred months. In the above Hadîth, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ explained which months they are. He stated that three of them are consecutive: Dhû al-Qa'dah, Dhû al-Hijjah and Muharram. One of them is separate [from these three], viz. Rajab. This is generally used as a proof by those who say that the sacred months are stretched across two years. A *marfû'* Hadîth of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ states: **"The first of them is Rajab."** There is Mûsâ ibn 'Ubaydah in this chain and he has a very weak memory. It is related that the people of Madînah stretched the sacred months over two years, and that the first of them is Dhû al-Qa'dah, then Dhû al-Hijjah, then Muharram, and then Rajab. In this way, Rajab will be the last of them.

Some people of Madînah say that Rajab is the first, followed by Dhû al-Qa'dah, Dhû al-Hijjah, and then Muharram.

Some people of Kufah say that they are all from the same year starting with Muharram, followed by Rajab, Dhû al-Qa'dah, and then Dhû al-Hijjah.

There is difference of opinion as to which of these sacred months are the most superior. Some Shâfi'î scholars say that it is Rajab, but an-Nawawî *rahimahullâh* and others say that this is a weak opinion. Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* says that it is Muharram, and an-Nawawî *rahimahullâh* gives preference to this opinion. Sa'îd ibn Jubayr and others say that it is Dhû al-Hijjah, and this is the most obvious opinion. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

As for the statement of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"Time has turned around as it was the day Allâh ﷻ created the heavens and the earth. The year has twelve months"**, he said this to refute the practice of postponing months as done by the people of *jâhilîyyah*. Allâh ﷻ says: **"The postponement [of a sacred month to another month] is an addition in unbelief by which the unbelievers fall into deviation. They make that month lawful one year and make it unlawful another year so that they may make up the number of months which Allâh sanctified. They thus make lawful the month which Allâh had made unlawful."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 37)*

There are differences with regard to the explanation of **"postponement"**. One group says: **"They used to exchange some sanctified months with other months, consider these other months to be sanctified, and consider the original sanctified months to be un-sanctified if they needed to do this. However, they did not increase the number of the lunar months [rather, they maintained them as twelve]."** Then from among this group are those who say: **"They would consider Muharram to be lawful and** consider fighting in this month to be lawful because of the lengthy period of prohibition by the three successive sanctified months. They would then consider Safar to be sanctified. It was like they were borrowing and then paying back. Another group says that they used to consider Muharram to be lawful together with Safar of the same year and refer to both as Safarayn (two Safars). Then the following year they would consider both to be sanctified and refer to them as Muharramayn (two Muharrams). This opinion is given by Ibn Zayd ibn Aslam.

Others say: Sometimes they needed Safar as well, so they used to make it lawful and made Rabî‘ [unlawful] in its place. In this way they used to turn around the lawfulness, unlawfulness, and postponement. This continued until the arrival of Islam when the sacred month coincided with the Farewell Pilgrimage, and the sanctity returned to the original Muharram. This is the explanation which is preferred by Abû ‘Ubayd. Based on this, the change took place specifically in the sacred months.

Another group said: No, they actually increased the number of the months of the year. The apparent words of this verse indicate to this when Allâh ﷻ said: **“The number of months in the sight of Allâh is twelve months.”** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 36)* Allâh ﷻ mentioned this as a prelude to cancelling and refuting the practice of postponement.

From among this group are those who say: They used to make the year into thirteen months. This is stated by Mujâhid and Abû Mâlik. Abû Mâlik said: **“They used to make the year into thirteen months, and Muharram into Safar.”**

Mujâhid said: **“They used to drop off Muharram and then say Safarayn for Safar, Rabî‘ al-Awwal and Rabî‘ al-Âkhir. They would then say: ‘The month of Rabî‘.’ They would then refer to Ramadân as Sha‘bân, Shawwâl as Ramadân, Dhû al-Qa‘dah as Shawwâl, Dhû al-Hijjah as Dhû al-Qa‘dah, as they had started. They would refer to Muharram as Dhû al-Hijjah and then count whatever they postponed for the following year, as they had started.”**

Mujâhid said: **“The people of *jâhilîyyah* used to perform** pilgrimage in every month of the year for two years. The pilgrimage of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ coincided with Dhû al-Hijjah. He therefore said: **“Time has turned around as it was the day Allâh ﷻ created the heavens and the earth.”**

There are those who said: **“The people of *jâhilîyyah* used to make the year into twelve months and five days.”** This is stated by Iyâs ibn Mu‘âwiyah. This number is close to the year of the Roman calendar. The *Marâsîl* of ‘Ikramah ibn Khâlid states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said during his sermon on the day of sacrifice [10th of Dhû al-Hijjah]: **“The month is like this, like this, and like this.”** (He pointed with both his hands (referring to ten each) and closed his one thumb the third time). The words **“like this, like**

this, and like this" refer to thirty days. In so doing, he indicated that the month is a lunar month.

Sometimes it is less and sometimes more. It is possible that those who practised **"postponement"** used to count all the months as full months, and add some days to them. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

It is said that the Rabî'ah and Mudar tribes used to sanctify four months of the year, but they differed on specifying which month is Rajab. We will mention this later – if Allâh ﷻ wills. The Banû 'Auf ibn Lu'ayy used to sanctify eight months of the year. This is an extreme, and an addition which Allâh ﷻ prohibited.

There are differences as to the year in which Dhû al-Hijjah returned to its original time, and when time returned to its original position. One group said: **"It returned to its original position during the Farewell Pilgrimage. As for the pilgrimage of Abû Bakr ﷺ, it took place in Dhû al-Qa'dah."** This is the opinion of Mujâhid, 'Ikramah ibn Khâlid and others. Others say: **"It coincided in that year** in which all the nations performed the pilgrimage at the same time. It was therefore referred to as al-Hajj al-Akbar (the greater pilgrimage).

Another group says: **"No, the pilgrimage of Abû Bakr ﷺ took place in Dhû al-Hijjah."** This is the opinion of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*. He refutes the opinion of Mujâhid and provides the proof that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered 'Alî ﷺ to announce on the day of sacrifice [10th of Dhû al-Hijjah]: **"No polytheist may perform pilgrimage after this year."**(1) Another narration states: **"Today is the day al-Hajj al-Akbar."**(2) Allâh ﷻ says: **"And this is a proclamation from Allâh and from His Messenger to the people on the day of the greater pilgrimage that Allâh is aloof from the polytheists and so is His Messenger."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 3)* Allâh ﷻ refers to it as the day of the greater pilgrimage. This shows that the announcement was made in Dhû al-Hijjah.

At-Tabarânî narrates in his *Awsat* from 'Amr ibn Shu'ayb who narrates from his father, who narrates from his grandfather who said: **"The Arabs used to consider a particular month to be lawful in one year, and two months in another year. They would**

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (369) And Muslim (1347).

(2) At-Tirmidhi checked it (3087) and Ibn Majah (3057).

coincide with the correct month of pilgrimage once every twenty one years. This is the postponement which Allâh ﷻ referred to in His Book. When it was the year when Abû Bakr ﷺ took the people for pilgrimage, it coincided with the month of pilgrimage. Allâh ﷻ therefore referred to it as the day of the greater pilgrimage (al-Ḥajj al-Akbar).”(1)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then performed pilgrimage the following year and the people watched the new moon. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“Time has turned around as it was the day Allâh ﷻ created the heavens and the earth.”**

It is said that the actual time when time turned around was in the year of the conquest of Makkah [i.e. 8 A.H.]. Al-Bazzâr narrates in his *Musnad* from Samurah ibn Jundub that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to them on the day of the conquest of Makkah: **“This year is the year of the greater pilgrimage. The pilgrimage of the Muslims and the pilgrimage of the polytheists coincided in three consecutive days. The pilgrimage of the Jews and Christians coincided in six consecutive days. It never coincided [like this] ever since Allâh ﷻ created the heavens and the earth, and it will never coincide after this year till the day of Resurrection.”**(2) This narration has Yûsûf as-Simtî who is considered to be a very weak narrator.

The scholars differ as to why these four months are known as *ḥurum* (sanctified). It is said that it is because of their great sanctity and the prohibition of committing sins in them.

‘Alî ibn Abî Ṭalḥah narrates from Ibn ‘Abbâs ﷺ: **“Allâh ﷻ appointed four months which He sanctified and made their sanctity great. He considers sinning in these months to be more serious [than in other months]. He considers good deeds in them worthy of greater rewards [than in other months].”** Ka‘b ﷺ said: **“When Allâh ﷻ chose time, He liked the sanctified months the most.”** This is also related as a *marfû‘* Ḥadîth but it is not authentic.

It is said that the meaning of **“Therefore, do not wrong yourselves therein.”** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 36)* refers to the sanctified

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(1) Al-Haithami said in Al-Majmaa‘ (7/29): At-Tabarany narrated it in "Al-Awsat" and his men are trustworthy.

(2) Al-bazzar checked it in his Musnad (1394).

months. It is said that it refers to all the months of the year.

It is said that they are referred to as sanctified because of the prohibition of fighting therein. And this was well-known during the period of *jâhilîyyah.* It is said that this sanctity was during the era of Ibrâhîm ﷺ. It is said that the reason behind the sanctity of these four months among the Arabs was so that people would be able to perform the hajj and 'umrah. The month of Dhû al-Hijjah was made sacred so that people could return safely from the pilgrimage. Dhû al-Qa'dah was made sacred with it so that people could travel for the pilgrimage. Muharram was made sacred so that people could return safely from the pilgrimage. In this way, the pilgrim could enjoy safety from the time he departs from his house for the pilgrimage till the time he returns. The month of Rajab was made sacred so that the 'umrah could be performed in the middle of the year. Those who lived near Makkah could perform the 'umrah in this month.

At the beginning of Islam, Allâh ﷻ prohibited fighting in the sacred months. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Do not consider permissible the signs of Allâh, nor the sacred month."** *(Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 2)* Allâh ﷻ says: **"They ask you about the sacred month, and how it is to fight therein? Say: 'Fighting therein is a major sin, and hindering from the path of Allâh, and disbelieving in Him, and hindering from the Sacred Musjid, and expelling its people from there is a far greater sin than that in the sight of Allâh. Causing people to go astray from the religion is more grievous than killing."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 217)*

Ibn Abî Hâtim narrates from Jundub ibn 'Abdillâh that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent a small military detachment under 'Abdullâh ibn Jahsh. They met Ibn al-Hadramî and killed him. They did not know whether it was the month of Rajab or Jumâdâ [al-Ukhrâ]. The polytheists said to the Muslims: **"You killed in a sacred month."** So Allâh ﷻ revealed this verse: **"They ask you about the sacred month, and how it is to fight therein? Say: 'Fighting therein is a major sin."**

As-Suddî narrates from Abû Mâlik and Abû Sâlih from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ, and from Murrah from Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ with regard to this verse. They relate this story in detail. In it they say that the polytheists said: **"Muhammad claims to be obedient to Allâh, yet he is the first to break the sanctity of a sacred month."** So the Muslims said: **"We killed him in Jumâdâ [al-Ukhrâ]."**

It is said that this happened on the first of Rajab in the last night of Jumâdâ [al-Ukhrâ], and that the Muslims sheathed their swords when the month of Rajab entered. Allâh ﷻ revealed this verse in criticism of the people of Makkah: **"They ask you about the sacred month, and how it is to fight therein? Say: 'Fighting therein is a major sin."** In other words, fighting in a sacred month is not lawful, but what you polytheists did is more serious than fighting in a sacred month. Namely, you rejected Allâh, you prevented others from going to Muhammad ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ, and you expelled Muhammad ﷺ from the Sanctified Musjid. All this is more serious in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than fighting in a sacred month.

This explanation is provided by (1) the narration of al-'Aufî from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ, (2) the narration of Abû Sa'îd al-Baqqâl from 'Ikramah ﷺ, and (3) the narration of al-Kalbî from Abû Sâlih.

Ibn Is-hâq states that this incident took place on the last day of Rajab. The Muslims feared that if they delayed the fighting, the polytheists will go ahead of them, enter the sanctified area of Makkah, and thus save themselves.

When they [the military detachment] came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, he said: **"I did not order you to fight in the sacred month."** And he did not take any of their booty. The Quraysh said: **"Muhammad and his Companions consider a sacred month to be lawful."** So the Muslims who were in Makkah said to them: **"They [the Muslims] fought them in Sha'bân [and not in a sacred month]."**

When people started engaging in many conversations on this topic, Allâh ﷻ revealed the verse: **"They ask you about the sacred month, and how it is to fight therein?..."**

A similar narrative is related from 'Urwah, az-Zuhrî and others. It is said that this was the first booty which the Muslims acquired. 'Abdullâh ibn Jahsh said this. It is said that this statement was made by Abû Bakr as-Siddîq ﷺ.

تعدون قتلا في الحرام عظيمة وأعظم منه لو يرى الرشد راشد

صدودكم عما يقول محمد وكفر به والله راء وشاهد

وإخراجكم من مسجد الله أهله لئلا يرى لله في البيت ساجد

"You consider killing in the sacred month to be very

serious. If a person of integrity were to see rectitude, he would consider a more serious thing to be your opposition to what Muhammad ﷺ says, and your rejection of him. Allâh ﷻ is looking and watching all [that you say and do]. [More serious than killing] is your expelling the people of Allâh from the musjid of Allâh. You did this so that no prostrating person may be seen in the House [Ka'bah].”

The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to fighting in the sacred months. Is its prohibition still applicable or is it abrogated? The majority say that its prohibition is abrogated. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and other imams explicitly state that it is abrogated. Some scholars of the past, including 'Atâ' *rahimahullâh*, are of the opinion that the prohibition is still applicable. Some latter scholars give preference to this view. They provide the verse from Sûrah al-Mâ'idah as proof because it was from among the last sûrahs to be revealed. It is related: **“Consider its [whatever is mentioned in this sûrah] lawful to be lawful, and its unlawful to be unlawful.”** It is also said that there is no abrogated ruling in this sûrah.

The *Musnad* states that 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **“It is the last sûrah to be revealed. Whatever lawful you find in it, consider it to be lawful. And whatever unlawful you find in it, consider it to be unlawful.”**(1)

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates in his *Musnad*: Is-hâq ibn 'Îsâ narrated to us, al-Layth ibn Sa'd narrated to us from Abû az-Zubayr from Jâbir who said: **“The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ would not go out in battle during the sacred months unless he was attacked. He would go out in battle, when the sacred month came, he would stop until it passed.”**(2)

Some of them state that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ laid siege to Tâ'if in Shawwâl. When the month of Dhû al-Qa'dah entered, he did not fight. Rather, he bore patiently and returned.

Similar was the case during the 'umrah of al-Hudaybiyah. He did not fight until he heard that 'Uthmân ﷺ was murdered. He then took the pledge to fight. Then when he heard that there was no truth in the news [that 'Uthmân ﷺ was murdered], he desisted from

(1) Al-Musnad (6/188).

(2) Al-Musnad (3/334).

fighting.

The majority provide the proof that after the demise of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, the Companions ﷺ became occupied in conquering countries and continuing the efforts of fighting and jihad. It is not related with regard to anyone of them that he stopped fighting in any of the sacred months. This proves that they unanimously considered the prohibition to be abrogated. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

One of the astonishing things about the sacred months is what was related by 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ ﷺ. He was talking about the astonishing things about this world and mentioned the land of the 'Âd which has a pillar made of copper. On it is a tree made of copper. During the sacred months, water drips from that tree. The people fill their ponds with it, provide water to their animals and irrigate their plants. When the sacred months end, the water stops dripping.

As for the words of the Messenger ﷺ: **"and the Rajab of the Muḍar tribe"**: Rajab is named thus because it was a month which was honoured. As stated by al-Aṣmu'î, al-Mufaḍḍal and al-Farâ'.

It is said that it is called Rajab because the angels are filled with reverence (*tatarajjabu*) in order to engage in the glorification and praise of Allâh ﷻ in this month. There is a Ḥadîth in this regard but it is fabricated.

As for its attribution to Muḍar, it is said that the Muḍar tribe used to pay additional attention to honouring and respecting this month. It was therefore attributed to them. It is said that the Rabî'ah tribe used to respect Ramaḍân and the Muḍar tribe used to respect Rajab. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ confirmed the placement of this month by saying: **"which is between Jumâdâ [al-Ukhrâ] and Sha'bân."**

Some scholars state that Rajab has fourteen names: (1) Shahr Allâh (the month of Allâh), (2) Rajab, (3) Rajab Muḍar, (4) Munṣil al-Asinnah, (5) al-Aṣamm, (6) al-Aṣabb, (7) Munaffis, (8) Muṭahhir, (9) Ma'lâ, (10) Muqîm (11) Haram, (12) Muqashqish, (13) Mubri' and (14) Fard. Others state that it has seventeen names. They add the following three: Rajam, Munaṣṣil al-Asinnah, and Munzi' al-Asinnah.

Many injunctions are connected to Rajab many of which were prevalent during *jâhilîyyah*. The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to their

continuity in Islam. One of them is the injunction with regard to fighting, and this was discussed previously. The other is of sacrificing animals. They used to slaughter animals during *jâhilîyyah* and refer to them as *al-'atîrah*.(1) The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to their ruling in Islam. The majority state that Islam considers this to be baseless. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is neither *fara'* nor *'atîrah*."**(2) [In other words, both are prohibited].(3)

Some say that sacrifices are preferable. Ibn Sîrîn *rahimahullâh* is from among them. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* relates this with regard to the people of Basra. Some latter Hadîth scholars give preference to this view. Hambal relates something similar from Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*.

Mukhannaf ibn Sulaym al-Ghâmidî narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said at 'Arafah: **"Every family should sacrifice an animal and an *'atîrah* every year. It is what they refer to as *ar-rajabîyyah*."**(4)

Nubayshah narrates that they said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! We used to sacrifice them in it [i.e. in Rajab]."** He said: **"Sacrifice for the sake of Allâh ﷻ in whichever month it may be. Be obedient to Allâh ﷻ and feed [the sacrificed animal to the people]."**(5)

Al-Hârith ibn 'Amr narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about *fara'* and *'atîrah*, and he said: **"Whoever wishes may practise *fara'* [for Allâh ﷻ] and whoever does not may abstain. Whoever wishes may practise *'atîrah* [for Allâh ﷻ] and whoever**

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(1) It refers to an animal which used to be slaughtered in Rajab. The people of *jâhilîyyah* used to resort to them to gain proximity. It was their practice that if any of them needed something, he would take a vow and say that if his objective was achieved, he will slaughter such and such number of animals in Rajab. These animals were known as *al-'atâ'ir* (plural of *al-'atîrah*).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (5473) and Muslim (1976).

(3) The word *fara'* refers to the firstling of the camel, sheep or goat which the people of *jâhilîyyah* used to sacrifice to their gods, looking for a blessing thereby. The word *'atîrah* was explained previously.

(4) Checked by Abu Dawoud (2788), An-Nasa'ei (7/167) and Ibn Majah (3125).

(5) Checked by Abu Dawoud (2830), An-Nasa'ei (7/169) and Ibn Majah (2565).

does not may abstain."(1) Another Hadîth states: **"*al-'Atîrah* is a fact."**(2)

Ibn Razîn narrates: I said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! We used to sacrifice animals during *jâhilîyyah*, that is in Rajab. We used to eat of the animals and feed whoever came to us."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is nothing wrong with that."**(3)

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates: **"The Quraysh sought the permission of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ for *'atîrah* so he said: 'You may practise *'atîrah* as in *jâhilîyyah*, but whoever among you wishes to sacrifice for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, eat thereof and give in charity, then he may do so."**(4)

They reconcile these Ahâdîth with the previous Hadîth wherein the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is neither *fara'* nor *'atîrah*"** by saying that the prohibition applies to the *jâhilî* practice of sacrificing for others apart from Allâh ﷻ. Sufyân ibn 'Uyaynah says that the negation in this Hadîth is to negate obligation [i.e. to show that it is not obligatory to practise this].

Some *'ulamâ'* say that the Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ is more authentic and more emphatic than these Ahâdîth. The practice will therefore be on this Hadîth and not on the others. This is the way of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*.

Mubârak ibn Fudâlah narrates from al-Hasan who said: **"There is no *'atîrah* in Islam. This was prevalent in *jâhilîyyah*: a person would fast in Rajab and sacrifice an animal. This sacrifice in Rajab was likened to celebrating the month as a month of festivity, like eating sweetmeats, etc. It is related with regard to Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that he considered it reprehensible to celebrate Rajab as a month of festivity."**

'Abd ar-Razzâq narrates from Ibn Jurayj from 'Atâ' who said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to prohibit fasting the entire month of Rajab for fear that it will be celebrated as a month of festivity."**

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(1) Checked by An-Nasa'ei (7/168).

(2) Narrated by An-Nasa'ei (7/168).

(3) An-Nasa'ei checked it (7/171).

(4) At-Tabarany checked it (11586).

Ma'mar narrates from Ibn Tâ'ûs from his father who said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Do not adopt any month as a month of festivity, nor any day as a day of festivity."**(1) The basis of this is that it is not lawful for the Muslims to consider any day as a day of festivity unless specified by the Sharî'ah. Such days are: the day of Fitr, the day of Ad-hâ, and the days of Tashrîq – these are the days of *'îd* (festivity) for the year. Then there is Friday which is the *'îd* of the week. If any other day apart from these days is adopted as a day of festivity and celebration, then it is an innovation which has no basis whatsoever in the Sharî'ah.

The injunctions of salâh, zakâh, fasting and 'umrah in Rajab

Salâh

There is no specific salâh to be recited specifically for Rajab. The Ahâdîth which are related with regard to the merit of *salâh ar-raghâ'ib* on the first Friday night of Rajab are false and baseless. This salâh is an innovation according to all the *'ulamâ'*. The following are some of the latter day personalities who labelled this salâh an innovation: Abû Ismâ'îl al-Ansârî, Abû Bakr ibn as-Sam'ânî, Abû al-Fadl ibn Nâsir, Abû al-Faraj ibn al-Jauzî and others. The early scholars did not make mention of this salâh because it was only innovated after them. The first mention of this salâh was after 400 A.H. The early scholars did not know about it and therefore did not speak about it.

Fasting

There is no authentic Hadîth on the merit of fasting specifically in Rajab – neither from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ nor from the Companions ﷺ. However, it is narrated from Abû Qilâbah who said that there is a palace in Paradise which is reserved for those who used to fast in Rajab.

Al-Bayhaqî said: **"Abû Qilâbah is from among the senior Tâbi'ûn. Someone like him will not say anything unless he received it from a reliable source."** However, there is a Hadîth which speaks about the virtue of keeping fast in all the sacred months. Mujîbah al-Bâhilîyyah narrates from her father or uncle that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Alternate between fasting and not fasting in the sacred months."**(2) He said this three times.

(1) Abdel Razzak checked it in his Musnaf (7853).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (5/28), Ibn Majah (1741) and Al-Baihaqi (4/291).

Narrated by Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh* and others. It is also narrated by Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* as follows: **"Keep fast in the sacred months."**

Al-Kattânî said: Tamâm ar-Râzî informed us, al-Qâḍî Yûsuf ibn al-Qâsim related to us, Muḥammad ibn Is-ḥâq as-Sirâj related to us, Yûsuf ibn Mûsâ related to us, Ḥajjâj ibn Minhâl narrated to us, Ḥammâd ibn Salamah narrated to us, Ḥabîb al-Mu'allim informed us on the authority of 'Aṭâ' that 'Urwah said to 'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar ﷺ: **"Was it the habit of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ to fast in Rajab?"** He said: **"Yes. And he used to wait [to fast in this month]."** He said this three times. Some past scholars used to fast the entire sacred months. Ibn 'Umar ﷺ, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrî *raḥimahullâh* and Abû Is-ḥâq as-Sabî'î *raḥimahullâh* were from among them.

Ath-Thaurî said: **"I like fasting in the sacred months."** A Ḥadîth narrated by Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* states that Usâmah ibn Zayd ﷺ used to fast in the sacred months, so the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: **"Keep fast in Shawwâl."**(1) He therefore stopped fasting in the sacred months and began fasting in Shawwâl until he passed away. The chain of this narration is cut.

Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* narrates through a weak chain from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ prohibited fasting in Rajab. The authentic chain is that it is a statement of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ [and not of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ]. It is also related by 'Aṭâ' from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ as a *mursal* Ḥadîth. It was quoted previously. 'Abd ar-Razzâq narrates in his book from Dâ'ûd ibn Qays from Zayd ibn Aslam who said: **"Someone mentioned to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about some people who fast in Rajab, so he said: 'What about Sha'bân?'"**(2) Azhar ibn Sa'îd al-Jumḥî narrates from his mother that she asked 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* about fasting in Rajab. She said: **"If you want to fast, fast in Sha'bân."** It is also related as a *marfû'* Ḥadîth, but the *mauqûf* Ḥadîth is more authentic.

It is related with regard to 'Umar ﷺ that he used to strike the palms of the men who used to fast in Rajab until they placed their hands in food [and began eating]. He used to say: **"What is Rajab? Rajab was a month which was accorded respect by the people of *jâhilîyyah*. When Islam came, it was left."** A narration states: **"He disliked considering fasting in this month to be Sunnah."**

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(1) Checked by Ibn Majah (1744).

(2) Checked by Abdel Razzak (4/292) number (7858) and Ibn Abi Shaiba (3/102).

Abû Bakrah saw his family people making preparations for fasting in Rajab so he said to them: **"Are you making Rajab like Ramadan?"** He then threw the baskets and mugs.

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ considered it reprehensible to fast the full month of Rajab. Ibn 'Umar ﷺ and Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ were of the opinion that one should abstain from fasting in some days of Rajab. Anas ﷺ and Sa'îd ibn Jubayr also considered it reprehensible to fast in this month. Yahyâ ibn Sa'îd al-Ansârî *rahimahullâh* and Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* considered it reprehensible to fast the entire month of Rajab. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said: **"The person must abstain from fasting in it for one or two days."** He narrated this from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ and Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ.

Ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* said during his early days: **"I consider it reprehensible for a person to fast an entire month as he fasts for the entire month of Ramadân."** He used this Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* as proof: **"I did not see the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ever fasting a full month except for Ramadân."**(1) Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* said: **"Similar is the ruling with regard to specifying a particular day for fasting."** He said: **"I consider it reprehensible lest an ignorant person may emulate him and think that it is obligatory. But if he fasts, it is good."**

Some of our scholars state that the reprehensibility of fasting in Rajab alone is removed if a person fasts another month with it as an optional act. For example he fasts in all the sacred months, or fasts in Rajab and Sha'bân. It was mentioned previously that Ibn 'Umar ﷺ and others used to fast in the sacred months. The established statement of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* in this regard is that only the person who keeps fasting all the time may fast the full month of Rajab.

There is reference to the fact that Ibn 'Umar ﷺ thought likewise. He learnt that some people disagreed with him when he prohibited fasting in Rajab. So he said: **"How about the person who keeps fasting all the time?"**(2) This shows that one should not fast for the full month of Rajab unless he is in the practice of fasting all the time.

Yûsuf ibn 'Atîyyah narrates from Hishâm ibn Hassân from Ibn Sîrîn on the authority of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not fast after Ramadân except Rajab and

(1) Al-Bukhari (1069) and Muslim (1156/175).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (1/26) and Muslim (2069).

Sha'bân.[1] Yûsuf is a very weak narrator. Abû Yûsuf al-Qâdî narrates from Ibn Abî Laylâ from his brother, 'Îsâ, from 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn Abî Laylâ from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast three days of every month. Sometimes he used to delay these fasts and keep them in Rajab and Sha'bân.

This is also narrated by 'Amr ibn Abî Qays from Ibn Abî Laylâ, but he does not mention Rajab in it. This Hadîth is more authentic.

Zakâh

The people in this country are in the habit of taking out their zakâh in Rajab. There is no basis for this in the Sunnah, nor is it known to be a practice of any of the past people. However, it is related with regard to 'Uthmân ﷺ that he addressed the people from the pulpit saying: **"This is the month for your zakâh. Whoever has a debt must pay off his debt and pay the zakâh on the balance."** Narrated by Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* in *al-Muwattâ*.

It is said that the month in which they used to take out their zakâh is forgotten and no longer known. It is said that it was the month of Muharram because it was the beginning of the year.

Our jurists [of the Hambalî school] and others say that the imam must send out the zakâh collectors in Muharram. Others say that it was Ramadân because of its merit and the merit of charity in it.

Nevertheless, zakâh becomes obligatory if a person possesses the *nisâb* (minimum amount which makes zakâh obligatory) for a full year. So each person has a different year-end based on his possession of *nisâb*. Once his year ends, it becomes obligatory on him to take out his zakâh no matter in which month it is. If he pays his zakâh before the end of his year, it will be valid according to the majority of *'ulamâ'*. This is irrespective of whether he gave it early in order to make the best of a meritorious time, or he gave it early to an extremely needy person the like of whom he may not find later, or whether he gave it early because of some difficulty which he may experience if he were to give all at once at the end of his year. In such a case, making several payments during the course of the year will be easier for him.

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(1) Ibn al-Jauzî *rahimahullâh* says with regard to the practice of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ for optional fasts: "He never kept fast in the three months consecutively – Rajab, Sha'bân and Ramadân – as is the practice of some people. He neither kept fast in the entire month of Rajab nor did he consider it to be desirable. In fact, he prohibited fasting for this entire month. (*Zâd al-Ma'âd*, vol. 2, p. 64)

Mujâhid explicitly states the permissibility of early payment in this way. This is also understood from the general statements of the majority of scholars. Is-hâq does not hold the same view in this case. This is related by Ibn Mansûr. But once the person's year expires, the majority say that he must not delay its payment.

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* says that its payment can be delayed if he is waiting for recipients whom he cannot find at present.

Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* and Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, in a narration, permit conveying zakâh wealth to another more deserving place. Based on this, it is not far-fetched to assume the permissibility of delaying it to a more meritorious time, such as Ramadân. Yazîd ar-Raqâshî narrates from Anas that the Muslims used to take out their zakâh in Sha'bân in order to strengthen their preparations for Ramadân. The chain of this narration is weak.

'Umrah

As for 'umrah in Rajab, Ibn 'Umar ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ performed 'umrah in Rajab. When 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* heard this, she rejected it, and Ibn 'Umar ﷺ was present there. He remained silent.(1) 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ and others consider it desirable to perform 'umrah in Rajab. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* and Ibn 'Umar ﷺ also used to perform 'umrah in this month. Ibn Sîrîn *rahimahullâh* relates that the people of the past used to do this.

The most superior of rites is for a person to perform hajj in one journey, and 'umrah in another journey out of the months of hajj. This is a way of completing the hajj and 'umrah which one is commanded to do. This is the view of the majority of the Companions ﷺ like 'Umar ﷺ, 'Uthmân ﷺ, 'Alî ﷺ and others.

It is related that major events took place in Rajab, but none of them are authentic. It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was born on the first night of Rajab, that he was commissioned as a Prophet on the 27th of Rajab, and the 25th of Rajab is also given for this event. But none of this is authentic. An unauthentic narration of al-Qâsim ibn Muhammad states that the Isrâ' (night journey or Mi'râj) of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ took place on the 27th of Rajab. Ibrâhîm al-Harbî and others refute this.

Qays ibn 'Ubâd narrates that he said on the 10th of Rajab:

(1) Revise Ṣaḥiḥ. Al-Bukhari (2/199) "Al 'Oumra" book, chapter (3). And Ṣaḥiḥ. Muslim (2/916) in "Al-Hajj" which is Pilgrimage (1255/219).

"Allâh wipes out whatever He wills and retains [whatever He wills]." *(Sûrah ar-Ra'd, 13: 39)*

The people of *jâhilîyyah* used to engage in excessive supplication against the oppressor in this month and their supplication used to be accepted. There are many famous incidents in this regard mentioned by Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ in his book, *Majâbî ad-Da'wah* and others.

This was mentioned to 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb ﷺ so he said: **"Allâh ﷻ used to do this for them to keep them away from each other. Allâh ﷻ made the Final Hour your appointed time. The Final Hour is more awesome and more terrifying."** Zâ'idah ibn Abî ar-Ruqâd narrates from Ziyâd an-Numayrî from Anas ﷺ that when the month of Rajab used to start, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to make this supplication: **"O Allâh! Bless us in Rajab and Sha'bân and convey us to Ramaḍân."**

Abû Ismâ'îl al-Anṣârî said: **"There is no other authentic Ḥadîth on the virtue of Rajab."** There is some hesitance in accepting this statement of his because this chain is weak. This Ḥadîth shows the desirability of supplication for living in meritorious times so that a person may be able to do good deeds during such times. The life of a true believer only adds to his goodness. The best of people is the one who has a long life and good deeds. The scholars of the past desired passing away after doing a good deed, e.g. after fasting in Ramaḍân or returning from ḥajj. It is said that the person who passes away in such a state is forgiven.

A pious *'âlim* fell ill before Rajab. He said: **"I supplicated to Allâh ﷻ to delay my death till Rajab for I have heard that Allâh ﷻ sets free some people in this month."** Allâh ﷻ enabled him to live till Rajab and he died in that month.

Rajab is the key to the months of goodness and blessings. Abû Bakr al-Warrâq al-Balkhî said: **"Rajab is the month of planting, Sha'bân is the month of irrigating the crop, and Ramaḍân is the month of harvesting the crop."** He said: **"Rajab is like the wind, Sha'bân is like the cloud, and Ramaḍân is like the rain."**

A person said: **"The year is like a tree, Rajab is the month when it produces leaves, Sha'bân is the month when it branches, Ramaḍân is the month of harvesting its fruit, and the believers are its harvesters."** The person who blackened his record with sins must whiten it in this month with repentance. The person who wasted his life in idleness must take full advantage of this month for whatever of his life remains.

بـيض صـحيفتك الـسوداء فـي رجـب بـصالح العمـل المنجـي مـن اللـب
شـهر حـرام أتـى مـن أشـهر حـرم إذا دعـا الله داع فـيه لـم يخـب
طوبـى لعـبد زكـى فـيه لـه عمـل فكـف فـيه عـن الفحـشاء والـرِّيَب

"Whiten your black record in Rajab by doing good deeds which will rescue you from the fire. It is a sacred month which has come. If a person supplicated to Allâh in this month, he will not go empty-handed. Glad tidings to the person who purified his deeds in this month and abstained from immorality and doubts."

Taking the opportunity of doing good deeds in this month is a great boon. Making the best of its hours with acts of obedience is a great merit.

يـا عـبد أقـبل منيـبا واغتـنم رجـبا فـإن عفـوي عمـن تـاب وقـد وجـبا
في هـذه الأشـهر الأبـواب قـد فـتحت للتائبـين فكـل نحـونا هـربا
حطـوا الـركائب فـي أبـواب رحمتـنا بحـسن ظـن فكـل نـال مـا طلـبا
وقـد نثـرنا علـيهم مـن تعطفـنا نـثار حـسن قـبول فـاز مـن نهـبا

"O servant! Come repentantly and take advantage from Rajab. Surely My pardon is incumbent on the person who repents. It is during these months that the doors are opened for the repentant ones, and everyone hastens towards Us. Dismount from the animals at the doors of Our mercy while expecting to be forgiven because each one shall receive whatever he asks for. We scattered good acceptance [of supplications] upon them out of Our affection. So the one who grabs all this is really the successful one."

SHA'BÂN

FASTING IN THIS MONTH

Usâmah ibn Zayd ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast for several days consecutively to the extent that we used to think that he will not stop fasting. He will then abstain from fasting for some days to the extent that he almost completely stopped fasting, except for two days in the week which he kept fast. He did not fast in the other months as much as he fasted in Sha'bân. I said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! You fast so much that you almost fast continuously. Then you abstain from fasting to the extent that you almost completely give up fasting except for two days in the week which you almost always fast.' He asked: 'Which two days?' I said: 'Mondays and Thursdays.' He said: 'Those are two days on which the deeds are presented to the Lord of the universe. I like my deeds to be presented while I am fasting.' I said: 'I did not see you fasting in the other months as much as you fast in Sha'bân.' He said: 'It is a month which many people are unmindful of – it falls between Rajab and Ramadân. It is a month in which the deeds are presented to the Lord of the universe. I like my deeds to be presented while I am fasting.'"**(1)

This Hadîth mentions the full year's fasting of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, his fasting during the days of the week, and his fasting during the months of the year. As for fasting in the course of the year, he used to fast several days consecutively at times, and abstain from fasting for several consecutive days. In this instance, he will fast so much that people would think that he is not going to stop fasting. And if he stopped fasting, he would stop for so long that people would think that he is not going to fast.

This is also related by 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*, Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ, Anas ﷺ and others. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast so much that we used to think that he is not going to stop. Then he would abstain from fasting**

(1) Checked by An-Nasa'ei (4/201) and Ahmad (5/201).

for so long that we used to think that he is not going to fast."(1)

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates: **"When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ commenced fasting, a person would think: 'By Allâh, he is not going to stop fasting.' He would then stop fasting to the extent that a person would think: 'By Allâh, he is not going to fast.'"**(2)

Anas ﷺ was asked about the fasting of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, so he said: **"Whenever I wanted to see him fasting in a month, I would see him fasting. Whenever I wanted to see him not fasting, I would see him not fasting. Whenever I wanted to see him standing in ṣalâh at night, I would see him thus. Whenever I wanted to see him sleeping at night, I would see him thus."**(3)

Anas ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast so much that people would say: 'He has fasted and fasted so much.' And he used to abstain from fasting so much that people would say: 'He has abstained from fasting so much.'"**(4)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to disapprove of anyone fasting continuously without stopping in-between, and he used to say that he does not do that. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Do you fast [continuously] by day and engage in [continuous] night worship?"** He replied: **"Yes."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"But I alternate between fasting and not fasting, I spend the night in worship and I sleep as well. I also engage in conjugal relations. Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me."**(5)

Anas ﷺ narrates that some Companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ were discussing among themselves. One said: **"I will not marry."** The other said: **"I will not eat meat."** The other said: **"I will not sleep on any bed."** When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard of this, he addressed the people saying: **"What is it with some people who are saying this and that? I offer ṣalâh and I sleep, I keep fast and abstain from fasting, and I marry women. Whoever**

(1) Al-Bukhari (1969) and Muslim (1156).

(2) Al-Bukhari (1971) and Muslim (1157).

(3) Al-Bukhari (1973) and Muslim (1158).

(4) Muslim (1158/180).

(5) Al-Bukhari (5063) and Muslim (1401).

turns away from my Sunnah is not of me."

An-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* related the above with the following addition: **"I will fast continuously without stopping."**(1)

The *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* relates from one of the Companions ﷺ who said: **"Someone mentioned a freed slave woman of Banû 'Abd al-Muttalib who spends the night in worship and the day fasting before the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. So he said: 'But I sleep and offer salâh as well, I keep fast and abstain from fasting. Whoever follows me is from me, whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me. There is a time of enthusiasm and slackness for every deed. The one whose slackness leads to innovation has indeed gone astray. The one who slackness leads to the Sunnah has certainly been guided."**(2)

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that 'Uthmân ibn Maz'ûn ﷺ wanted to become a recluse so the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked him: **"Are you dissatisfied with my Sunnah?"** He replied: **"By Allâh, no. In fact, I want to follow your Sunnah."** He said: **"I sleep and also offer salâh, I fast and also abstain from fasting, and I also marry. So fear Allâh, O 'Uthmân! Surely your wife has a right over you, your guest has a right over you, and your self has a right over you. You must fast and also abstain from fasting. You must offer salâh [at night] and also sleep."**(3)

'Ikramah and others said: 'Uthmân ibn Maz'ûn ﷺ, 'Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ﷺ, al-Miqdâd ﷺ, and Sâlim, the freed slave of Hudhayfah ﷺ, became reclusive, sat in their houses, remained aloof from their wives, and abstained from good food and clothing. They confined themselves to the food and clothes of the travellers of the Banî Isrâ'îl. They also intended castrating themselves, spending the night in worship, and the day in fasting. The following verse was revealed with reference to them: **"O believers! Do not declare as forbidden the good things which Allâh made lawful to you. And do not exceed the bounds. Surely Allâh does not love those who exceed the bounds."** *(Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 87)*

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ established a brotherly relationship

(1) An-Nasa'ei (6/60).

(2) Al-Musnad (5/409).

(3) Checked by Abu Dawoud (1369) and Ahmad (6/268).

between Salmân ﷺ and Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ. [One day], Salmân ﷺ went to visit Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ and saw Umm ad-Dardâ' *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* in shabby clothes. He asked her: 'What is this?' She replied: 'Your brother, Abû ad-Dardâ', has no inclination to this world.' Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ then came, prepared food for Salmân ﷺ and said to him: 'You may eat, but I am fasting.' Salmân ﷺ said: 'I am not going to eat unless you join me.' So he also ate with him. When night came, Abû ad-Dardâ ﷺ went to stand up [for salâh]. Salmân ﷺ said to him: 'Go to sleep.' So he went and slept. [After some time], he got up [to offer salâh]. Salmân ﷺ said to him: 'Go to sleep.' When it was the last portion of the night, Salmân ﷺ said to him: 'You may get up now.' They both offered salâh together. Salmân ﷺ said to him: 'Your Sustainer has a right over you, your soul has a right over you, and your family has a right over you. You should therefore give everyone their due right.' He then went to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and related all that transpired to him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **'Salmân is correct.'"**(1) Another narration which is not in the *Sahîh* of al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* says that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"May Salmân be bereft of his mother!(2) He has been endowed with great knowledge."**

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said the same thing to 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ when he was fasting continuously. He prohibited him from doing that and ordered him to fast as Dâ'ûd ﷺ used to fast: **"He used to alternate between fasting one day and not fasting the next day."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: **"There is no fast which is superior to this."**(3) There are several Ahâdîth which prohibit fasting continuously.(4) All this shows that the best type of fasting is that it must not be continuous. Instead, the person must alternate between fasting and not fasting. This is the correct opinion of the *'ulamâ'*, and the way of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and others.

Someone said to 'Umar ﷺ: **"There is a certain person who is**

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(1) Al-Bukhari (6139).

(2) Although this appears to be a supplication against him, it is not intended. Such a statement is made on an occasion of intense love.

(3) Al-Bukhari (1976).

(4) As in Hadith of Abdullah Bin 'Amr at Muslim (1159) "He who fasted every day didn't fast".

fasting continuously." 'Umar ﷺ began hitting him on his head with a spear which he had and said: **"Eat O you are fasting continuously. Eat O you are fasting continuously."** Narrated by 'Abd ar-Razzâq.(1)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made reference to the wisdom behind this:

(1) He said with regard to continuous fasting: **"The person has neither kept fast nor abstained from fasting."**(2) In other words, he neither experienced the difficulty of fasting, nor did he miss out on food, drink and conjugal relations. This is because fasting became a welcome habit for him. He may well be harmed by abstaining from it. If he kept fast occasionally and abstained from fasting occasionally, he would have achieved the purpose of fasting by abstaining from these desires [of food, drink and conjugal relations] while having an inclination for them. This is better than abstaining from them while his self has no inclination for them.

(2) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to Dâ'ûd ﷺ: **"He used to alternate between fasting and not fasting, and he did not flee from the battlefield when he met the enemy."**(3) He is making reference to the fact that his fasting did not weaken him from meeting the enemy and striving in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to his Companions ﷺ during the conquest of Makkah – and it was in Ramadân – **"This is a day of battle, so do not fast."**(4)

When 'Umar ﷺ used to despatch any army, he would say: **"Do not fast because having the strength to wage jihad is better than fasting."**

The best fast thus means that the body must not become so weak that it cannot do another act which is superior to fasting, e.g. fulfilling the rights of Allâh ﷻ, or the essential rights of His servants. If he is too weak to fulfil that which is more superior than fasting, it will be better for him to abstain from fasting.

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(1) Abdul Razzak in his Musanaf (7871).

(2) Checked by Ibn Majah (1705).

(3) Checked by Muslim (181/1159).

(4) Checked by Ibn Sa'aed in his "Tabakat" (2/1/120).

Where fasting weakens a person from fulfilling the rights of Allâh ﷻ

For example, fasting weakens a person from offering salâh, engaging in remembrance of Allâh, or from acquiring knowledge. As is said with regard to the prohibition of fasting on Friday and the day of 'Arafah [9th Dhû al-Hijjah] for the person who is at 'Arafah, that fasting weakens a person from remembrance and supplication on these two days. Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ used to offer few fasts and say: **"Fasting prevents me from reciting the Qur'ân and the recitation of the Qur'ân is more beloved to me."** The recitation of the Qur'ân is superior to fasting as clearly stated by Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* and other imams. Similarly, seeking and conveying beneficial knowledge are both superior to fasting.

The four imams explicitly state that the acquisition of knowledge is superior to optional salâh, and salâh is superior to optional fast. Acquiring knowledge will thus be even more superior to fasting. Knowledge is the light which guides one in the darkness of ignorance and base desires. The person who treads a path without a light will soon fall in a deep pit and be destroyed. Ibn Sîrîn *rahimahullâh* said: **"Some people abandoned knowledge and adopted the *mihrâb* (semi-circular enclosure in a musjid) where they offered salâh and kept fast without knowledge. By Allâh, anyone who practises without knowledge is certain to cause more corruption than rectitude."**

Where fasting weakens a person from fulfilling the rights of his fellow humans

For example, fasting weakens a person from earning a livelihood for his family or fulfilling the rights of his wife. In such a case, it will be better for him to abstain from fasting. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made reference to this by saying: **"Your wife has a right over you."**

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ also made reference to the following: **"Your self has a right over you, so fulfil the right of everyone who has a right over you."** This shows that the soul is a trust of Allâh which is entrusted to man. He is ordered to fulfil its right. One of its rights is to be affectionate towards it until he conveys it to its destination.

Al-Hasan said: **"Your souls are your conveyances towards your Lord. Rectify your conveyances and they will convey you to**

your Lord." The person who accords to his soul its lawful share with the intention of gaining strength from it for carrying out acts of obedience shall be rewarded for this.

Mu'âdh ibn Jabal ﷺ said: **"I expect reward from my sleep just as I expect reward from my night worship."** The person who displays shortcomings in fulfilling the rights of his soul to the extent that it becomes weak and is harmed, has in fact wronged it. This is what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was referring to when he said to 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ ﷺ: **"If you do that, the soul will become burdened and the eyes will become hollow."**

A Bedouin came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and embraced Islam. He then came back the following year, but he had changed so much that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ could not recognize him. When he eventually recognized him, he asked him about himself. He said: **"After I left you, I never ate any food during the day."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: **"Who asked you to punish yourself?"**(1)

A person who punishes his self by imposing on it anything which it cannot bear, e.g. fasting, it may well lead to weakness in his body and intellect. If this happens, he will miss out more of the virtuous deeds than what he will acquire if he were to torture it with fasting.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ adopted a balanced approach in according rights to his soul, and remained extremely just in this regard. He would fast and abstain from fasting, he would engage in night worship and sleep, he married, he ate food which he liked, e.g. sweetmeats, honey and chicken. There were also occasions when he used to be so hungry that he had to tie a rock to his stomach.

He said: **"My Lord offered to turn the level land of Makkah into gold for me. I said: 'No, my Lord. I would rather stay hungry one day and eat one day. When I am hungry, I will humble myself before You and remember You. When I have eaten, I will praise and thank You."**(2)

He thus chose the best of conditions for himself so that he may

(1) Al-Baihaqi checked it (4/291).

(2) At-Tirmidhi checked it (2347).

combine gratitude with patience and contentment.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ: **"It may well be that you will have a long life."** In other words, the worship which you have imposed on yourself may be borne by the strength of youth as long as youth remains. But once youth departs and old age approaches, old age will not be able to bear this. If he were to exercise patience and continue striving [despite his old age], he may destroy his body. If he stops completely, he would be missing out on the most beloved of deeds in the sight of Allâh ﷻ, viz. steadfastness on good deeds. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Take upon yourselves the deeds which you can bear. By Allâh, Allâh ﷻ does not tire until you tire."**(1)

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The most beloved of deeds in the sight of Allâh ﷻ is the one that is done regularly even though it may be little."**(2)

The person who does a deed which his body has the strength to do throughout his life – both in his strength and weakness – will find that his life is upright. The person who bears something which he does not have the strength to bear might experience an illness which prevents him from doing it completely. He may become tired and bored and give up that deed. He will thus become like a person who is unable to proceed on his journey because his conveyance has broken down.

The fasts of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ during the week

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was particular about fasting on Mondays and Thursdays. As related by 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was particular about fasting on Mondays and Thursdays.(3) Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*. At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* said that it is a sound Hadîth.

Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ who

(1) Al-Bukhari (43).

(2) Al-Bukhari (6465).

(3) Checked by Ahmad (6/80), An-Nasa'ei (4/202), At-Tirmidhi (745) and Ibn Majah (1739).

said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast on Mondays and Thursdays. He was asked about this: 'O Messenger of Allâh! You fast on Mondays and Thursdays?' He said: 'Mondays and Thursdays are two days in which Allâh ﷻ forgives every Muslim except the two who have ill-feeling towards each other. He says: 'Leave them until they reconcile.'"**

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast on Mondays and Thursdays the most. When he was asked about this, he said: 'The deeds are presented [before Allâh ﷻ] every Monday and Thursday. Every Muslim or every believer is forgiven except the two who have ill-feeling towards each other. Allâh ﷻ says: 'Defer their matter.'"**(1)

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates the above as follows: **"The deeds are presented [before Allâh ﷻ] on Monday and Thursday. I like my deeds to be presented while I am fasting."**

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates: **"The doors of Paradise are opened on Mondays and Thursdays. Every person who does not ascribe partners with Allâh is forgiven, except for the person who has severed relations with his brother. Allâh says: 'Delay the matter of these two till they reconcile.'"**

A Hadîth which has a weak chain on the authority of Abû Umâmah ﷺ says: **"The deeds are raised on Monday and Thursday. Those who seek forgiveness are forgiven and those who bear malice are left to their malice."**

'Alî ibn Abî Talhah narrates Ibn 'Abbâs's ﷺ explanation of the verse: **"He does not utter a single word without there being a watcher with him, ever-ready."** *(Sûrah Qâf, 50: 18)* He [Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ] said: **"Everything – whether good or evil – which man utters is recorded. So much so, the following words of man are also written: 'I ate, I drank, I went, I came, I saw.' Then when it is Thursday, his deeds and words are presented, he is made to admit all the good and evil, and all of it is cast. This is what is meant by the words: 'Allâh wipes out whatever He wills and retains [whatever He wills]. And with Him is the original Book.'** *(Sûrah ar-Ra'd, 13: 39)***"** Narrated by Ibn Abî Hâtim and others. This shows that Thursday is specifically set aside for the presentation of

(1) Al-Musnad (2/329).

deeds.

Ibrâhîm an-Nakha'î *rahimahullâh* used to cry to his wife on Thursdays and she used to cry to him. He used to say to her: **"Our deeds are presented to Allâh ﷻ today."**

This is a special presentation of deeds on these two days, separate from the general presentation which takes place everyday. The daily presentation is a continuous presentation which takes place every morning and evening. This is inferred from the following Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ who says that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Angels take shifts in coming to you at night and during the day. They assemble during the *fajr salâh* and *'asr salâh*. Allâh ﷻ asks the angels who spent the night with you – despite Allâh having full knowledge thereof – 'In what condition did you leave My servants?' They say: 'When we went to them, they were in salâh. And when we departed from them, they were in salâh.'"**(1)

Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arîy ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stood before us and said five things: (1) Allâh ﷻ does not sleep nor is it appropriate for Him to sleep. (2) He lowers and raises the scale. (3) The deeds of the night are raised to Him before the start of the day. (4) The deeds of the day are raised to Him before the start of the night. (5) Light is His veil. If He were to reveal this light, the beams from the light on His countenance would burn all the creations as far as His eyes see."**

Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"The extent of each day in the sight of Allâh is twelve hours. Your deeds of yesterday are presented to Him at the beginning of today. Three times are examined therein."** He then related the rest of the Hadîth.

Ad-Dahhâk used to cry at the end of the day and say: **"I do not know what deeds of mine have been raised. O you whose deeds are presented to the Being who knows the secrets and all that is concealed! Do not try to adorn yourself because the investigator [Allâh ﷻ] is watching carefully."**

الـسقم علـى الجـسم لـه تـرداد	والعمـر مـضى وزلتـي تـزداد
مـا أبعـد شُـقَّتي ومـا لـي زاد	مـا أكثـر يهرجـي ولـي نقـاد

(1) Al-Bukhari (555) and Muslim (632).

"Illness on the body is coming repeatedly, my life has passed, and my sins are increasing. My destination is so far but I have no provisions. I have embellished myself so much, yet I have critics [who are examining me]."

The Hadîth of Usâmah ﷺ states that when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ abstained from fasting for several days, he would still fast on Monday and Thursday. This shows his constancy in fasting on these days. It was because of this that Usâmah ﷺ used to fast on these days irrespective of whether he was on a journey or at home. The *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and the *Sunan* of an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* narrate from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered him to fast for three days of every month. He said to him: **"I have the strength to fast more than that."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Then fast on Monday and Thursday from the week."** He said: **"I have the strength to fast more than that."** He said: **"Then fast as Dâ'ûd ﷺ used to fast."**(1)

The *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* states from 'Uthmân ibn Rushayd who said: Anas ibn Sîrîn related to me saying: **"We went** to Anas ibn Mâlik ﷺ on a Thursday. He called for his table and invited them to have a meal. Some people ate while others abstained. They went to him on Thursday again and he did the same. Anas ﷺ said: 'You are probably the **"Mondayers"** and **"Thursdayers"** (those who fast on Mondays and Thursdays). The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast so much that people used to think he will not stop. He would abstain from fasting to such an extent that people used to **think he will not fast.'"**(2)

This Hadîth apparently contradicts the Hadîth of Usâmah ﷺ. It seems that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast on Monday and Thursday if these days fell within the period of his fasting, and that he was not particular about fasting on these two days during the period when he was not fasting. However, 'Uthmân ibn Rushayd is a weak narrator. Ibn Ma'în and others labelled him weak. The Hadîth of Usâmah ﷺ is more authentic.

It is related from the Hadîth of Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast for three days of every

(1) Checked by An-Nasa'ei (4/212).

(2) Al-Musnad (3/230).

month: Thursday, Monday and Monday.(1) Another narration mentions the opposite: **"Monday, Thursday and Thursday."**(2) The majority of *'ulamâ'* are of the opinion that it is desirable to fast on Monday and Thursday. The reprehensibility of fasting on these days is related from Anas ibn Mâlik ﷺ through several narrations from him. Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* used to fast on these days, then gave it up and considered it reprehensible. Abû Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Alî considered it reprehensible to fast on a Monday. A group of scholars considered it reprehensible to set aside a particular day for fasting.

This is related with regard to 'Imrân ibn Husayn ﷺ, Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ, ash-Sha'bî *rahimahullâh*, an-Nakha'î *rahimahullâh*, and Ibn al-Qâsim narrates this with regard to Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh*. Ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* said in his early days: **"I consider it reprehensible."** He said: **"I consider it reprehensible so that an ignorant person may not emulate him and think that it is obligatory."** He said: **"But if he does it, it is good."** In other words, provided he does not believe it to be obligatory.

As for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ fasting during the months of the year, he used to fast in Sha'bân without fasting as much in the other months.

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"I did not see the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ fasting a full month except for Ramadân. I did not see him fasting more than what he did in Sha'bân."**(3)

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* adds in a narration: **"He used to fast for the entire month of Sha'bân."**(4) A narration of Muslim *rahimahullâh* states: **"He used to fast for the entire month of Sha'bân, he used to fast for the major portion of Sha'bân."**(5) An-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* narrates that 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ loved fasting in Sha'bân the most. He used to join it with Ramadân."**(6)

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* and Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*

(1) Narrated by An-Nasa'ei: (4/221).

(2) Checked by An-Nasa'ei (4/220).

(3) It was checked before.

(4) Al-Bukhari (1970).

(5) Muslim (176/1156).

(6) An-Nasa'ei (4/199).

narrate: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast for the major portion of Sha'bân. In fact, he used to fast the entire month."**(1) Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"I did not see the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ fasting for two consecutive months except Sha'bân and Ramadân."**(2)

A group of *'ulamâ'* including Ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh* and others prefer the opinion that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not fast the entire month of Sha'bân. Rather, he used to fast the major portion of it. The following narration of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* in *Sahîh Muslim* testifies to this: **"I do not know of him – the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ - fasting an entire month except for Ramadân."**(3) Another narration of his from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* states: **"I did not see him fasting a full month ever since he came to Madînah, unless it was Ramadân."**(4)

Another narration of his from her states: **"I do not know of the Prophet of Allâh ﷺ reciting the entire Qur'ân in one night, nor did he fast an entire month except for Ramadân."**(5) Another narration of his states: **"I never saw him engaged in worship the entire night till morning, nor did I see him fasting one continuous month except for Ramadân."**(6)

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not fast an entire month apart from Ramadân."**(7) Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ considered it reprehensible to fast an entire month apart from Ramadân.

'Abd ar-Razzâq *rahimahullâh* narrates in his book(8) on the authority of Ibn Jurayj from 'Atâ' who said: **"Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ used to prohibit fasting an entire month. He used to say: 'A person may fast it except for a few days.' He used to prohibit setting aside a particular day for fasting and fasting on specific days. He used to say: 'Do not fast on known days.'"**

(1) At-Tirmidhi (736).
(2) Ibid.
(3) Muslim (1156).
(4) Muslim (174/1156).
(5) Muslim (746).
(6) Muslim (141/746).
(7) Al-Bukhari (1971) and Muslim (1157).
(8) Abdel Razzak in Al-Musannaf (7855).

If someone were to ask: How is it that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to specifically keep optional fasts in Sha'bân while he said: **"The best fast after the month of Ramadân is in the month of Allâh, Muharram."**?

A group of people provided weak answers to this question because of their belief that fasting in Muharram and the sacred months is superior to fasting in Sha'bân – as clearly stated by the Shâfi'îs and others. But this is not the case because fasting in Sha'bân is superior to fasting in the sacred months. This is inferred from the Hadîth which at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Anas ﷺ: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: **"Which fast is the most superior after Ramadân?"** He said: **"Sha'bân, as a way of according honour to Ramadân."**(1) There is some objection to the chain of this Hadîth.

The *Sunan* of Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* states that Usâmah ﷺ used to fast in the sacred months. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: **"Fast in Shawwâl."**(2) He stopped fasting in the sacred months and kept fasting in Shawwâl until his death. The chain of this Hadîth is *mursal*, but it has been narrated through other chains which strengthen it. This is a clear text indicating the superiority of fasting in Shawwâl over fasting in the sacred months. The reason for this is that it follows Ramadân just as Sha'bân precedes Ramadân. Sha'bân is superior because the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast in it and not as much in Shawwâl. If fasting in Shawwâl is superior to fasting in the sacred months, fasting in Sha'bân will obviously be more superior.

It becomes clear from the above that the most superior optional fasts are those which are close to the month of Ramadân – before it and after it. These optional fasts are attached to the fasting of Ramadân because of their proximity to it. The position of these fasts will be like the Sunnah salâhs which are offered before and after the compulsory salâhs. Their merit is attached to the compulsory and they perform the task of completing any deficiency which remained in the compulsory salâh. Similar is the case with fasting before and after Ramadân. Just as the Sunnah salâhs which are attached to the compulsory salâhs are superior to all other optional salâhs, similar is

(1) At-Tirmidhi narrated it (663).

(2) It was narrated before.

the case with the fasts before and after Ramadân – they are superior to the optional fasts which are far away from the month of Ramadân. The words of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"The best fast after the month of Ramadân is in Muharram"** will apply to optional fasts in general.

As for the fasts before and after Ramadân, their merit will be attached to Ramadân. In the remaining part of the above Hadîth, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The best salâh after the compulsory salâh is the night [*tahajjud*] salâh."** He was referring to the superiority of the night salâh over the optional salâhs in general and not the optional salâhs which are offered before and after the compulsory salâhs. This is according to all the *'ulamâ'* except for a few Shâfi'î scholars. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

If someone were to say: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The most superior fast is the fast of Dâ'ûd عليه السلام, he used to alternate between fasting one day and not fasting the next."** Yet he himself did not fast like this. Instead, he used to fast for several days and then abstain from fasting for several days. Moreover, he used to fast in Sha'bân and every Monday and Thursday.

The fasting of Dâ'ûd عليه السلام to which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ accorded superiority over other fasts has been explained in another Hadîth wherein the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said that it entails fasting half one's life. If the fasting of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ were to be added together, it would reach fasting half one's life or more. Moreover, he used to fast on the day of 'Âshûrâ' – as mentioned before – or on the 9th of Dhû al-Hijjah. He used to scatter his fasts and abstained from alternating between fasting one day and not fasting the next because he was particular about fasting on meritorious days. To scatter the fasts for more than a day is not harmful if the object was to gain strength to do something which was superior to fasting, e.g. fulfilling his responsibility of conveying the message, waging jihad for this purpose, and fulfilling the rights of jihad. If he were to alternate between fasting one day and abstaining the next, it would have made him weak from doing all this. It is for this reason that when he was asked – in the Hadîth of Abû Qatâdah – about the person who alternates between fasting one day and not fasting for two days, he said: **"I wish I had the strength to do**

that."(1)

When 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ became old, he used to abstain from fasting for several days so that he could gain the strength to fast. He would start fasting again and keep the fasts which he missed in order to maintain his norm of fasting half his life based on what he had left the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ with. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ acquired the reward of fasting half his life or more through this scattered fasting, and he also acquired the reward of fasting continuously because of the intention which he made in this regard. His preoccupations with other matters which were more superior prevented him from carrying out all this. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

From what we mentioned above, the reason for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ fasting in Sha'bân and not in other months becomes clear. There are other reasons for this. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mentions two of them in the Hadîth of Usâmah ﷺ. They are:

(1) It is a month which many people are unmindful of – it falls between Rajab and Ramadân. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is pointing to the fact that because it falls between two great months – the sacred month [of Muharram] and the month of fasting [Ramadân] – people become occupied with these two and become unmindful of Sha'bân. Many people are under the assumption that fasting in Rajab is superior to fasting in Sha'bân because the former is a sacred month. But this is not the case. Ibn Wahb narrates: Mu'âwiyah ibn Sâlih related to us from Azhar ibn Sa'd from his father from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* who said: **"Someone mentioned to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about some people who fast in Rajab, so he asked: 'What about Sha'bân?'"**(2)

The words **"many people are unmindful of – it falls between Rajab and Ramadân"** refer to the fact that at times certain times, places or people may be assumed to be virtuous whereas there are other [times, places or people] who are more virtuous – either unilaterally or because of some peculiarity in it which most of the people do not recognize. They thus become engrossed with popular belief and miss out the opportunity of acquiring the merit of

(1) Checked by Muslim (1162).

(2) Checked by Abdul Razzak (7858).

something which is not popular according to them.

The above statement [of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ] shows the desirability of making the times which people are unmindful of into constructive times of obedience, and that this is beloved to Allâh ﷻ. For example, some people of the past preferred spending the time between the *maghrib* and *'ishâ salâhs* with optional salâh because it is a time of negligence. Similar is the virtue of salâh in the middle of the night because the majority of people are unmindful of remembrance of Allâh ﷻ during this time. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If you are able to be among those who engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ at that time, then do so."** It was because of this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ wanted to delay the *'ishâ salâh* to middle of the night but abandoned this with the reason that he did not want to cause difficulty to the people. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ went to his Companions ﷺ while they were waiting for him for the *'ishâ salâh*, he said to them: **"There is no one on earth apart from you who is waiting to perform this salâh."**(1)

This shows the merit of engaging in solitary remembrance of Allâh ﷻ at a time when there is no one else. It is for this reason that there are Ahâdîth which mention the merit of engaging in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ in the market places. In fact, Abû Sâlih said: **"Allâh ﷻ smiles at the person who engages in His remembrance in the market place."** The reason for this is that he engaged in His remembrance in a place of heedlessness among heedless people.

A *marfû'* Hadîth of Abû Dharr ﷺ states: **"There are three types of people whom Allâh ﷻ loves: (1) A group of people travelled through the night [and became so exhausted] that sleep was the most desirable thing to them. They placed their heads down to sleep, but one person stood up praising Me and reciting My verses. (2) A group of people were in an army and were defeated. But one of them went forward, faced the enemy and fought until he was killed. (3) A beggar came to some people and asked them, but they refused. One of them went aside and gave the beggar secretly."** These three people separated themselves from their companions and did something which was private between

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (750).

themselves and Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ therefore loved them.

Similar is the case with the person who remembers Allâh ﷻ while people are heedless, or a person who fasts during days which people are heedless of. There are several benefits of engaging in obedience during the times when people are heedless:

The benefits of engaging in obedience during the times when people are heedless

(1) There is more concealment in this. Concealing optional acts and keeping them a secret is superior, especially with regard to fasting. This remains a secret between the person and Allâh. It is for this reason that it is said that there is no ostentation in it. A person of the past kept fasting for forty years without anyone knowing about it. He used to leave his house in the morning with two loaves of bread and go to his business place. He would give both loaves in charity and remain fasting. His family thought that he ate the bread at his business place, while the people in the market thought that he ate at home.

Furthermore, they considered it desirable for the person who is fasting to do things which conceal his fast. Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"When you commence fasting, apply oil to yourselves."**

Qatâdah *rahimahullâh* said: **"It is desirable for a fasting person to apply oil so that the dryness of fasting goes away."** Abû at-Tayyâh said: **"I saw my father and seniors of my residential area applying oil and wearing their best clothes when they were fasting."**

It is related that 'Îsâ ibn Maryam ﷺ said: **"When any of you is fasting, he must apply oil to his beard and wipe some of that oil on his lips so that when any person looks at him, he thinks that he is not fasting."**

A righteous person became well-known for his abundant fasting. He therefore tried hard to show that he was not fasting. He would stand at the *jâmi' musjid* on a Friday, hold a jug of water in his hand, place its edge to his mouth, and do as if he was sipping from it without drinking anything. He would remain for some time like that so that the people may see him and think that he is drinking water, whereas nothing would go down his throat.

No matter how much the truthful people try to conceal their conditions, the fragrance of truth betrays them. The fragrance which

emanates from the mouth of a fasting person is better than the fragrance of musk. The hearts of the believers are able to inhale this fragrance even if it is very subtle [and concealed]. The longer it remains, the stronger the fragrance.

كـــم أكـــتُمُ حـــبّكم عـــن الأغـــيار والدمـــع يذيـــع فـــي الهـــوى أســـراري
كـــم أســـتركم هتكـــتموا أســـتاري مـــن يخفـــى فـــي الهـــوى لهـــيب الـــنهار

"No matter how much I conceal my love for you from others, my tears betray my secrets of love. No matter how much I try to conceal you, you remove my veils. Who is there who can conceal love from the blazing of the day?"

No matter how much a person concealed a secret, Allâh ﷻ clothed it with the sheet of publicity.

وهبنـــي كـــتمت الـــسر أو قلـــت غيـــره أتخفـــى علـــى أهـــل القلـــوب الـــسرائر
أبـــى ذاك أن الـــسر فـــي الـــوجه ناطـــق وأن ضـــمير القلـــب فـــي العـــين ظاهـــر

"Tell me and I will conceal the secret, or else, I will say something else [different from what you tell me]. Can secrets be concealed from the people of the hearts? A secret expresses itself on the face, and what is in the depth of the heart becomes obvious in the eyes."

(2) It is more difficult on the souls, and the most superior deeds are those which are most difficult on the souls. The reason for this is that the souls emulate the conditions which they notice of their fellow souls. When there is more vigilance and obedience on the part of people, there are more people of obedience because there are more people emulating them. In this way, acts of obedience become easy. When there is more heedlessness and more heedless people, the people in general emulate them. In such a case, it becomes difficult for the vigilant souls to obey them because of the small number of people whom they can emulate. It is in this sense that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"A single practising person from among them shall receive the reward of fifty from among you. This is because you have supporters in doing good while they do not have."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Islam commenced as a stranger and shall return as a stranger. So glad tidings to the strangers."**(1) Another narration states that he was asked: **"Who are the**

(1) Checked by Muslim (145), Ibn Majah (3986) and Ahmad (2/389).

strangers?" He said: **"Those who remain on rectitude when people become corrupt."**(1)

Imam Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrates on the authority of Ma'qil ibn Yasâr ﷺ who narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Engaging in worship during times of disorder is like emigrating to me."**(2)

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates the above as follows: **"Engaging in worship during times of tribulation is like emigrating to me."**(3)

The reason for this is that during times of corruption and tribulation, people follow their whims and fancies and do not return to religion. Their condition is similar to that of *jâhilîyyah*. So if a person distances himself from them, adheres to his religion, worships his Lord, does all that would earn His pleasure, and abstains from all that earns His wrath, he will be like the person who emigrates and departs from the people of *jâhilîyyah* and goes to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, believes in him, follows his orders and abstains from his prohibitions.

(3) A solitary obedient person among disobedient and heedless people may be a means of a punishment [from Allâh ﷻ] being averted from all the people. So it is as if he is protecting and defending them. A Hadîth of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ states: **"The one who remembers Allâh ﷻ while among the heedless ones is like a person who is fighting on behalf of those who are fleeing from the battlefield. The one who remembers Allâh ﷻ while among the heedless ones is like a green tree in the centre of trees whose leaves have fallen off because of the severe cold. Allâh ﷻ forgives the person who engages in His remembrance equal to the number of every animate and inanimate creation. The one who remembers Allâh ﷻ while among the heedless knows his abode in Paradise."**(4)

A person of the past said: **"The one who remembers Allâh ﷻ while among the heedless is like a person who is defending a**

(1) Checked by At-Tabarany in "Al-kabir" and Al-'Aajery in "Sefat al Ghorabaa' (5) and Al-Lalekaa'ey in Shareh "Osoul Al-E'tekaad" (173).

(2) Muslim (2948).

(3) In Al-Musnad (5/27).

(4) Checked by Abu Na'eem in Al-Hilya (6/181).

vanquished army. Were it not for the person who remembers Allâh ﷻ while people are heedless, all of them would have been destroyed." A group of past peoples saw in their dream that angels descended upon various lands and one said to the other: **"Sink this village."** The other asked: **"How can we sink this village when there is a certain person in it who is offering ṣalâh?"**

A person of the past saw someone saying the following in his dream:

لـــو لا الـــذين لهـــم ورد يـــصلونا وآخـــرون لهـــم ســـردٌ يـــصومونا

لدُكـِدكتْ أرضـكم مـن تحـتكم سـحرا لأنكـــم قـــوم ســـوء مـــا تطـــيعونا

"Were it not for those who offer ṣalâh constantly and others who fast regularly, the earth would have been rendered asunder from beneath you in the early dawn because you are an evil nation which refuses to obey."

The *Musnad* of al-Bazzâr states: **"Allâh ﷻ grants respite, Allâh ﷻ grants respite. Were it not for servants who are bowing [before Allâh ﷻ], children who are being breast-fed, and animals which are grazing, the punishment would have been poured upon you with full force."**(1) The following poem contains a similar theme:

لـــو لا عـــباد للإلـــه رُكَّـــعُ وصـــبية مـــن اليتامـــى رُضَّـــعُ

ومهمـــلات فـــي الفـــلاة رُتَّـــعُ صـــب علـــيكم العـــذاب المُوجِـــع

"Were it not for servants who are bowing before Allâh, orphaned children who are being breast-fed, animals grazing in the field, a painful punishment would have been poured upon you."

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Had it not been for Allâh's repelling some people by others, the land would have been corrupted."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 251)* One of the explanations of this verse is that Allâh ﷻ repels the sinners through the obedient servants. A tradition states: **"Because of a single righteous man, Allâh ﷻ repels punishment from his wife, children, progeny and all those around him."** A tradition states that Allâh ﷻ says: **"The most beloved to Me are those who love each other for My sake, who walk around the earth with good advice, and who walk for the Jumu'ah ṣalâh."**

(1) Musnad Al-Bazzar (2193).

Another narration states: **"Those whose hearts are attached to the musjids, and who seek forgiveness in the pre-dawn. When I decide to send punishment on anyone and I look at these, I divert the punishment from the people."**

Mak-hûl said: **"As long as there are fifteen people – each one seeking forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ twenty five times daily – the entire population will not be destroyed by an all-embracing punishment."** There are numerous other traditions in this regard.

There is another reason for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ fasting in Sha'bân, viz. the deaths of people are determined in this month. A weak Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* states: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast the most in Sha'bân. So I said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! I see you fasting the most in Sha'bân.' He said: 'In this month it is written for the angel of death as to whose life he is going to take away. I therefore want that my name be recorded while I am fasting."**(1) This Hadîth is also related as a *mursal* Hadîth and it is said that the latter is more authentic.

Another *mursal* Hadîth states: **"The life-spans are determined from one Sha'bân to the next, so much so that a person gets married and has a child while his name is already recorded among the dead."**(2)

Another reason is given in this regard: the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast three days of every month, and sometimes deferred this till Sha'bân. This is related by Ibn Abî Laylâ from his brother, 'Îsâ, both of whom narrate from their father who narrates from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*. Narrated by at-Tabarânî and others. He adds: **"'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: 'There were times when I wanted to fast but did not have the strength, till when he [the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ] kept fast, I would fast with him.'"**(3)

There is some reservation to the above based on the narration of Muslim *rahimahullâh* from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* who said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast three days of every month, he**

(1) Checked by Abu Yaa'la (4911).

(2) Ibn Kathir mentioned it in his Tafsir Explanation (7/232), Ibn Al Jouzi in Zad Al-Maseer (7/338), Al Hindi in Al-Kanz (4278).

(3) Checked by At-Tabarany in Al-Awsat (2098).

did not bother which month it was."(1) She also said: **"I do not know of him – the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ - fasting an entire month apart from Ramadân, nor did he abstain from fasting an entire month – he certainly fasted some part of it. And he continued in this way."**(2)

The two Ahâdîth can be reconciled by saying that in some of the months his fasting did not reach three fasts, so he used to make up for them in Sha'bân. Or, he used to fast three days of every month with Mondays and Thursdays. He would then defer the three fasts so that he could fulfil them in Sha'bân with his fast of Monday and Thursday.

Nevertheless, the actions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ were constant. When he missed out any of his optional acts, he would fulfil them later on. For example, he used to make up for the missed Sunnah salâhs. Similarly, if he missed the night salâh, he would make up for it during the day. When the month of Sha'bân commenced and he had some optional fasts which he had to make up for, he would fulfil them in Sha'bân so that he completes his optional fasts before the commencement of Ramadân. It was during this time that 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* used to take the opportunity of fulfilling her missed Ramadân fasts which she had missed because of her menses. She did not have the opportunity to fast in the other months because she was occupied with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and a woman cannot fast without the permission of her husband if he is present.

When Sha'bân commences and a person has optional fasts of the year which he has to make up for, it is desirable for him to fulfil them in this month so that he can complete all his optional fasts between the two Ramadâns. As for the person who has to fulfil some missed Ramadân fasts, it is obligatory on him to fulfil them immediately after Ramadân if possible. It is not permissible for him to unnecessarily delay them till after the next Ramadân. If he does this – and he has an excuse which was continuous between the two Ramadâns, he may fulfil them after the second Ramadân. He is not liable to do anything except keep the missed fasts. But if he missed them without any valid excuse, it is said that together with keeping

(1) Muslim (1160).

(2) Muslim (1156).

the missed fast, he must feed a poor person for each missed fast. This is the opinion of Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh*, Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* and Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* based on the Ahâdîth related in this regard. Others say that he must keep the missed fast and there is no need for him to feed anyone. This is the opinion of Imam Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh*. Others say that he must merely feed a poor person and there is no need for him to keep the missed fast. This is a weak opinion.

Another reason is given for fasting in Sha'bân: it is like a practice for the fast of Ramadân so that the person does not experience any hardship and difficulty in fasting in Ramadân. Instead, he would have got habituated to fasting and experienced the sweetness and joy of fasting by keeping fast in Sha'bân. He would thus enter Ramadân with strength and enthusiasm.

Since Sha'bân is like a prelude to Ramadân, the fasting and reciting of the Qur'ân which are prescribed in Ramadân are prescribed in Sha'bân as well. This is to acquire readiness for Ramadân, and the souls may be pleased to obey the Merciful [Allâh ﷻ]. We relate through a weak chain from Anas ﷺ who said: **"When Sha'bân used to commence, the Muslims used to devote themselves to the recitation of the Qur'ân and paid the zakâh of their wealth in order to provide strength to the poor and weak to fast in Ramadân."**

Salamah ibn Kuhayl said: **"People used to say: 'Sha'bân is the month of the readers [of the Qur'ân]."** When Sha'bân commenced, Habîb ibn Abî Thâbit used to say: **"This is the month of the readers."** It was the practice of 'Amr ibn Qays to close his shop and devote himself to the recitation of the Qur'ân when Sha'bân commenced.

O you who committed excesses during meritorious times, whiled his time away and placed them in sinful actions! What an evil thing you placed them in!

مضى رجب وما احسنت فيه ... وهذا شهر شعبان المبارك
فيا من ضيع الأوقات جهلا ... بحرمتها أفق واحذر بوارك
فسوف تفارق اللذات قهرا ... ويخلي الموت كرها منك دارك
تدارك ما استطعت من الخطايا ... بتوبة مخلص واجعل مدارك
على طلب السلامة من جحيم ... فخير ذوي الجرائم من تدارك

"Rajab has passed and you did no good in it. Now here is the blessed month of Sha'bân. O you who wasted time because of your ignorance of the sanctity of this time. Wake up and beware of your destruction. You will be compelled to leave your pleasures, and death will force you to leave your house. Make up for your sins as much as you can by engaging in sincere repentance. Turn your focus to seeking security from the fire. Surely the best sinner is the one who makes up for it [through repentance and good deeds]."

THE 15tH OF SHA'BÂN

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh*, at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* in his *Sahîh*, and al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* all narrate from al-'Alâ' ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmân from his father from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When half of Sha'bân passes, do not fast until Ramadân."**(1) At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and others say that it is an authentic Hadîth.

The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to the authenticity of this Hadîth and then with regard to practising on it. As for its authenticity, several scholars consider it authentic, e.g. at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh*, al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh*, at-Tahâwî *rahimahullâh* and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr *rahimahullâh*. Scholars who are greater and more knowledgeable than these express their reservations about this Hadîth. They say it is a *munkar* Hadîth. Some of these scholars are: 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn Mahdî *rahimahullâh*, Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Abû Zur'ah ar-Râzî *rahimahullâh*, and al-Athram *rahimahullâh*. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said: **"Al-'Alâ' did not narrate a more disagreeable Hadîth than this."** He refuted this Hadîth with the following Hadîth: **"Do not precede Ramadân with fasting a day or two."**(2) It is understood from this that it is permissible to precede Ramadân with fasting more than two days. Al-Athram said: **"All the Ahâdîth contradict it [the first Hadîth]."** He is referring to the Ahâdîth which mention that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast the entire month of Sha'bân and join it with Ramadân, and his prohibition of preceding it with two days [of fasting]. The first Hadîth is therefore a rare Hadîth which contradicts

(1) Checked by Ibn Majah (1651) and At-Tirmidhi (738).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (1914) and Muslim (1082).

other authentic Ahâdîth. At-Tahâwî *rahimahullâh* said: **"It is abrogated."** And he narrates that abstaining from practising on this Hadîth is unanimously accepted. The majority of the *'ulamâ'* are of the opinion that it is not practised upon. Others also adopted this opinion, including Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* and his companions. They prohibited commencing optional fast after the 15th of Sha'bân to the person who is not in the habit of fasting. Some of our latter scholars agree with them in this regard.

Then they differ with regard to the reason for this prohibition. Some of them say: out of fear of adding days to the fast of Ramadân which are not part of it. This is far-fetched if applied to the second half of the month. It may be possible if preceded by one or two days of fasting.

Others say that the prohibition is to gain strength for fasting in Ramadân out of kindness to the person for it may well be that these fasts will make him too weak to fast in Ramadân. This is narrated from Wakî'. This is refuted by the Messenger's ﷺ fasting the entire month of Sha'bân or the major portion of it, and joining it with Ramadân.

All the above is with regard to fasting after the 15th of Sha'bân.

Fasting on the 15th of Sha'bân

This is not prohibited because it is one of the days of *bîd* (13th, 14th and 15th of the lunar month) in which it is desirable to fast of every month. A specific order to fast on this day in Sha'bân is related. The *Sunan* of Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates through a weak chain from 'Alî ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When it is the 15th of Sha'bân, spend its night in worship and its day in fasting. Surely Allâh ﷻ descends to the lowest heaven at the time of sunset and says: 'Is there anyone seeking My forgiveness that I may forgive him? Is there anyone asking Me for sustenance that I may provide him? Is there anyone in difficulty that I may remove his difficulty? Is there anyone? Is there anyone?' This continues till the break of dawn."**(1)

There are many other Ahâdîth on the merit of the 15th night of Sha'bân. There are differences with regard to them. The majority of scholars consider them to be weak. Ibn Hibbân considers some of

(1) Checked by Ibn Majah (1388).

them to be authentic and narrated them in his *Sahîh*.

For example, the Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* who said: **"I noticed that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was missing so I went out in search for him. I found him at al-Baqî' with his head raised towards the heavens. He said: 'Did you fear that Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ will be unjust to you? I said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! I thought that you went to one of your wives.' He said: 'Allâh ﷻ descends on the night of the 15th of Sha'bân to the lowest heaven and forgives more people than the number of hairs on the goats of the Kalb tribe.'"**(1) Narrated by Imam Ahmad, at-Tirmidhî and Ibn Mâjah. At-Tirmidhî states that al-Bukhârî considers it weak.

Ibn Mâjah narrates from Abû Mûsâ ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ appears on the 15th night of Sha'bân and forgives all his creation except for a polytheist and one who bears malice."**(2)

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ appears before His creation on the 15th night of Sha'bân and forgives His servants except two: a person who bears malice, or a murderer."**(3) It is also related by Ibn Hibbân in his *Sahîh*.

It is narrated by 'Uthmân ibn al-'Âs as follows: **"When it is the 15th night of Sha'bân, a caller calls out: 'Is there anyone seeking forgiveness that I may forgive him? Is there anyone begging that I may give him?' Anyone who asks for anything most certainly receives it except an adulteress or a polytheist."**(4) There are other Ahâdîth on this subject, but they are weak.

Nauf al-Bikâlî narrates that 'Alî ﷺ went out on the 15th night of Sha'bân and continued looking towards the sky. He said: **"Dâ'ûd ﷺ went out one night at a similar hour and looked at the sky and said: 'This is such an hour that whatever a person supplicates to Allâh ﷻ for, He will accept it. Every person who seeks forgiveness from Him on this night shall certainly be forgiven.**

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(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (739), Ibn Majah (1389) and Ahmad (6/238).

(2) Checked by Ibn Majah (1390).

(3) Checked by Ahmad (2/176).

(4) Checked by Al-Baihaqi in "Ashu'ab" (3836).

This is provided he is not an *'ashshâr*,[1] a magician, a poet, an astrologer, a diviner, an [unjust] policeman, an [unjust] tax collector, a drummer or lute player.' O Lord of Dâ'ûd ﷺ! Forgive whoever supplicates to you on this night, and whoever seeks Your forgiveness."

The Tâbî'ûn of Syria, e.g. Khâlid ibn Mi'dân, Mak-hûl, Luqmân ibn 'Âmir and others, used to honour the 15th night of Sha'bân and strive in worship on this night. People learnt the merit and honour of this night from them. It is said that they received Isrâ'îlî narrations in this regard. When these became popular in the lands, the people began differing in this regard. Some people accepted this from them and agreed with them in honouring this night. A group of ardent worshippers of Basra are included among them. The majority of the *'ulamâ'* of Hijâz disapproved of this. 'Atâ' and Ibn Abî Mulaykah are among them. 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn Zayd ibn Aslam related this with regard to the jurists of Madînah. It is also the opinion of the followers of Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* who said that these are all innovations.

The *'ulamâ'* of Syria differ on the manner of engaging in worship on this night. There are two opinions in this regard:

(1) It is desirable to engage in collective worship in a musjid. Khâlid ibn Mi'dân, Luqmân ibn 'Âmir and others used to wear their best clothes on this night, burn *'ûd* (Indian aloes) sticks, apply antimony, and engage in worship in a musjid on that night. Is-hâq ibn Râhwayh concurred with them in this regard. He said with regard to collective worship in a musjid on this night: **"It is not an innovation."** Harb al-Kurmânîy related this from him.

(2) It is detestable to assemble in the musjids on this night for salâh, relating stories [of the pious] and supplication. It is not detestable for a person to offer salâh on this night provided it is on his own. This is the opinion of al-Auzâ'î *rahimahullâh* – the imam of the people of Syria, their jurist and their great scholar. This is the most correct opinion – *inshâ Allâh*.

It is related that 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *rahimahullâh* wrote to his governor in Basra saying: **"Adhere to four nights of the year because Allâh ﷻ pours His mercy on these nights with full force.**

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(1) This word literally refers to a person who collects the *'ushr* (one tenth) of property. The punishment mentioned in this Hadîth refers to the person who takes the one tenth as the people of *jâhilîyyah* used to do.

The 1st of Rajab, the 15th of Sha'bân, the night of *'îd* al-fi<u>t</u>r, and the night of *'îd* al-a<u>d</u>-<u>h</u>â." There is some reservation on the authenticity of this narration from him.

Imam ash-Shâfi'î *ra<u>h</u>imahullâh* said: **"We have learnt that supplications are accepted on five nights: the night of Friday, the two 'îds, the 1st of Rajab and the 15th of Sha'bân."** He said: **"It is desirable to do all which I related in these nights."** The opinion of Imam A<u>h</u>mad *ra<u>h</u>imahullâh* on the 15th night of Sha'bân is not known. But there are two narrations of his from which the desirability of spending this night in worship is derived. From the two narrations, one concerns spending the night of *'îd* in worship. One narration states that it is not desirable to engage in collective worship on that night because this was not reported about the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ. But in another narration he considers it desirable because of the practice of 'Abd ar-Ra<u>h</u>mân ibn Yazîd ibn al-Aswad who was a Tâbi'î. Similarly, there is nothing established from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ nor from his Companions ﷺ with regard to spending the 15th night of Sha'bân in worship. But it is established that a group of Tâbi'ûn who were senior jurists of Syria used to spend this night in worship.

Ka'b said: **"Allâh ﷻ sends Jibra'îl ﷺ to Paradise on the 15th night of Sha'bân and orders it to adorn and beautify itself. Jibra'îl ﷺ says to it: 'Allâh ﷻ has set free on this night of yours [sinners] equal to the number of stars in the sky, the number of days and nights in the world, the number of leaves on the trees, the weight of the mountains, and the number of grains of sand.'"**

Sa'îd ibn Man<u>s</u>ûr narrates: Abû Ma'shar related to us from Abû <u>H</u>âzim and Mu<u>h</u>ammad ibn Qays from 'A<u>t</u>â' ibn Yasâr who said: **"After the night of Power (laylatul Qadr), there is no night which is superior to the 15th night of Sha'bân. Allâh ﷻ descends to the lowest heaven and forgives all His servants except a polytheist, a person who bears malice, or a person who severs ties of kinship."**

O you who have been freed from the Hell-fire on this night! Congratulations to you over this great gift. O you who are rejected on this night! May Allâh console you over this calamity of yours for it is a serious calamity.

بكـيت علـى نفـسي وحُـقّ لـي الـبكا وما أنـا مـن تـضييع عمـري فـي شـك

لـئن قلـت إنـي فـي صـنيعي محـسن فإنـــي فـــي قولـــي لـــذلك ذو إفـــك
ليالـــــي شـــــعبان ولـــــيلة نـــــصفه بأيـــة حـــال قـــد تنـــزل لـــي صـــكِّي
وحقـــي لعمـــري أن أديـــم تـــضرعي لعـــل إلـــه الخلـــق يـــسمح بالفـــك

"I cried over myself and I ought to have cried. I have no doubt that I wasted my life. If I were to say that I have been doing good, I will most certainly be lying. No matter in what condition the nights of Sha'bân and its 15th night descend upon me, is the night when my sustenance is going to be recorded. It is my duty to continue my submission for the rest of my life. Perhaps the God of the creation will be kind enough to free me."

It is thus the duty of a believer to free himself on that night for the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and supplicating to Him for the forgiveness of sins, concealment of faults, and removal of hardships. And he should precede all this with repentance because Allâh ﷻ turns to the one who repents to Him in this night.

فقـــم لـــيلة النـــصف الـــشريف مـــصليا فأشـــرف هـــذا الـــشهر لـــيلة نـــصفه
فكم من فتى قد بات في النصف غافلا وقـــد نـــسخت فـــيه صـــحيفة حـــتفه
فـــبادر بفعـــل الخيـــر قـــبل انقـــضائه وحـــاذر هجـــوم المـــوت فـــيه بـــصرفه
وصـــم يـــومها لله واحـــسن رجـــاءه لتظفـــر عـــند الكـــرب مـــنه بلطفـــه

"Stand up in salâh on the 15th night because the most distinguished part of this month is the 15th night. Many a youth spent the 15th night in negligence while the decree of death was recorded in his favour. Hasten with good deeds before this night expires, and beware of the attack of death after it ends. Fast during its day for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, and have good hopes in Him so that you may acquire His kindness from hardship."

A Muslim must abstain from sins which prevent forgiveness and the acceptance of supplications on that night. It is related that these sins are: ascribing partners with Allâh ﷻ, murder, and adultery. These three are the most serious sins in the sight of Allâh ﷻ. Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ narrates that he asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about the most serious sins. He said: **"That you consider an equal for Allâh ﷻ while He created you."** He asked: **"Then which?"** He said: **"That you kill your child out of fear that he will share your food."** He

asked: **"Then which?"** He said: **"That you commit adultery with your neighbour's wife."**(1) Allâh ﷻ revealed the following verse in confirmation of this: **"Who invoke no other sovereign with Allâh and do not kill the soul which Allâh has forbidden except for a just cause. And they do not commit adultery."** *(Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 68)*

Bearing malice towards a fellow Muslim is also one of the sins which prevents forgiveness. This also prevents forgiveness in most of the times of forgiveness and mercy. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The doors of Paradise are opened on Mondays and Thursdays. Every person who does not ascribe partners with Allâh is forgiven, except for the person who has severed relations with his brother. Allâh says: 'Delay the matter of these two till they reconcile."**

Al-Auzâ'î *rahimahullâh* explains this prohibited malice to refer to the malice which a person bears towards the Companions ﷺ. There is no doubt whatsoever that this malice is a greater crime than the malice which contemporaries have towards each other. Al-Auzâ'î *rahimahullâh* said: **"A malicious person is every person who is involved in innovation thereby separating himself from the main body of Muslims."** Ibn Thaubân said: **"A malicious person is the one who abandons the Sunnah of his Messenger ﷺ, who criticizes his *ummah*, and sheds their blood."** This type of malice – i.e. the malice of innovations – causes one to become critical of the Muslim *ummah*, and impose on their lives, wealth and honour. For example, the innovations of the Khawârij, Sh'îah and others.

The most superior deed is for the heart to be free of malice. And the most superior of this is for the heart to be free from the malice which is borne by those who follow their whims, fancies and people of innovations. This is because malice of this nature entails criticism of the past peoples of the *ummah*, detesting them, believing that they were unbelievers, innovators or deviates.

This is followed by the heart being free from malice towards Muslims in general, having good intentions for them, advising them, loving for them what one loves for oneself. Allâh ﷻ describes the Muslims in general that they say: **"O our Sustainer! Forgive us and our brothers who preceded us in faith, and do not place in our**

(1) Al-Bukhari (4761) and Muslim (86).

hearts any malice against the believers. O our Sustainer! You alone are kind, merciful." *(Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 10)*

Anas ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to his Companions ﷺ for three days in a row: **"Soon there will come to you a person from the inhabitants of Paradise."** On each of these three days, a person came. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ went and lived with him as a guest for three days so that he could see what deeds this person does. He did not see him engaging in much deeds in his house. He eventually asked him and he said: **"I only do what you saw. However, when I go to sleep, I bear no malice towards any of the Muslims."** 'Abdullâh ﷺ said: **"It is because of this quality that you reached such a high rank."**

'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ narrates that someone asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Which person is the most superior?"** He said: **"Every person who is *makhmûm* of heart, truthful in speech."** The Companions ﷺ said: **"We know the meaning of 'truthful in speech', what is the meaning of '*makhmûm* of heart'?"** He said: **"He is the pious and pure person who has no sin in him, no enmity [towards anyone], no malice and no jealousy."**

A person of the past said: **"The best deeds are: cleanliness of the heart, generosity of the soul, and wishing well for the *ummah*."** It is through these qualities that people reached great heights – not through excessive striving in [optional] salâh and fasting.

Brothers! Abstain from sins which deprive a person from gaining forgiveness of his all-forgiving Master during the seasons of mercy, repentance and forgiveness.

As for polytheism, Allâh ﷻ says: **"Surely whoever has ascribed a partner to Allâh, Allâh has made Paradise forbidden to him and his abode is Hell. And there is no helper for the sinners."** *(Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 72)*

As for murder, if all the creations of the heavens and the earth were to assemble to kill a single Muslim without a just cause, Allâh ﷻ shall cast all of them together in the Hell-fire.

As for adultery: beware, beware of making yourself eligible for the wrath of the all-powerful Allâh. All the servants are the male and female servants of Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ is filled with self-respect. There is no one more self-respecting than Allâh ﷻ when one of His male or

female servants commits adultery. It is because of this that He forbade acts of immorality and ordered lowering of the gaze.

As for malice: O how dreadful for the person who harbours evil towards his brother and intends harm to him: **"Never think that Allâh is unaware of what the unjust do. He has merely given them a respite till a day when eyes will remain staring."** *(Sûrah Ibrâhîm, 14: 42)* The fact that you are deprived of forgiveness during times when forgiveness of sins is acquired is sufficient to prove your deprivation.

خـــاب عـــبد بـــارز المـــو ... لـــى بأســـباب المعاصـــي
ويحـــه ممـــا جـــناه ... لـــم يخـــف يـــوم القـــصاص
يـــوم فـــيه تـــرعد الأقـــدام ... مـــن شـــيب النواصـــي
لـــي ذنـــوب فـــي ازديـــاد ... وحـــياة فـــي انـــتقاص
فمتـــى أعمـــل مـــا أعلـــم ... لـــي فـــيه خلاصـــي

"The person who challenges Allâh ﷻ with sins has most certainly lost. Destruction to what he earned. He does not fear the day of retribution. The day when feet will falter from the greyness of the forelocks. I have sins which are increasing, while my life is decreasing. Once I practise on what I know, I will gain salvation."

'Ikramah *rahimahullâh* and other commentators say that the verse: **"Therein is made distinct every sensible matter."** *(Sûrah ad-Dukhân, 44: 4)* refers to the 15th night of Sha'bân. The majority of scholars say that it refers to the night of Power (laylatul Qadr), and this is correct.

'Atâ' ibn Yasâr said: **"When it is the 15th night of Sha'bân, a** scroll is given to the angel of death. He is ordered: 'Take away the life of all those whose names are on this scroll.' A person plants a crop, gets married, constructs buildings while his name is included among the dead – the angel of death is waiting for the order to be issued and takes away his life.

O you who are deceived by lengthy hopes! O you who are happy with your evil deeds! Be on guard from death because you do not know when your time will expire.

كـــل امـــريء مـــصبّح فـــي أهلـــه ... والمـــوت أدنـــى مـــن شـــراك نعلـــه

"Every person wakes up in the morning among his family, while death is closer to him than his sandal straps."

A person of the past said: **"How many a person looks forward to the day but does not complete it. How many a person hopes for tomorrow but does not reach it. If you were to see your life-span and how fast it is moving, you would detest hopes and the deception of hopes."**

أؤمـــــل أن أخلـــــد والمـــــنايا تـــدور علـــي مـــن كـــل النواحـــي
ومـــــا أدري وإن أمـــــسيت يـــــوما لعلـــي لا أعـــيش إلـــى الـــصباح

"I desire to live forever, but death is hovering around me from all directions. I do not know that when I go to sleep one night, I may not live till the next morning."

Many a person departed in the morning or evening in his quest for this world, but became one of the dwellers of the graves the next day.

كأنـــك بالمـــضي إلـــى ســـبيلك وقـــد جـــدّ المجهـــز فـــي رحـــيلك
وجـــــيء بغاســـــل فاســـــتعجلوه بقـــــولهم لـــــه افـــــرغ غـــــسيلك
ولـــم تحمـــل ســـوى كفـــن وقطـــن إلـــيهم مـــن كثيـــرك أو قلـــيلك
وقـــد مـــد الـــرجال إلـــيك نعـــشا فأنـــت علـــيه ممـــدود بطـــولك
وصـــــلّوا ثـــــم إنهـــــم تداعـــــوا لحملـــك مـــن بكـــورك أو أصـــيلك
فلمـــــا أســـــلموك نـــــزلت قبـــــرا ومـــن لـــك بالـــسلامة فـــي نـــزولك
أعانـــــك يـــــوم تدخلـــــه رحـــــيم رؤوف بالعـــــباد علـــــى دخـــــولك
فـــسوف تجـــاور الموتـــى طـــويلا فذرنـــي مـــن قـــصيرك أو طـــولك
أُخَـــيَّ لقـــد نـــصحتك فاســـتمع لـــي وبـــــالله اســـــتعنت علـــــى قـــــبولك
ألـــست تـــرى المـــنايا كـــل حـــين تـــصيبك فـــي أخـــيك وفـــي خلـــيلك

"While you are continuing on your path, the preparer is working hard [in making preparations] for your departure. The washer-man was brought and they rushed him by saying: **"Finish the task of washing your corpse."** From all your wealth and possessions, you carried nothing but a cotton shroud (*kafan*). The men stretched out a bier to you and you are lying down to your full length on it. They performed the salâh over you and called some of your descendants [children, grandchildren, etc.] and ascendants

[parent, uncles, etc.] to carry you. When they conveyed you, you went down into a grave. Who was there to ensure that you went down safely? The day you entered it, the Being who is kind and merciful to His servants helped you in entering it. You will now be in the neighbourhood of dead people for a long time. I do not want to know about who is short and who is tall among you. My brother, I advised you so listen to me. I sought the help of Allâh ﷻ to accept you. Do you not see death taking away your brothers and friends all **the time?"**

FASTING AT THE END OF SHA'BÂN

'Imrân ibn Husayn ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked a person: **"Did you fast in any part of this month."** A narration of al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* states: **"I think he was referring to Ramadân."** A narration of Muslim *rahimahullâh* and which al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* annotated states: **"Did you keep any fast in the *sarar* of Sha'bân?"** Another narration states: **"If you abstained from fasting in Ramadân, fast for two days in its place."** Another narration states: **"one or two days."** Shu'bah, the narrator is in doubt. It is also related as: **"Did you fast in the *sirâr* of this month?"**

There is difference of opinion in the explanation of the word *sirâr*. The popular explanation is that it refers to the last day of the month. This word is pronounced as *sirâr* and *sarâr* – as stated by Ibn as-Sakîr and others. It is said that *sarâr* is more eloquent, as stated by al-Farâ'. The end of a month is referred to as *sarâr* (last night of the lunar month) because the moon is concealed on this night. Abû 'Ubaydah and others consider the word *sarâr* to mean the last day of the month. Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* also has a chapter titled fasting on the last day of the month.

This has caused many *'ulamâ'* to express their reservations about this because the *Sahîh* of al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* and Muslim *rahimahullâh* narrate from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Do not precede Ramadân with one or two days except for the person who was in the habit of fasting, so he may fast."**

Many *'ulamâ'* like Abû 'Ubayd and those who follow him, like al-Khattâbî, and most of the commentators of Hadîth said: This person whom the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked knew that he was in the habit of fasting or that he vowed to fast on that day. It is for this reason

that he ordered him to fulfil it. Another group of *'ulamâ'* say that the Hadîth of 'Imrân shows that it is unrestrictedly permissible to fast on the **"day of doubt"** and the last day of Sha'bân, irrespective if that day fell within a person's habit or not. He states that this is the opinion which he received from people of knowledge. In fact, Muhammad ibn Maslamah said: **"It is reprehensible to issue an order** of abstaining from fasting so that the obligation of abstaining from fasting before the commencement of the next month may not be believed by anyone.

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr narrates this opinion from the majority of the *'ulamâ'* of the cities. Muhammad ibn Nâsir relates that this is also the *madh-hab* of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*. But it is an error to attribute this to Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*. The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ raises objections with the words: **"except for the person who was in the habit of fasting, so he may fast."** Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* mentions in *Mukhtalaf al-Hadîth* a possible meaning of the words **"except for the person who was in the habit of fasting, so he may fast"** and in another narration: **"unless that coincides with a day which one of you used to normally fast on."**(1) Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* says: **"Fasting on that day if it 'coincides with that person's habit of fasting' means the habit of people keeping optional fast, and not fasting on that day with the intention of Ramadân as a precaution."**

Other scholars are of the opinion that the word *sirr* or *sarâr* refers to the first day of the month [and not the last]. Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* narrates in the chapter **"preceding Ramadân"** a Hadîth of Mu'âwiyah ﷺ that he said: **"I am preceding the month [with fasting]. Anyone wanting to do this may do so."** When he was asked about this, he said: 'I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: 'Fast the month and the *sirr* **of it.'"** Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* then quotes from al-Auzâ'î and Sa'îd ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz who said that the *sirr* of the month refers to the first day of the month. Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* said: **"Some scholars said: 'The *sirr* of the month refers to the middle of the month.'"**

Al-Azharî differentiates between the *sirâr* of the month and *sirr* of the month. He says: **"The *sirâr* and *sarar* of the month refer to the end of the month. And the *sirr* of the month refers to the middle of the month, and it refers to the days of *bîd* (13th, 14th**

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (684) and (685).

and 15th of a month). And the word *sirr* refers to the centre or middle of anything."

The narration of Muslim *rahimahullâh* in the above-mentioned Hadîth of 'Imrân ibn Husayn ﷺ states: **"Did you fast in the *sirrah* of this month."** This is explained as the days of *bîd*.

I [Ibn Rajab Hambalî *rahimahullâh*] say: It is not correct to refer the words *sarar* and *sarâr* to refer to the first of the month because the first day of the month is well recognized by the sighting of the new moon and it is seen on the first night. A month is known as a *shahr* [in Arabic] because it is well-known (*mash-hur* – both words are from the same root) and obvious. The well-known nights (*layâlî al-ishtihâr*) are termed *layâlî as-sarâr* (the concealed or hidden nights) by way of reversal(1) and colloquial usage.

Some *'ulamâ'* disagree with what Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* quoted from al-Auzâ'î. Al-Khattâbî is one such scholar. He relates with his chain from al-Walîd who narrates from al-Auzâ'î who said: **"The *sirr* of the month refers to the end of the month."** Al-Harawî said: **"It is well known that the *sirr* of the month refers to the end of the month."** Al-Khattâbî explains the Hadîth of Mu'âwiyah ﷺ were he said: **"Fast the month and the *sirr* of it"** that he was referring to the lunar month. The Hadîth will therefore mean: **"Fast on the first day of the month and the last day of the month."** It is for this reason that Mu'âwiyah ﷺ ordered fasting on the last day of the month.

I [Ibn Rajab Hambalî *rahimahullâh*] say: When Mu'âwiyah ﷺ said: **"Fast the month and the *sirr* of it"** and he then kept fast on the last day of the month, we learn from this that he explained the word *sirr* to mean the last day.

It is most obvious that the month which he was referring to was the entire month of Ramadân, and the *sirr* which he mentioned was referring to the last day of Sha'bân. As in the narration of al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* in the Hadîth of 'Imrân ﷺ: **"I think he was referring to Ramadân."** He annexed the word *sarar* to Ramadân although it [that day] is not part of Ramadân [but of Sha'bân] just as Ramadân

(1) Many words and terms in the Arabic language are taken in the opposite or reverse meaning of the original word. So in this case, although the word *sarâr* refers to something which is concealed or hidden, colloquial usage considers the opposite meaning, i.e. to be well-known and obvious.

is referred to as **"the month of 'îd"** although *'îd* is not in Ramadân but it follows it [in Shawwâl].

The Hadîth of 'Imrân ﷺ and Mu'âwiyah ﷺ demonstrate the desirability of fasting on the last day of Sha'bân. The order to keep the missed fast at the beginning of Shawwâl was issued because both times [before and after Ramadân] are times of fasting in emulation of Ramadân. Their merit is therefore attached to Ramadân. So the person who misses the fast before Ramadân shall fulfil it after Ramadân. Just as the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast in Sha'bân, and encouraged fasting in Shawwâl.

An objection to this is caused by the Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ wherein the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ prohibits fasting one or two days before Ramadân except for the person who had a habit of fasting [on certain days and those days fall on one or two days before Ramadân]. The majority of the *'ulamâ'* are of the view that he prohibited fasting on these days except for the person who was in the habit of keeping optional fasts on such days. This is the obvious meaning of the Hadîth.

The majority of the *'ulamâ'* did not mention any differences of opinion in the explanation of this Hadîth. It is also the chosen explanation of Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* and he did not give preference to the previous possibility. Based on this, the Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ will be given preference over the Hadîth of 'Imrân ﷺ. This is because the Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ contains a general prohibition to the *ummah* in general. It is thus a general ruling for the *ummah* and it will be practised upon.

As for the Hadîth of 'Imrân, it is a specific ruling for a specific person. It will therefore be adopted in the case of fasting in a manner which is not prohibited, [this we will do] in order to reconcile both Ahâdîth. The best adoption of it will be that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ already knew the practice of this man, i.e. he used to fast in Sha'bân or the major part of Sha'bân in emulation of the fasting of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He left out a few fasts of this month and asked him about fasting on the last day. When the man informed him that he did not fast in the last day, he instructed him to fast after *'îd* al-fitr in place of the missed fast. This is because fasting on the first of Shawwal is like fasting on the last of Sha'bân – both of them are prohibited for Ramadân. This instruction shows the desirability of making up for missed optional fasts, and that the keeping of these

missed fasts should be done on days which are similar in virtue to the days on which the fasts were missed. This Hadîth also proves that it is permissible for a person who fasts in Sha'bân or a major portion of this month to join it without any break with Ramadân. There are thus three scenarios with regard to fasting on the last day of Sha'bân:

1. The person fasts that day with the intention of Ramadân as a precaution. This is prohibited. Some Companions ﷺ used to do this and it seems that they did not know about its prohibition. Ibn 'Umar ﷺ differentiated between a cloudy and clear day for the 30th of Sha'bân. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* emulated him in this regard.

2. The person fasts on that day with the intention of fulfilling a vow, keeping a missed fast of Ramadân, an atonement, etc. The majority of the *'ulamâ'* permit this. Those who say that there has to be a break of one day between Sha'bân and Ramadân prohibit fasting on this day. This is the opinion of a group of past scholars. The reprehensibility of fasting on this day is attributed to Imam Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh* and Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh*. But there is some reservation in this.

3. The person fasts with a general intention of an optional fast. Those who say that there has to be a break of one day between Sha'bân and Ramadân consider such a fast to be reprehensible even if it coincides with a fast which he was in the habit of fasting [e.g. he was in the habit of fasting on Mondays and Thursdays and the last day of Sha'bân falls on a Monday or Thursday]. Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* is from among such scholars. Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* and those who agree with him provide the concession of fasting on this day for such a person. Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh*, al-Auzâ'î *rahimahullâh*, Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and others differentiate between whether it coincides with the person's habit or not. A similar differentiation is made between a person who precedes fasting by more than two days and joins his fasting with that of Ramadân. This is also not reprehensible except according to those who consider it reprehensible to commence optional fasts after the middle of Sha'bân. Such a person is prohibited unless he commences fasting before the middle of Sha'bân and continues fasting until he joins it with Ramadân.

In short, the Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ is practised upon by many *'ulamâ'*. Preceding Ramadân with one or two optional fasts is reprehensible in respect of the person who has no habit and the

person who did not fast before that in Sha'bân continuously till its end.

The three meanings of the reprehensibility of preceding Ramadân with fasting

First meaning

It is as a precaution for Ramadân. It is prohibited to fast before it so that no day which is not part of Ramadân may be added to it. It is similar to the reason for the prohibition of fasting on the day of 'îd. This is as a precaution against falling into what the people of the Book did with regard to their days of fasting where they added days according to their personal whims and fancies. At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* who said: **"Some people used to precede a month by fasting before the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. So Allâh ﷻ revealed this verse: 'O believers! Make not [a decision] in advance before Allâh and His Messenger...'** *(Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 1)* **'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: 'Fasting is when everyone fasts, and abstaining from fasting is when everyone abstains from fasting.'"**

Despite this, there were those of the past who used to precede Ramadân with fasting as a precaution. This Hadîth is a proof against such people. It is for this reason that it is prohibited to fast on the **"day of doubt"**. 'Ammâr said: **"Whoever fasts on this day has in fact disobeyed Abû al-Qâsim [Muhammad ﷺ]."**

The **"day of doubt"** refers to the day regarding which there is a doubt as to whether it is of Ramadân or not. Some people of the past used to fast on this day as a precaution. Some Hanafî scholars provide the concession of fasting on this day specifically to the *'ulamâ'* alone and not to the masses, so that they do not believe in the obligation [of fasting on this day]. This is based on their [Hanafî] principle that the fast of Ramadân is acceptable with a general intention, and so is an optional fast. The **"day of doubt"** applies to the person who claims to have seen the crescent, but whose opinion is not accepted.

As for a cloudy day, there are some *'ulamâ'* who consider it to be the **"day of doubt"** and prohibit fasting on it. This is the view of the majority. But there are those who kept fast on this day as a precaution. This is the opinion of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ, and Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* used to emulate him in this regard. There are three

popular opinions of his with regard to fasting on this day. The third opinion is that a person cannot fast on this day unless the imam [leader of the Muslims] and the general body of Muslims fast on it. This is so that there may be no digression and separation from them. Is-hâq said: No fast should be kept on a cloudy day. However, he should delay eating on this day till mid-morning just in case news about the sighting of the crescent is obtained. On the other hand, if it is a cloudless day, the person may eat from early morning.

Second meaning

To make a distinction between the compulsory and optional fast. This is because we are ordered to make a distinction between the compulsory and the optional. It is for this reason that fasting on *'îd* day is prohibited. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ prohibited joining a compulsory salâh with an optional salâh. There has to be a distinction [and separation] between the two by a *salâm* or the uttering of a few words. This is especially so with regard to the Sunnah which is performed before the *fajr salâh*. There has to be a distinction between it and the compulsory salâh. It is for this reason that we are ordered to offer this salâh [Sunnah of *fajr*] at home and to lie down [for a short while] after it.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw a person offering salâh while the *fajr salâh* had commenced. He said to him: **"Is the *fajr salâh* four rak'ats?"**(1)

The *Musnad* states that he said: **"Separate it from the compulsory salâh and do not make it like the *zuhr salâh*."**(2)

The *Sunan* of Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* relates that a man performed salâh with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made the *salâm*, this man stood up to continue offering his salâh. 'Umar ﷺ jumped towards him, held him by his shoulders and pushed him down and said: **"Sit down because the only reason why the people of the Book were destroyed was that there was no distinction [or separation] in their salâh."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ looked up and said: **"O Ibn al-Khattâb! Allâh ﷻ enabled you to say the correct thing."** Some of those who use this incident as a basis say that it is unilaterally reprehensible to join

(1) Al-Bukhari (663) and Muslim (711).

(2) Al-Musnad (6/345).

the fast of Sha'bân with that of Ramadân. Ibn 'Umar ﷺ said: **"Even if I were to fast all the time, I would abstain from fasting on the day between these two [i.e. between Sha'bân and Ramadân]."** A *marfû'* Hadîth is related in this regard, but it is not authentic. The majority of *'ulamâ'* say that it is permissible to fast on this day if it coincides with a person's habit. This is because the fear of adding [to the days of Ramadân] will only apply if the reason for fasting is not known.

Third meaning

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ prohibited fasting on this day so that a person may get the strength to fast in Ramadân. It may well happen that continuous fasting may cause a person to become too weak to keep the compulsory fast. If a person abstains from fasting one or two days before, it will make him stronger for fasting in Ramadân. There is some reservation in this explanation. It is not reprehensible to precede it by more than that [i.e. more than one or two days], nor for that person who fasts for the entire month of Sha'bân. Whereas fasting in this manner would make him even more weak. On the other hand, not fasting with the intention of gaining strength for Ramadân is advisable for the person who feels weak by fasting continuously. As was the case with 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ who used to abstain from fasting consecutively at times in order to gain the strength to fast consecutively. It is in this light that the following statement of a Companion ﷺ can be understood: **"I expect reward for my sleep just as I expect reward for my engaging in night worship."**

A Hadîth states: **"A grateful eating person is like a patient fasting person."**(1) Narrated by at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and others.

It is possible that some ignorant people assume that not fasting before Ramadân means making the most of the opportunity to eat so that the souls can take their full share of their desires before they are prohibited from all this when they start fasting. It is for this reason that they say: **"They are the days of bidding farewell to eating."** These days are known as *tanhîs* (inauspicious), and this is derived from *al-ayyâm an-nahisât* (days of dearth or drought). Others say that they are known as *tanhîs*, but this is incorrect. This is stated by Ibn Durustawayh, the grammarian. He states that this

(1) Al-Tirmidhi in "As-Sunan" (2486).

practice was adopted from the Christians who do this at the approach of their days of fasting. All this is wrong and an act of ignorance on the part of whoever thinks it to be so. It may well happen that many people will not confine themselves to **"making the most"** of lawful desires and may well transgress the bounds into committing unlawful acts. This would entail clear loss. A poet says in this regard:

إذا العشرون من شعبان ولّت فواصل شرب ليلك بالنهار

ولا تشرب بأقداح صغار فإن الوقت ضاق على الصغار

"When twenty days of Sha'bân pass, continue drinking through the night and day. Do not drink from small bowls because the time is too short to drink from small bowls."

Another said:

جاء شعبان منذرا بالصيام فاسقياني راحا بماء الغمام

"Sha'bân has come to warn us that the month of fasting is soon to commence. So provide me with as much wine as the rainfall."

If a person's condition is as described in these two poems, then the animals are more intelligent than him and he has a share of the following verse: **"We have created for Hell many jinn and men. They have hearts with which they do not understand. They have eyes with which they do not see. They have ears with which they do not hear. They are like animals. In fact, they are farther astray. It is they who are heedless."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 179)*

Many people have an aversion for fasting in Ramadân. In fact, some foolish poets used to be vulgar and abusive towards Ramadân. Ar-Rashîd had a foolish son who once said:

دعاني شهر الصوم لا كان من شهر ولا صمتُ شهرا بعده آخر الدهر

فلو كان يُعديني الأنام بقدرة على الشهر لاستعديت جهدي على الشهر

"The month of fasting called me. May that month be destroyed so that I would never have to fast in any month for the rest of my life. If the people were to give me the strength to fight against this month, I would have spent all my efforts in fighting against it."

Consequently, he became an epileptic and used to experience

bouts of epilepsy several times a day. He passed away before the next Ramadân.

These foolish people consider Ramadân to be a heavy burden because they regard salâh, fasting and other acts of worship in this month to be a heavy burden. Many of these ignoramuses will not offer salâh in Ramadân unless they are fasting. Many of them will only abstain from major sins in Ramadân. They continue in this way and because they have become accustomed to it, it becomes very difficult for them to give up these sins. They will therefore count and wait when these days and nights will expire so that they may return to their sinning. They are persisting in sin wittingly, and are thus bound to destruction. There are yet others who cannot exercise patience over abstention from sins to the extent that they commit them in Ramadân as well.

The incident of Muhammad ibn Hârûn al-Balkhî is well-known. It is said that he was persistent in consuming alcohol. He came home on the last day of Sha'bân while he was in a state of intoxication. His mother reprimanded him while she was firing up the oven. He carried her, cast her into the oven and she burnt to death. He repented later on and became an ardent worshipper. Once he saw a dream that all the pilgrims of that year except for him were forgiven.

When Allâh ﷻ wills good for a person, He makes îmân beloved to him and beautifies it in his heart. He makes unbelief, iniquity and sinning abhorrent to him. He thus becomes of the righteous. When Allâh ﷻ wills evil for a person, He leaves the person to himself, Satan follows him, and beautifies unbelief, iniquity and sinning to him. He thus becomes of those who are astray.

Beware, beware of sins! How many bounties were snatched away! How many adversities were imposed! How many homes were destroyed! How many homes were left deserted and there remained no one to inhabit them! How many sinners were avenged! How many of their traces were wiped off!

يـا صـاحب الـذنب لا تـأمن عواقـبه عـواقب الـذنب تخـشى وهـي تنتظـر

فكـل نفـس سـتجزى بالـذي كـسبت ولـيس للخلـق مـن ديّـانهم وزر

"O sinner! Do not feel secure from the consequences of sinning. The consequences of sinning should always be feared and they are bound to take place. Every soul shall be

recompensed for whatever it earned. There is no burden placed on the creation by their Judge [Allâh ﷻ]."

How can these foolish people ever compare with those whose entire life was a Ramaḍân – their nights spent in worship and their days spent in fasting?!

A person of the past purchased a slave woman. When Ramaḍân approached, she saw the people preparing for Ramaḍân with foods and other things. When she asked them the reason for this, they said: **"We are preparing for the fast of Ramaḍân."** She said: **"You people only keep fast in Ramaḍân?! I was living with some people whose entire life was Ramaḍân. Send me back to those people."**

Al-Ḥasan ibn Ṣâliḥ sold a slave woman of his to some people. When it was midnight, she got up and called out: **"O people of this house, get up for ṣalâh, get up for ṣalâh."** They asked: **"Is it already the time of *fajr ṣalâh*?"** She asked: **"What! Do you only perform the compulsory ṣalâh?!"** She then went to al-Ḥasan and said: **"You sold me to some bad people, they only perform the compulsory ṣalâh. Take me back, take me back."**

A person of the past said: **"Fast throughout your life and make death the time when you open your fast."** This entire life is a month of fasting for the pious. They abstain from desires and prohibitions during this entire life. When death comes to them, the month of their fasting expires, and they rejoice over their *'id al-fiṭr*.

وقد صمتُ عن لذات دهري كلها ويوم لقاكم ذاك فطر صيامي

"I kept fast from [abstained from] pleasures throughout my life. The day when I meet You will be the day when I open my fast."

The person who abstains from pleasures and desires today shall partake of them after his death. The person who hastens in doing whatever was prohibited to him before his death shall by punished by being deprived of them in the Hereafter and after his death. This is borne out by the following verse: **"You wasted all your pleasures in the worldly life and you enjoyed them."** *(Sûrah al-Aḥqâf, 46: 20)* The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The one who consumed alcohol in**

this world will never drink it in the Hereafter."(1) The one who wore silk in this world will never wear it **in the Hereafter."**(2)

أنـــــت فـــــي دار شـــــتات فـــــتأهب لـــــشتاتك

واجعـــــل الدنـــــيا كـــــيوم صـــــمته عـــــن شـــــهواتك

ولـــــيكن فطـــــرك عـــــند اللـــــه فـــــي يـــــوم وفاتـــــك

"You are living in a world that is going to be dispersed. So prepare for your own dispersal. Make this world like a day in which you abstain [keep fast] from pleasures. Make the opening of your fast before Allâh ﷻ on the day when you pass away."

A *marfû'* Hadîth narrated by Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ states: **"If people knew what [rewards] lie in Ramadân, my *ummah* would have desired the entire year to be Ramadân."**(3) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to convey glad tidings to the Companions ﷺ with the arrival of Ramadân. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* narrate that Abû Hurayrah ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to convey glad tidings to the Companions ﷺ by saying: 'The month of Ramadân has come to you. It is a blessed month in which Allâh ﷻ prescribed fasting to you. It is in this month that the doors of Paradise are opened, the doors of Hell are locked, and the devils are chained. In it is a night which is superior to a thousand months. The person who is deprived of its good is really deprived."**(4)

How can a believer not rejoice over the opening of the doors of Paradise? How can a sinner not rejoice over the shutting of the doors of Hell? How can an intelligent person not rejoice over a time when the devils are chained? Can any other time compare with this time? A Hadîth states: **"Ramadân, the chief of all months, has come to you. So welcome to it."**(5)

جـــاء شـــهر الـــصيام بالبـــركات فأكـــرم بـــه مـــن زائـــر هـــو آت

"The month of Ramadân has arrived with blessings. So

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (5575) and Muslim (2003).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (5834) and Muslim (2073).

(3) Checked by Abu Ya'ala in his Musnad (5273).

(4) Checked by Ahmad (2/230).

(5) Checked by Al-Bazzar (663).

honour the guest who has arrived."

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to supplicate to be conveyed to Ramadân. When the month of Rajab commenced, he would say: **"O Allâh! Bless us in Rajab and Sha'bân, and convey us to Ramadân."** Narrated by at-Tabarânî and others from Anas ﷺ.

Al-Mu'allâ ibn al-Fadl said: **"They used to supplicate to Allâh ﷻ six months before hand to convey them to Ramadân. They used to then supplicate to Him for the next six months that He must accept it from them."** Yahyâ ibn Abî Kathîr said: **"One of their supplications was: 'O Allâh! Keep me safe and secure for Ramadân, and make Ramadân safe and secure for me. And receive it from me with acceptance."**

Reaching the month of Ramadân and fasting in it is a great bounty on the person whom Allâh ﷻ enabled to do this. This can be inferred from a Hadîth which mentions three people, two of whom were martyred and the third passed away after them on his bed. The third person was seen in someone's dream to have surpassed the other two [although they were martyrs and he was not]. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Did he not perform so many more salâhs after them? Did he not get the month of Ramadân and keep fast in it? I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, the distance [in rank and level] between him and them is further than the distance between the heavens and the earth."**(1) Narrated by Imam Ahmad and others.

The person who is shown mercy in Ramadân is truly a person who is engulfed in mercy. The person who is deprived of its goodness is really a deprived person. The person who does not take provision from it for his journey to the Hereafter is really worthy of reprimanding.

أتـــى رمـــضان مـــزرعة العـــباد لتطهيـــر القلـــوب مـــن الفـــساد

فـــأد حقـــوقه قـــولا وفعـــلا وزادك فاتخـــــذه للمعـــــاد

فمـــن زرع الحـــبوب ومـــا ســـقاها تـــأوه نادمـــا يـــوم الحـــصاد

"Ramadân comes as a tilling ground for the servants to purify their hearts from corruption. So fulfil its rights through words and actions, and take it as a provision for the Hereafter.

(1) Checked by Ahmad (2/333).

The person who sows seeds without irrigating them will most certainly cry out in anguish on the day of harvesting."

O you whose absence from us has prolonged! The days of reconciliation have drawn near. O you whose loss has gone on for too long! The days of profitable trade have drawn near. If a person does not make a profit in this month, when will he ever make a profit?! The person who does not get close to his Master in this month, he will continue going further away from him.

أنـــــاس أعرضـــــوا عـــــنا بـــــلا جُـــــرم ولا معنـــــى
أســـــاؤوا ظـــــنهم فيـــــنا فهـــــلا أحـــــسنوا الظـــــنا
فـــــإن عـــــادوا لـــــنا عـــــدنا وإن خانـــــوا فمـــــا خـــــنا
فـــــإن كانـــــوا قـــــد اســـــتغنوا فإنـــــا عـــــنهم أغـــــنا

"People turned away from Us without any crime and reason. They have ill thoughts about Us. Why did they not have good thoughts [and expectations] of Us? If they return to Us [with repentance], We will return to them [by accepting their repentance]. If they break their trust, We will never break Our promise. If they feel that they do not need Us, We definitely do not need them."

How often the announcement is made: **"Come to success"** [during the *adhân*] yet you are in loss?! How often you are summoned towards rectitude, but you persist in corruption?!

إذا رمـــــضان أتـــــى مقـــــبلا فأقـــــبل فبالخيـــــر يـــــستقبل
لعلـــــك تخطـــــئه قـــــابلا وتأتـــــي بعـــــذر فـــــلا يقـــــبل

"When Ramad̲ân approaches, come forward and welcome it with good. It may well be that you will miss it next year and you will make an excuse which is not accepted."

Many a person had the hope of fasting in this month but his hopes deserted him and he fell into the darkness of the grave before the arrival of this month. Many a person welcomes the day but is unable to complete it. Many a person hopes to see tomorrow but does not reach it. If you were to see your life-span and how you are moving towards it, you would detest hopes and their deception.

One of the things which 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *rah̲imahullâh* said in the last sermon which he delivered was this: **"You have not**

been created in vain and you will never be left in vain. There is an appointed time for you when Allâh ﷻ will descend in order to pass judgement among His servants. The person who comes out of the all-encompassing mercy of Allâh ﷻ and is deprived of the Paradise whose extent is as wide as the heavens and the earth has most certainly lost and is destroyed. Do you not see that you are in the spoils of those who are to be destroyed and that the remaining people shall inherit those spoils after you? This will continue until you are returned to the best of inheritors [Allâh ﷻ]. Every day you bid farewell to those who return to Allâh ﷻ in the morning and evening after the expiry of their time and the end of their life. You bid farewell to them and place them in a crevice in the ground which neither has a pillow nor a bed. They have removed all their possessions, left their beloved ones, settled down in the soil, and are facing the accounting of deeds. They have no need of those whom they left behind while they are in total need of what they missed [of good deeds]. O servants of Allâh! Fear Allâh before the descent of death and the expiry of life. I am saying all this to you while I know that I am the most sinful among you. However, I seek forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ and repent to Him." He then lifted one end of his sheet and began crying till he was sobbing. He then descended and never returned to the pulpit until he passed away. May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on him.

يا ذا الذي ما كفاه الذنب في رجب ... حتى عصى ربه في شهر شعبان

لقد أظلك شهر الصوم بعدهما ... فلا تصيره أيضا شهر عصيان

واتل القرآن وسبح فيه مجتهدا ... فإنه شهر تسبيح وقرآن

واحمل على جسد ترجو النجاة له ... فسوف تُضرم أجساد بنيران

كم كنتَ تعرف ممن صام في سلف ... من بين أهل وجيران وإخوان

أفناهم الموت واستبقاك بعدهم ... حيا فما أقربَ القاصي من الداني

ومُعجب بثياب العيد يقطعها ... فأصبحت في غد أثواب أكفان

حتى متى يعمر الإنسان مسكنه ... مصير مسكنه قبر لإنسان

"O you who felt that his sins in Rajab were not enough and so he disobeyed his Lord in Sha'bân! The month of fasting has dawned upon you after these two months. Now do not turn it into a month of disobedience as well. Recite the Qur'ân and glorify [Allâh ﷻ] in earnestness because it is a month of glorification and the month of the Qur'ân. Impose on your body

with the hope of salvation for it. Soon there will come a time when the bodies will be burnt by the fires. How many of your family members, neighbours and brothers you knew who had kept fast last year, but now death destroyed them and enabled you to live after them. The distant place is no less nearer than the place that is close at hand [i.e. death is closer than you think]. The person is very attracted to the fabric which he is going to cut for his *'îd* clothes, but tomorrow that fabric is cut for his shroud (*kafan*). For how long is man going to inhabit his house? His house is going to be turned into a grave for man."

RAMADÂN

THE MERIT OF FASTING

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The reward for each deed of man is multiplied by ten till 700. Allâh ﷻ says: 'Except for fasting. It is solely for Me, and I shall personally give the reward for it. The fasting person leaves his desires and his food for My sake.' There are two occasions of joy for the fasting person: the joy he experiences when he opens his fast, and the joy he will experience when he meets his Sustainer. The smell that emanates from the mouth of a fasting person is purer in the sight of Allâh than the fragrance of musk."**(1) Another narration states: **"Every deed of man is for him except for fasting, it is for Me."**(2) Another narration of al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* states: **"There is an atonement for every deed. Fasting is for Me and I shall personally give the reward for it."**(3) Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrated it as follows: **"Every deed of man entails atonement for him except for fasting, fasting is for Me and I shall personally give the reward for it."**(4)

The first narration excludes fasting from the multiplied deeds. All deeds are multiplied from ten to 700 times except for fasting. It is not confined to this number. Rather, Allâh ﷻ multiplies it many times without any limit to the number of times. This is because fasting entails patience, and Allâh ﷻ said: **"It is the patient ones alone who receive their reward without measure."** *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 10)* It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ referred to Ramadân as the month of patience.(5)

Another Hadîth states: **"Fasting is half of patience."**(6) Narrated

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(1) It was narrated before.

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (1904).

(3) Checked by Al-Bukhari (7538).

(4) In Al-Musnad (7679/10640).

(5) It was checked before.

(6) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3519).

by at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh*.

Patience is classified into three categories: (1) patience in obedience to Allâh ﷻ, (2) patience in abstaining from the prohibitions of Allâh ﷻ, (3) patience over the painful decrees of Allâh ﷻ. All these three categories are found in fasting. The person has to exercise patience in obeying the command of Allâh ﷻ, he has to exercise patience in abstaining from the pleasures [food, drink and conjugal relations] which Allâh ﷻ prohibited him from, and he has to exercise patience over the hunger, thirst, and weakness of the soul and body which he has to experience.

The person is rewarded for the pain which he experiences because of acts of obedience. Allâh ﷻ says with regard to those who wage jihad: **"This is because the *mujâhidîn* are afflicted neither by thirst, nor by fatigue, nor by hunger in the path of Allâh, nor do they tread a path which angers the unbelievers, nor do they snatch from the enemy anything, but that a good deed is written in their favour in exchange for it. Surely Allâh does not usurp the right of the righteous."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 120)*

Ibn Khuzaymah *raḥimahullâh*, in his *Saḥîḥ*, narrates a Ḥadîth on the merit of Ramadân from Salmân ﷺ. Part of the Ḥadîth reads: **"It is the month of patience, and the reward of patience is Paradise."**(1) At-Ṭabarânî *raḥimahullâh* narrates a *marfû'* Ḥadîth from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ: **"Fasting is for Allâh, none knows the reward of his action except Allâh ﷻ."**(2) This Ḥadîth is also narrated as a *mursal* Ḥadîth and it is more authentic.

The reason for multiplication of rewards

The rewards for deeds are multiplied for several reasons, some of them are:

1. The sanctity of the place where the deed is done, e.g. the *ḥaram* (the sanctified place surrounding the Ka'bah). It is for this reason that the reward for ṣalâh performed in the musjids of Makkah and Madînah are multiplied. This is established from an authentic Ḥadîth from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ who said: **"One ṣalâh in this musjid of mine is better than 1 000 ṣalâhs in other musjids**

(1) Ibn Khouzayma in his Ṣaḥiḥ (1887).

(2) At-Tabarany in "Al-Awsat" (865).

except for al-Musjid al-Harâm."(1) Another narration adds: **"Salâh there is superior."** Similarly, it is related that fasting in the *haram* is multiplied. The *Sunan* of Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* relates a *marfû'* Hadîth of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ through a weak chain: **"The person who spends Ramadân in Makkah, fasts [during the day] and engages in night worship as much as he can, Allâh ﷻ records 100 000 Ramadâns in his favour as opposed to if he were to spend the month elsewhere."**(2) Many rewards are mentioned in this regard.

2. The sanctity of the time, e.g. Ramadân and the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah. The Hadîth of Salmân ﷺ which we referred to previously states: **"The one who fulfils an optional good act in it shall receive the reward of the one who fulfilled a compulsory act in other months. Those one who fulfils a compulsory act in it shall receive the reward of the one who fulfilled seventy compulsory acts in other months."**(3) At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Anas ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: **"Which charity is the most superior?"** He said: **"Charity in Ramadân."**(4) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"An 'umrah performed in Ramadan is equivalent to a hajj."** Or he said: **"a hajj with me."**(5) Another Hadîth states: **"The deeds of a fasting person are multiplied."**

Abû Bakr ibn Abî Maryam relates about his seniors that they used to say: **"When Ramadân arrives, spend openly in it because spending in it is multiplied like spending in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. A single *tasbîh* (glorification of Allâh ﷻ) is superior to 1 000 in other months."** An-Nakha'î said: **"A single fast in Ramadân is superior to 1 000 fasts. A single *tasbîh* is superior to 1 000 *tasbîhs*, and one *rak'ah* is superior to 1 000 *rak'ahs*."**

Since the reward of fasting itself is multiplied as opposed to other deeds, fasting in Ramadân will be multiplied over fasting in other months. This is because of the sanctity of this month, and because it is fasting which Allâh ﷻ made compulsory on His servants, and made it one of the pillars on which Islam is based.

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(1) Al-Bukhari (1190) and Muslim (1394).

(2) Sunan of Ibn Majah (3117).

(3) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (663).

(4) It was checked before (663).

(5) Al-Bukhari (1782) and Muslim (1156).

Rewards are multiplied for other reasons as well. For example, the nobility of the person, his proximity to Allâh ﷻ, and his excessive piety. This is similar to how the reward of this *ummah* is multiplied over the nations before them, and it has been given a double reward.

The second narration [quoted at the beginning of this chapter] excludes fasting from other deeds on the basis that all other deeds return to the servants while Allâh ﷻ reserved fasting for Himself from among all the deeds of His servants. Furthermore, He annexed it to Himself. An explanation of this will be provided further on – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

The third narration [quoted at the beginning] excludes fasting from the atonement of deeds. The best explanation of this is provided by Sufyân ibn 'Uyaynah *rahimahullâh* who said: **"This is one of the best and firmest Ahâdîth. When it is the day of Resurrection, Allâh ﷻ shall take His servant to account. All his wrongs will be atoned by his deeds until nothing but his fasting remains. Allâh ﷻ will bear his remaining wrongs and admit him into Paradise by virtue of his fasting."** Narrated by al-Bayhaqî in *Shu'ab al-Îmân* and others.

Based on this, it will mean that fasting is for Allâh ﷻ and no one can take away the person's reward from fasting. Rather, his reward is stored with Allâh ﷻ. It is in such a situation that it is said: All deeds may atone for the sins of a person to the extent that he is left with no good deeds. It is related that on the day of Resurrection, the good deeds and evil deeds will be weighed against each other, and cut off against each other. Even if a single good deed remains, the person shall enter Paradise. This was said by Sa'îd ibn Jubayr and others. There is a *marfû'* Hadîth in this regard which is related by al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ. It may be said with regard to fasting that its reward will not be cut off by a person demanding his right [from the account of the fasting person]. Rather, the person shall receive his full reward so that he may enter Paradise where he will enjoy his full reward.

As for Allâh's words **"Fasting is for Me"**, Allâh ﷻ reserved fasting by annexing it to Himself to the exclusion of all other good deeds. There are many opinions of the jurists, Sufis and others in explaining this. And they mentioned many reasons for this. The following two reasons are the best:

The reasons for Allâh ﷻ saying: "Fasting is for Me"

The first reason

Fasting entails abstaining from the essential inclinations and desires of the soul towards which it is naturally inclined for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. This is not found in any act of worship apart from fasting. For example, when a person is in a state of *ihram*, he abstains from conjugal relations and its propellants such as perfume. But he does not abstain from all desires such as eating and drinking. Similar is the case with *i'tikâf* (seclusion) although it is subservient to fasting.

As for salâh, although a person performing salâh abstains from all desires, the time period is very short. He does not experience any deprivation of food and drink in his salâh. In fact, he is prohibited from performing salâh when the food is presented to him and his soul is inclined towards eating. He must first eat a few morsels until his soul is satisfied. It is for this reason that we are ordered to have supper before the salâh.

A group of *'ulamâ'* are of the opinion that it is permissible to drink water while performing an optional salâh. Ibn az-Zubayr used to do this in his salâh. There is also a narration in this regard from Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*. This is in contradiction to fasting which takes the entire day. The fasting person experiences the deprivation of these desires and his soul has an inclination for them especially during summer days when the heat is intense and the days are long. It is for this reason that it is narrated that fasting in summer is one of the qualities of îmân. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast while on a journey during the intense heat while his Companions ﷺ did not fast. Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ said: **"We were with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ on a journey in Ramadân. We used to place our hands on our heads because of the intense heat. None among us would be fasting except for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and 'Abdullâh ibn Rawâhah ﷺ."**(1)

The *Muwattâ* states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was at al-'Arj pouring water on his head while he was fasting. He was pouring this water out of thirst or because of the intense heat.(2) When the soul

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (1945) and Muslim (1122).

(2) Al- Mowatta' (1/294) "Fasting" book, chapter: what is mentioned regarding traveling.

has an intense yearning for something which it desires, has access to it and yet stays away from it for the sake of Allâh ﷻ at a place where none but Allâh ﷻ knows about it, then this is a proof of the genuineness of the person's îmân. This shows that the fasting person knows that he has a Lord who is watching him in his privacy. He knows that He prohibited him from consuming his desires which his soul is naturally inclined towards in privacy, yet he obeys his Lord, carries out His order, and abstains from His prohibition out of fear for His punishment and hope for His reward; then Allâh ﷻ is most appreciative of this and reserves this particular deed of his for Himself to the exclusion of all other deeds. It is for this reason that the Hadîth states thereafter: **"The fasting person leaves his desires and food for My sake."** A person of the past said: **"Glad tidings to the person who remained aloof from an immediate desire for an unseen promise [reward in the Hereafter]."**

When a fasting believer knows that the pleasure of his Master lies in abstaining from his desires, he gives preference to his Master's pleasure over his own desires. He thus experiences joy in abstaining from his desires for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. This is because he has full conviction that Allâh ﷻ is watching him, and His punishment is far greater than the enjoyment which he is going to experience in fulfilling his desire in privacy. He thus gives preference to the pleasure of his Lord over the desire of his soul. In fact, a true believer will dislike this in his privacy more than his dislike for the pain of a beating. [In other words, he would prefer the pain of a beating over the displeasure of Allâh ﷻ].

It is for this reason that most believers – if they were beaten to abstain from fasting in Ramadân without a valid reason, they would not do it because they know the dislike of Allâh ﷻ for abstaining from fasting in this month. This is one of the signs of îmân – a believer dislikes giving vent to his desires if he knows that Allâh ﷻ dislikes this. His pleasures are thus spent in what pleases his Master even if they are against his desires. He will feel pain at doing anything which his Master dislikes even if it may be in agreement with his desires. If this is the case with regard to temporary prohibition of eating, drinking and conjugal relations because of fasting; it ought to be more emphatic with regard to those things which are unilaterally forbidden, e.g. adultery, consuming intoxicants, usurping wealth, dishonouring people, shedding unlawful blood. These are acts which anger Allâh ﷻ under all conditions, in all places and at all times. If the îmân of a believer is

perfect, he would detest all these acts more than he would detest killing and beating. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stated that one of the signs of the existence of the sweetness of îmân to be: **"that he detests returning to unbelief after Allâh ﷻ rescued him just as he detests being cast into the fire."**(1)

Yûsuf ﷺ said: **"O my Lord! I prefer the prison to that which they invite me."** *(Sûrah Yûsuf, 12: 33)*

Dhû an-Nûn al-Misrî *rahimahullâh* was asked: **"When will I know that I love my Lord?"** He said: **"When what He dislikes is more bitter to you than patience."** Someone said: **"Loving what your beloved dislikes is not from among the signs of love."** Many people practise on their habits without practising on what îmân imposes and demands. Therefore, if any of them were beaten, he will still not abstain from fasting in Ramadân without an excuse. But there are some ignorant people who do not stop fasting despite having a valid excuse and even if fasting would be harmful to them. This, despite the fact that Allâh ﷻ loves a believer to accept His concessions. Such people do this out of habit. While at the same time, they are in the habit of committing acts which Allâh ﷻ prohibited, e.g. adultery, consuming intoxicants, seizing wealth without due right, dishonouring people, and killing without due right. Such a person is doing everything out of habit and custom and not because of the demands of îmân. When a person acts according to the dictates of îmân, he will experience delight in imposing patience on his soul when it inclines towards acts which earn the wrath of Allâh ﷻ. Such a person may progress to the level of detesting everything which Allâh ﷻ dislikes, and fleeing from it even if it is conducive to the soul. A poet said:

إن كـــان رضـــاكم فـــي ســـهري فـــــسلام الله علـــــى وســـــني

"If your pleasure lies in my remaining awake, then farewell to my sleep."

Another poet said:

فما لجرح إذا أرضاكم ألم

"I am not bothered by any injury if pain causes you pleasure."

(1) Al-Bukhari (16) and Muslim (43).

Another poet said:

عذابـــــه فـــــيك عـــــذب وبعـــــده فـــــيك قـــــرب

وأنـــــت عـــــندي كروحـــــي بـــــل أنـــــت مـــــنها أحـــــب

حـــــسبي مـــــن الحـــــب أنـــــي لمـــــا تحـــــب أحـــــب

"Experiencing pain for your sake is sweet. Being distant for your sake is actually a source of proximity to you. You are like my soul to me. In fact, you are more beloved to me than my soul. My love is sufficient if I love you whenever you show love to me."

The second reason

Fasting is a secret between a servant and his Lord. None but Allâh ﷻ is aware of it. Fasting comprises of an internal intention which none but Allâh ﷻ knows, and abstaining from desires which are generally concealed. It is therefore said that the angels who are deputed to record deeds do not record this. It is said that there is no ostentation in it. This is said by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and others. There is a *marfû' mursal* Hadîth in this regard. This reason is preferred by Abû 'Ubayd and others. This reason could be similar to the first reason because a person who abstains from something towards which his soul invites him, and he does this for the sake of Allâh ﷻ in the sense that none but He is aware of it, then it demonstrates the genuineness of his îmân. Allâh ﷻ loves His servants to deal with Him in secrecy. The true lovers of Allâh ﷻ love to deal with Him in secrecy and in a manner that no one else comes to know of their relationship. In fact, some of them wished that they could engage in worship in such a manner that even the recording angels are not aware of it. Someone came to know of a person's private acts of worship, so he said: **"My life was enjoyable when my relationship with Allâh ﷻ was private."** He then asked for death and passed away. True lovers dislike others to come to know of the secrets which they share with their lovers.

نـسيم صـبا نجـد متـى جـئت حـاملا تحيـتهم فاطْـو الحـديث عـن الـركب

ولا تُـــذِع الـــسر المـــصون فإننـــي أغـار علـى ذكـر الأحـبة مـن صـحبي

"We experienced the gentle breeze of the morning when you came bearing their greetings. Conceal the message from your fellow travellers and do not announce the safeguarded secret because I detest talking about my beloved among my

companions."

The words: **"The fasting person leaves his desires, food and drink for My sake"** makes reference to the reason which we mentioned above. The fasting person gains proximity to Allâh ﷻ by abstaining from the food, drink and carnal pleasures which his soul desires. These are the greatest desires of the soul. There are several benefits in gaining proximity to Allâh ﷻ by abstaining from these desires through fasting:

The benefits of abstaining from desires through fasting

1. The subduing of the soul. Eating, drinking and conjugal relations cause the soul to become covetous, haughty and heedless.

2. Freeing the heart for reflection and remembrance. Fulfilling these desires hardens and blinds the heart. They come as barriers between the person, and reflection and remembrance, and invite him towards heedlessness. When the stomach is devoid of food and drink, this emptiness enlightens the heart, softens it, removes its hardness, and frees it for reflection and remembrance.

3. An affluent person values the bounty of Allâh ﷻ Who blessed him with more food, drink and wives than many poor people. When he is forbidden from these pleasures for a certain time and experiences difficulty for not having them, he thinks of those who do not possess them at all. This imposes on him to be grateful to Allâh ﷻ for the affluence which He bestowed him with. It also prompts him to show mercy to his needy brother and help him in whatever way possible.

4. Fasting constricts the blood veins which are also the veins through which Satan moves in the human body. Satan flows through man as blood flows through his body. The whisperings of Satan are subdued through fasting, and the excitement of carnal desires and anger is broken. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ referred to fasting as a shield because it breaks the urge of carnal desires.

Gaining proximity to Allâh ﷻ by abandoning these lawful desires through not fasting can only be achieved through abstaining from all which Allâh ﷻ made forbidden at all times, viz. speaking lies, oppression, enmity against people by committing injustices against their lives, wealth and honour. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If a**

person does not give up falsehood and practising on it, Allâh ﷻ has no need for his abstention from food and drink."(1) Narrated by al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*. Another Hadîth states: **"Fasting is not mere abstention from food and drink, it entails abstention from futile activities and obscenity."**(2) Hâfiz Abû Mûsâ al-Madînî said: **"This Hadîth fulfils the conditions of Muslim *rahimahullâh*."**

Someone of the past said: **"The most insignificant fast is [mere] abstention from food and drink."** Jâbir said: **"When you fast, your ears, eyes and tongue must fast [abstain] from lies and other unlawful acts. Abstain from harming your neighbour. Let there be dignity and sedateness in you on the day you fast. Do not let your fasting day be like your non-fasting day."**

إذا لـم يكـن فـي الـسمع منـي تـصاون وفي بصري غض وفي منطقي صمت

فحظي إذا مـن صـومي الجـوع والظمـأ فإن قلت إني صمت يومي فما صمت

"If I do not protect my ears [from listening to evil], if I do not lower my gaze, and if do not remain silent, then my fast is mere hunger and thirst. If I were to say that I am fasting today, I haven't really fasted."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Many a fasting person's share from his fasting is mere hunger and thirst. Many a person's share from engaging in night worship is mere sleeplessness."**(3) The secret behind this is that abstaining from lawful things in order to gain proximity to Allâh ﷻ can only be perfected after a person seeks proximity to Him by abstaining from the unlawful. If a person commits unlawful acts and then tries to gain proximity to Him by abstaining from lawful things, then he is like a person who leaves out the compulsory and tries to gain proximity through the optional. This, notwithstanding the fact that all the *'ulamâ'* state that his fast is valid in the sense that he does not have to repeat it. An act is considered invalid when a person commits what he is specifically forbidden from, and not by committing something which is not specifically bound to it. This is the principle of the majority of the *'ulamâ'*.

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(1) Al-Bukhari (1903).

(2) Checked by Al-Baihaqi (4/270), Al-Hindi in "Al-Kanz" (23864), Ibn Khouzayma (1996), Al-Hakem (1/430) and Ibn Hibban (3470).

(3) Checked by Ibn Majah (1690), Ibn Khouzayma (1998), Al-Hakem (1/431) and Al-Bayhaqi (4/270).

The *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* narrates that two women were fasting during the era of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. They were on the verge of dying out of thirst. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was informed of this, he turned away. When he was informed again, he summoned them and ordered them to vomit. They both vomited a bowl full of pus, blood, matter and fresh flesh. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"These two abstained from what Allâh ﷻ made lawful to them, but partook of what Allâh ﷻ made unlawful to them. One of them went and sat by the other and they began consuming the flesh of people [by backbiting]."**(1)

It is for this reason – and Allâh ﷻ knows best – that after mentioning the prohibition of food and drink to the fasting person during the day, the Qur'ân mentions the prohibition of the unjust usurpation of people's wealth. This prohibition applies at all times and climes, as opposed to food and drink. This makes reference to the fact that the person who fulfils the order of Allâh ﷻ in abstaining from food and drink during the day when he is fasting must also obey His order in abstaining from the unjust usurpation of people's wealth because this is prohibited under all conditions and is not permitted at any time.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said [in the Ḥadîth quoted at the beginning]: **"There are two occasions of joy for the fasting person: the joy he experiences when he opens his fast, and the joy he will experience when he meets his Sustainer."** With regard to the joy which he experiences at the time of opening his fast, it is known that the souls are naturally inclined to what is conducive to them, viz. food, drink and conjugal relations. When they are prohibited from these things at any time, and then permitted at another time, they become overjoyed with the permission of what they were prohibited from. This is especially so when they have an intense need for it. So the souls are naturally overjoyed by this. If this is beloved for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, it will be beloved according to the Sharî'ah. Similar is the case with the fasting person at the time when he opens his fast. Allâh ﷻ prohibited the fasting person from consuming these desires during the day and permitted them to him at night. In fact, Allâh ﷻ made it desirable for him to hasten in consuming them in the first and last parts of the night. The most beloved in the sight of Allâh ﷻ are those who hasten in opening the

(1) Checked by Ahmad (5/431).

fast. Allâh ﷻ and His angels pray for the well being of those who partake of *saḥûr* (the pre-dawn meal in preparation for the fast).

The fasting person thus gives up his desires by day in order to gain proximity to Him and in obedience to Him. He then hastens in consuming them at night in order to gain proximity to Him and in obedience to Him. So he abstained from them solely because it was the order of Allâh ﷻ, and partook of them solely because it was the order of Allâh ﷻ. He is thus obedient to Him in both conditions. It is for this reason that continuous fasting is prohibited. When a fasting person hastens to open his fast in order to gain proximity to his Master, eats and drinks, and then praises Allâh ﷻ; then there is hope that he will be forgiven or that he will gain His true pleasure through this.

A Ḥadîth states: **"Allâh ﷻ is most pleased with a person who eats a morsel of food and thanks Him for it, who drinks a sip of water and thanks Him for it."**(1) It may well be that his supplications will be answered at that time. A Ḥadîth of Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* states: **"A fasting person has a supplication which is not rejected at the time of opening his fast."**(2)

When a fasting person eats and drinks with the intention of gaining strength for his fast and night worship, he will be rewarded for this. Just as his sleep will be considered to be an act of worship if he sleeps during the day or night with the intention of gaining strength for the doing of good deeds.

A Ḥadîth states: **"The sleep of a fasting person is an act of worship."**(3) Ḥafṣah bint Sîrîn said: **"Abû al-'Âliyah said: 'A fasting person is in worship even if he is sleeping on his bed as long as he does not backbite anyone.'"** He said: **"Ḥafṣah used to say: 'What an excellent act of worship while I am sleeping on my bed!'"** Narrated by 'Abd ar-Razzâq.

A fasting person is thus in worship during the day and night. His supplications are accepted while fasting and when opening his fast. During the day he is fasting and patient, while at night he is eating and grateful.

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(1) Checked by Muslim (2734).

(2) Checked by Ibn Majah (1753).

(3) Checked by Al-Baihaqi in "Ash-Shu'ab" (3938).

A Ḥadîth which at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* and others narrated states: **"An eating person who is grateful is on the level of a fasting person who is patient."**(1)

The person who understands what we referred to above will not hesitate in understanding the joy of a fasting person when he opens his fast. His opening of his fast in the manner referred to is from the bounty and mercy of Allâh ﷻ. He is included in the words: **"Say: By the grace of Allâh and His beneficence – in this, then, they should rejoice. This is better than all that they amass."** *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 58)*

However, the precondition for this is that his sustenance must be lawful. If he opens his fast with something which is unlawful, he will be a person who abstained from what Allâh ﷻ made lawful while consumed what Allâh ﷻ made unlawful. Furthermore, his supplications will not be accepted, as stated by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ of a person who undertook a lengthy journey: **"He extends his hands towards the heavens and says: 'O my Lord! O my Lord!' Whereas his food is unlawful, his drink is unlawful, his clothing is unlawful, and he was nourished with the unlawful. How, then, can his supplication be accepted?"**(2)

As for his joy at the time when he shall meet his Lord, this will be on account of the reward which he will receive from Him and which He had stored for him. He will receive it at a time when he will be most in need of it. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Whatever good you send for yourselves, you will find it with Allâh – better and more rewarding."** *(Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 73: 20)* **"The day when every person shall find whatever good he has done presented before him."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 30)* **"He who does an atom's weight of good, shall see it. He who does an atom's weight of evil shall see it."** *(Sûrah az-Zalzalah, 99: 7, 8)*

The statement of Ibn 'Uyaynah *raḥimahullâh* was quoted before wherein he said that the reward of a fasting person will not be taken away by those whom he had wronged. Rather, Allâh ﷻ will store it for him until He admits him into Paradise. The *Musnad* narrates from 'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The deed of**

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2486), Ibn Majah (1765), Ahmad (4/343), Al-Hakem (1/422) and Ibn Hibban (952).

(2) Checked by Muslim (1015).

every day is sealed."(1)

'Îsâ ﷺ said: **"This day and night are two treasure houses. You should therefore watch what you place in them. The days are treasure houses which are filled with whatever good and evil people stored in them. These treasure houses will be opened to the respective people on the day of Resurrection. The righteous will find honour and beneficence in their treasures. The sinners will find regret and remorse in their treasures."**

There are two categories of fasting people:

The first category of fasting people

The person who abstains from his food, drink and carnal desires for the sake of Allâh ﷻ and hopes for the reward for that in Paradise. This person has entered into a transaction and work contract with Allâh ﷻ, and He does not let the wage of the one who worked well to go to waste. Anyone who deals with Allâh ﷻ never loses. Instead, he makes the most profit. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to a person: **"If you abstain from something solely out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ, He will most certainly give you something better than it."** Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*. This fasting person will be given whatever food, drink and women he desires in Paradise. Allâh ﷻ says: **"and drink to your heart's content as a reward for what you sent ahead in days gone by."** *(Sûrah al-Hâqqah, 69: 24)* Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* and others said: This verse was revealed with reference to the fasting people.

Ya'qûb ibn Yûsuf al-Hanafî said: **"We heard that Allâh ﷻ shall say to His friends (*auliyâ'*) on the day of Resurrection: 'O My friends! Many a time I looked at you when you were in the world: your lips were dry for want of drinking liquids, your eyes became deep set, and your stomachs became light. Today you can be in your comforts and pass the cup around among you, 'and drink to your heart's content as a reward for what you sent ahead in days gone by.'"** *(Sûrah al-Hâqqah, 69: 24)*

Al-Hasan said: **"The wide-eyed damsel of Paradise will be with the friend of Allâh ﷻ while he is lying down by the bank of the river of honey. She will pass the cup to him and say: 'Allâh ﷻ looked at you on a long hot day and you were experiencing**

(1) Al-Musnad (14613).

severe thirst. Allâh ﷻ proudly said to the angels: 'Look at My servant! He abstained from his wife, his carnal desires, his pleasure, his food and his drink because of Me, and in yearning for [the reward which] I have with Me. Bear witness that I have forgiven him.' Allâh ﷻ forgave you on that day and got me married to you."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is a door in Paradise which is named 'ar-Rayyân'. The fasting people shall enter through that door, and no one else."**(1) Another narration adds: **"Once they have gone through, it will be locked."** Another narration states: **"Whoever enters through it shall drink, and whoever drinks will never experience thirst again."**(2)

The Hadîth of 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn Samurah relates a lengthy dream of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in which he said: **"I saw a person from my *ummah* panting out of thirst. Each time he came to a pond, he was prevented from [drinking] from it. The fast of Ramadân came, provided him with water and satiated his thirst."** Narrated by at-Tabarânî(3) and others. Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates through a Hadîth with a weak chain from Anas ﷺ: **"The fragrance of musk will emanate from the mouth of the fasting persons and a dining table will be laid out for them under the Throne. They will be eating from it while other people will still be busy giving an account of their deeds."**(4)

Anas ﷺ narrates: **"Allâh ﷻ has a dining table which no eye has seen the like thereof, no ear has heard the like thereof, and which never crossed the imagination of any human. None but those who used to fast shall sit at that table."**

A person of the past said: We have heard that a dining table will be laid out for those who used to fast and they will eat from there while the rest of the people are busy giving an account of their deeds. The people will ask: **"O our Lord! How is it that we are taken to account while they are eating?"** It will be said: **"They used to fast**

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(1) Al-Bukhari (1896) and Muslim (1152).

(2) An-Nasa'ei: (4/168).

(3) Al-Haithami said in: Al Majmaa' (7/179): narrated by At-Tabarany by Two Isnads in one of them Suleiman Bin Ahmad Al-wasety and in the other Khaled Bin Abdel Rahman al-Makhzoumy, both of them are weak.

(4) Narrated by Al-Soutti in Ad'Durr al-Manthur (1/182).

for lengthy periods while you continued eating. They engaged in night worship while you were sleeping."

A person saw Bishr ibn al-Hârith in a dream with a dining table in front of him and he was eating from it. Someone was saying to him: **"Eat, O you who had abstained from eating. Drink, O you who had abstained from drinking."**

A righteous person had kept fast so much that he became bent, lost his voice and passed away. One of his pious friends saw him in a dream and asked him about his condition. He began laughing and said:

قد كُسي البهاء وطافت بأباريق حوله الخدام

ثم حلي وقيل يا قارئ ارقا فلعمري لقد براك الصيام

"He was made to wear splendid clothes, cups of drinks were passed around, and he was surrounded by attendants. He was made to wear jewellery and was told: 'O reader! Climb up [to the upper levels] for fasting has surely been good to you.'"

A righteous man passed by a person calling out at pre-dawn in Ramadân: **"O we have not really paid particular attention to fasting."** He became attentive to this statement and began fasting abundantly. A righteous person saw himself in a dream and it seemed that he was admitted into Paradise. He heard someone saying to him: **"Do you ever remember fasting a single day for the sake of Allâh?"** He replied: **"Yes."** He said: **"The scattered flints then took me from Paradise."** The person who abstains from food, drink and carnal desires for a short period in this world solely for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ shall recompense him with food and drink which never ends, and wives which never die.

It is in the month of Ramadân that the fasting persons get married. A Hadîth states: **"Paradise is decorated and furnished from year to year for the arrival of Ramadân. The doe-eyed damsels say: 'O Lord! Appoint for us husbands from Your servants in this month, husbands whom we will take delight in, and who will be delighted by us.'"**(1) Another Hadîth states: **"The doe-eyed damsels announce in Ramadân: 'Is there any suitor who is sending a proposal to Allâh ﷻ so that He may get him**

(1) Al-Hindi mentioned it in "Al-Kanz" (23711) and Ibn Al-Jouzy in Al'elal Al-Mutanaheya (2/26).

married to us?'"

The dowry for the doe-eyed damsels is lengthy periods of *tahajjud salâh*. This can be acquired the most in Ramadân as opposed to other months. A righteous person used to engage in abundant *tahajjud salâh* and fasting. He performed the salâh one night in a musjid and supplicated. He was overcome by sleep and saw in his dream a group of personalities who were not humans. They were holding plates filled with bread which was as white as ice. On top of each bread was a pearl which was as huge as a pomegranate. They said to him: **"Eat."** He said: **"I want to fast."** They said: **"The owner of this house is ordering you to eat."** He said, so I began eating and went to pick up the pearl. They said: **"Leave it, and we will plant a tree for you which will produce far better pearls than this."** He asked: **"Where?"** They said: **"In an abode which is never destroyed, a place where fruits never rot, a kingdom which never ends, and clothes which never wear out. In it is contentment, pleasure, delight, wives who are pleased and make one pleased – they are neither envious nor make others envious. You should remain occupied in what you are doing because this is merely a slumber. You shall soon depart and live in this abode."** The person passed away within two weeks after seeing this dream. One of his pious friends to whom he had related this dream saw him in his dream saying to him: **"Will you believe that the tree which was planted for me on the day when I related this dream to you has already borne its fruit!!?"** He asked him: **"What did it bear?"** He said: **"Do not even ask me, no one can describe it. No one has come across anyone as generous as Allâh ﷻ when an obedient servant comes to Him."**

O people! Is there no one to propose [for one of the doe-eyed damsels of Paradise] to Allâh ﷻ? Is there no one who is yearning for all that Allâh ﷻ prepared in Paradise for the obedient servants? Is there no one seeking the everlasting comforts which he has been informed about? [I am saying this] although there is nothing like a personal experience.

مـــن يـــرد ملـــك الجـــنان فلـــيدع عـــنه التوانـــي
ولـــيقم فـــي ظلمـــة اللـــيـ ـــل إلـــى نـــور القـــرآن
وليـــصل صـــوما بـــصوم إن هـــذا العـــيش فانـــي
إنمـــا العـــيش جـــوار اللـــ ـــه فـــي دار الأمـــان

"The one who desires the kingdom of Paradise must give up his laziness. He must stand up in the darkness of the night to the light of the Qur'ân. He must fast one after the other because this life is fleeting. The true life is in the proximity of Allâh ﷻ in the abode of peace."

The second category of fasting people

He is the person who fasts [abstains] from everything apart from Allâh ﷻ in this world. He safeguards his head and whatever it embraces. He safeguards his stomach and whatever it contains. He thinks of death and the tribulation. He desires the Hereafter and therefore stays aloof from the attraction of the world. His day of *'îd* is when he meets his Lord, and his joy is when he sees Him.

أهل الخصوص من الصوام صومهم صون اللسان عن البهتان والكذب

والعارفون وأهل الأنس صومهم صون القلوب عن الأغيار والحجب

"The fasting of the special people entails safeguarding the tongue against slander and lies. The fasting of the *'ârifûn* (those who truly recognized Allâh ﷻ) and those enjoying close proximity [to Allâh ﷻ] entails the fasting of the heart from everything apart from Allâh ﷻ and everything which comes as a barrier between Allâh ﷻ and himself."

No castle can console the *'ârifûn* against seeing their Master. No river can satisfy their thirst to see Him. Their aspirations are much higher than that.

كبرت همة عبد طمعت في أن تراك

من يصم عن مفطرات فصيامي عن سواك

"A servant has a great desire to see You. There are those who fast from the things which break a fast, but my fast entails abstaining from everything apart from You."

The person who abstains from his desires in this world shall receive them tomorrow in Paradise. The person who abstains from everything apart from Allâh ﷻ shall be recompensed on the day when he meets Him: **"Whoever looks forward to meeting Allâh then [let him know] that Allâh's appointed time is coming."** *(Sûrah al-'Ankabût, 29: 5)*

وقد صمت عن لذات دهري كلها ويوم لقاكم ذاك فطر صيامي

"I abstained from all pleasures throughout my life. The day when I meet You will be the day when I open my fast."

Someone saw Bishr in a dream so he asked him about his condition. He said: **"Allâh ﷻ knew my little desire for food, so He permitted me to look at Him."**

Someone was asked: **"Where should I seek you in the Hereafter?"** He said: **"In the group which will be looking at Allâh ﷻ."** He was asked: **"How do you know that?"** He said: **"By virtue of the fact that I lower my gaze from everything which is forbidden solely for His pleasure, by virtue of my abstaining from every evil and sin for His sake, and because I asked Him to make looking at Him my Paradise."**

يـا حبـيب القلـوب مـن لـي سـواك ارحـم الـيوم مذنـبا قـد أتـاك
لـيس لـي فـي الجـنان مـولاي رأس غيـر أنـي أريـدها لأراك

"O the beloved of the hearts! Who do I have apart from You? Show mercy to the sinner who has come to You today. O Master! I have no desire in Paradise except the desire to see You."

O group of repentant ones! Today you must abstain from the desires of the self so that you can enjoy the *'îd* on the day when you meet Allâh ﷻ. Do not think that you still have a long way to go because your time is still to come. No, the major part of the day of fasting has departed, and the *'îd* of meeting [Allâh] is approaching.

إن يـوما جامعـا شـملي بهـم ذاك عـيدي لـيس لـي عـيد سـواه

"The day of reunion with them is the day of my 'îd. I have no other day of 'îd."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The smell that emanates from the mouth of a fasting person is purer in the sight of Allâh than the fragrance of musk."** The smell mentioned in this Hadîth refers to the fumes which rise from the stomach because of the absence of food due to fasting. It is a detestable smell in the nostrils of people in this world. However, it is liked by Allâh ﷻ because it emanates out of His obedience and in the quest for His pleasure. This is like the blood of the martyr which will come flowing on the day of Resurrection. It will have the colour of blood and the fragrance of musk.

Those who consider the use of a *miswâk* reprehensible for a fasting person or those who do not recommend it use this Hadîth as

a proof. As far as we know, 'Atâ' ibn Abî Rabâh was the first to use this as a proof. It is related that Abû Hurayrah ﷺ also used this as a proof but this is not established.

The differences of the *'ulamâ'* in this regard are well known. Those who consider it reprehensible, consider it as such in the latter part of the fasting day. This is the time when the stomach is devoid of food and the fumes rise from it. As to when this time of reprehensibility commences, there are three opinions (1) with the completion of the *'asr salâh*, (2) after mid-day, (3) after offering the *zuhr salâh* at the beginning of its time. The third opinion is established from Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh.*

There are two meanings to Allâh ﷻ liking the smell which emanates from the mouth of a fasting person:

(1) Since fasting was a secret between the person and his Lord in this world, Allâh ﷻ brought it into the open before all the creations on the day of Resurrection. He does this to popularize those who used to fast and so that it may be known to the people that their reward was for concealing their fast in this world. Abû ash-Shaykh al-Asbahânî narrates through a weak chain from Anas ﷺ: **"Those who used to fast shall come out of their graves. They will be recognized by the smell that emanates from their mouths; it will be better than the fragrance of musk."**

Mak-hûl said: **"The inhabitants of Paradise inhale a special fragrance. They will say: 'O our Lord! Ever since we entered Paradise, we never inhaled a better fragrance than this.' He will say: 'This is the fragrance from the mouths of those who used to fast.'"**

The smell which emanates from the mouth of a fasting person spreads in this world and is inhaled before the Hereafter. This is of two types:

(1)The fragrance which is perceived by the outward senses. 'Abdullâh ibn Ghâlib was an ardent worshipper who strove in salâh and fasting. When he was buried, the fragrance of musk emanated from his grave. Someone saw him in a dream and asked him about the fragrance which is found at his grave. He said: **"That is the fragrance of recitation of the Qur'ân and thirst."**

(2)The fragrance which is inhaled by the hearts and souls. This fragrance ensures that the sincere fasting persons enjoy love in the

hearts of the believers. Al-Ḥârith al-Ash'arî narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Zakarîyyâ ﷺ said to the Banî Isrâ'îl: 'I order you to fast. The similitude of a fasting person is like that of a person who is among a group of people. He has a vessel containing musk and everyone is attracted to its fragrance. The smell which emanates from a fasting person is better in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the fragrance of musk.'"** Narrated by at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* and others.(1)

Since the relationship of the sincere servants in their fasting was a secret between themselves and their Master, Allâh ﷻ displayed their secret and brought it into the open. This display and exposition is a reward for that secrecy.

A Ḥadîth states: **"When a person conceals a secret, Allâh ﷻ most certainly clothes it with the sheet of publicity."**(2)

Yûsuf ibn Asbâṭ said: **"Allâh ﷻ sent revelation to one of the Prophets saying: 'Tell your people to conceal their actions for My sake and I will display them for them.'"**

تـذلل أربـاب الهـوى فـي الهـوى عـز وفقـرهم نحـو الحبـيب هـو الكنـز

وسـترهم فـيه الـسرائر شـهرة وغيـر تـلاف الـنفس فـيه هـو العجـز

"The submission of the lovers for the sake of love is an honour for them. Their need for the beloved is a treasure for them. Their concealing the secret for him is a cause of popularity. Surrendering to him is something which is irreplaceable."

(2) The person who worships Allâh ﷻ, obeys Him, seeks His pleasure in this world through good deeds; these good deeds have disagreeable effects on some people in this world. But those effects are not disagreeable to Allâh ﷻ. Rather, they are beloved to Him and liked by Him because they emanated out of obedience to Him and in the quest for His pleasure. He thus informs those who practise on His instructions in this world that He loves these disagreeable effects in order to gladden them, and so that they do not dislike what they experience in this world.

A person of the past said: **"Allâh ﷻ promised Mûsâ ﷺ that He**

(1) Checked by Ahmad (16718) and At-Tirmidhi (2864).

(2) Checked by At-Tabarany (1702).

will speak to him after the completion of thirty days. He kept fast for thirty days and then found a foul smell in his mouth. He disliked conversing with his Lord in such a condition. He therefore took a *miswâk* and cleaned his mouth with it. When he went for his appointment with Allâh ﷻ, He said to him: 'O Mûsâ! Did you not know that the smell which emanates from the mouth of a fasting person is more liked by us than the fragrance of musk? Go back and fast for another ten days.'"

This is the reason why the blood of a martyr will have the smell of musk on the day of Resurrection. The dust of those who waged jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ will be a fragrant powder for the inhabitants of Paradise.

There is a Hadîth which states that everything used by people in this world is defective until it is annexed and attributed to His obedience and pleasure. Only then does it become perfect in reality.

The smell which emanates from the fasting people is better than the fragrance of musk. The semi-nakedness of the *muhrim* (the person wearing *ihrâm*) who dresses like this in order to visit His House is more beautiful in His sight than wearing suits. The wailing of sinners over their own selves out of His fear is superior to *tasbîh* (glorifying Allâh ﷻ). The submission of the humble ones to His grandeur actually demonstrates their awe. The humility of those who fear His wrath actually demonstrates their dignity. The exposure of those who truly love Him is better than concealment. Spending one's life in order to die in His path is actually a source of life to the person. The hunger of fasting people for His sake actually entails satiation. Their thirst in quest of His pleasure actually entails quenching of their thirst. Those who strive in His service actually experience comfort.

ذل الفتـــى فـــي الحـــب مكـــرمة وخـــضوعه لحبيـــبه شـــرف

"The youth's surrender for the sake of love is an honour for him. His submission for his beloved is dignity for him."

Today the gentle breeze of proximity [to Allâh ﷻ] blew. The broker of admonitions strove to reconcile antagonists. Those who were cut off received the good news of attachment, sinners received the news of pardon, and those who were destined to the Hell-fire received the news of salvation.

When the devils were enchained in Ramadân and the fires of

carnal desires were extinguished with fasting, the king of desires was removed and control came into the hands of the intellect which ruled with justice, and a sinner was left with no excuse. O clouds of heedlessness! Move away from the hearts. O suns of piety and îmân, rise. O scrolls of the deeds of the righteous, ascend. O hearts of the fasting ones, submit. O feet of the strivers, prostrate and bow to your Lord. O eyes of those who engage in night worship, do not sleep. O sins of the repentant ones, do not come back. O earth of desires, swallow your water. O sky of the souls, retract. O lightning of yearnings for the lovers, strike. O thoughts of the *'ârifûn*, ascend. O determination of the lovers who love without Allâh, do not despair. O Junayd, rejoice. O Shiblî, present yourself. O Râbi'ah, listen. The tables of bounties have been laid out during these days for the fasting ones. Every single one of you is invited. **"O our people! Accept the caller towards Allâh..."** *(Sûrah al-Ahqâf, 46: 31)* O endeavours of the believers, hasten. Glad tidings to the person who responds and receives. How sorrowful is the plight of the person who is repulsed from the door and is not invited.

سألتك يا بانة الأجرعي متى رفع الحي من لعلعي
وهل مر قلبي مع الظاعنيـ ـن أم خار ضعفا فلم يتبعني
رحلنا ووافقنا الصادقون ولم يتخلف سوى مدعي

"O Bânah al-Ajra'î! I ask you, when the people departed from La'la'î, did my heart join with those who departed, or did it grow weak and spiritless, and therefore did not follow me? We departed and the true [lovers] joined us. None except those who claimed to be lovers [and were not true lovers] remained behind."

ليت شعري إن جئتهم يقبلوني أم تراهم عن بابهم يصرفوني
أم تراني إذا وقفت لديهم يأذنوا بالدخول أم يطردوني

"If only I knew whether they will accept me when I go to them. Will I see them turning me away from their door? When I stand at their door, do I see myself being permitted to enter or will they drive me out?"

THE MERIT OF GENEROSITY AND RECITING THE QUR'ÂN IN RAMADÂN

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the most**

generous of people, and he was most generous in Ramadân when Jibra'îl ﷺ used to come to him and study the Qur'ân with him. Jibra'îl ﷺ used to come to him on every night of Ramadân and study the Qur'ân with him. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ met Jibra'îl ﷺ, he was more generous than the wind conveying good."(1)

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrated the above with the following addition at the end: **"He never refused anything which he was asked."**(2) Generosity refers to expansiveness and abundance in giving. Allâh ﷻ is described as being generous.

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Sa'd ibn Abî Waqqâs ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ is most generous, He loves generosity. He is beneficent, He loves beneficence."**(3)

Abû Dharr ﷺ narrates from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ who narrates from his Lord: **"Allâh ﷻ says: 'O My servants! If the first and last of you, the living and dead among you, the moist and dry among you were all to gather on a single plain, and each one of you were to ask Me whatever he desires, and I were to give every person who asks, it would not decrease My treasures except as when one of you passes by the ocean, dips a needle into it and takes it out. That is because I am most generous, I am the creator, the glorious. I do as I will. My giving is through a mere order. My punishment is through a mere order. When I will anything, I merely say to it: 'Be!' and it becomes.'"**(4)

Fudayl ibn 'Iyâd said that Allâh ﷻ says every night: **"I am the most generous, and generosity is from Me. I am the most beneficent and beneficence is from Me."** Allâh ﷻ is thus the most generous of all those who are generous. His generosity is multiplied at certain times, e.g. the month of Ramadân. Allâh ﷻ says in this regard: **"When My servants ask you concerning Me, I am near. I accept the supplication of the supplicant when he supplicates to Me."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 186)*

A Hadîth which at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate

(1) Al-Bukhari (6) and Muslim (2308).

(2) Al-Musnad (1/288, 363).

(3) At-Tirmidhi (2799).

(4) At-Tirmidhi (2495).

states: **"An announcer calls out in Ramadân: 'O you who desires good, come forward. O you who desires mischief, get away.' There are people whom Allâh ﷻ sets free from the Hell-fire, and this takes place every night."**(1)

Bearing in mind that Allâh ﷻ endowed the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ with the natural capacity for the most perfect and noble characteristics - as in a Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ wherein he said: **"I have been commissioned to perfect noble characteristics"** and Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* mentioned it in the *Muwattâ* with the words **"convey"** – the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the most generous of all people.

Ibn 'Adîyy narrates through a weak chain from Anas ﷺ: **"Should I tell you who the most generous of all the generous is? Allâh ﷻ is the most generous of all the generous. I am the most generous among mankind. The most generous after me is a person who conveyed knowledge and his knowledge spread. Such a person will be raised on the day of Resurrection as a nation himself. Then is the person who offers his life in the cause of Allâh ﷻ."**(2)

This shows that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the most generous of all mankind, just as he is the most superior, most learned, bravest, and most perfect in all praiseworthy qualities.

His generosity encompassed all categories of generosity: spending knowledge and wealth, spending his self for the sake of Allâh ﷻ in conveying His religion and guiding His servants, conveying benefit to them in every way possible be it by way of feeding the hungry, admonishing the ignorant, fulfilling their needs, and bearing their concerns.

He possessed these qualities ever since he was born. It is for this reason that Khadîjah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said to him at the time when he was first commissioned as a Prophet: **"By Allâh, He will never disgrace you. You maintain ties of kinship, you are hospitable to the guest, you bear those who are tired and fatigued, you provide to the one who has nothing, and you help in all worthy causes."**(3)

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(1) At-Tirmidhi (682).

(2) Ibn 'Udday in "Al Kamel" (1/358).

(3) Al-Bukhari (3).

These qualities then increased in him after he was commissioned as a Prophet and they multiplied several times. Anas ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the kindest of people, the bravest of people and the most generous of people."**(1) Anas ﷺ said: **"No matter what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked for the sake of Islam, he certainly gave it. A man came to him and he gave him an entire herd of sheep between two mountains. The man returned to his people and said: 'O my people! Embrace Islam because Muhammad gives so much that a person will not have to fear poverty."** Another narration states: **"A person asked** the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ for a herd of sheep between two mountains so he gave it to him. He went to his people and said: **"O my people! Embrace Islam because Muhammad gives to the extent that no one will fear poverty."**(2)

Anas ﷺ said: **"Many a time a person will embrace Islam with the sole purpose of obtaining worldly goods. But by the evening he would reach a stage where Islam is the most beloved to him than the world and all that it has."** Safwân ibn Umayyah ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave me certain things while in my heart I considered him to be the most detestable person. He continued giving me until he was the most beloved of all to me."** Ibn Shihâb said: **"He gave him 100 camels on the day of Hunayn. Then another hundred and then another hundred."**(3) The *Maghâzî* of al-Wâqidî states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave Safwân ibn Umayyah a valley filled with camels and cattle on that day [of Hunayn]. So Safwân said: 'I testify that none but a Prophet can be as open **hearted as this.'"** Jubayr ibn Mut'im said: **"The Bedouins joined the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ during his return from Hunayn and continued asking him to distribute among them. So he said: 'If I had as many camels as these thorny shrubs, I would have distributed them among you. You will find that I am neither a miser, a liar nor a coward."**(4)

Jâbir ﷺ narrates: **"Whenever the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked for anything, he never said: 'No.'"** He said to Jâbir ﷺ:

(1) Al-Bukhari (2908) and Muslim (2307).

(2) Muslim (2312).

(3) Muslim (2313).

(4) Checked by Al-Bukhari (2821).

"When the wealth from Bahrain comes to us, I will give you like this, like this, and like this." He pointed with both his hands.(1)

Al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh* narrates from Sahl ibn Sa'd ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ received a shawl as a gift. He was wearing it for he needed to wear it. A person asked him for it and he gave it to him. The people reprimanded this person saying: **"You know that he needed it and that he never refuses anyone who asks him [why did you still ask him]?"** He replied: **"I asked for it so that it will be used as my shroud (*kafan*)."** It was eventually used as his shroud.(2)

His generosity was entirely for the sake of Allâh ﷻ and for seeking His pleasure. He used to spend wealth for a poor person, a needy person, spend it in the cause of Allâh ﷻ, or to incline someone whose Islam would be a benefit to Islam.

He used to give preference to others over his own self, his family and his children. He used to give so much, that kings like Kusroes and Caesar could not give as much. While he himself lived a life of poor people. At times, no fire would be lit in his house for one to two months. At times he would tie a rock to his stomach because of hunger.

Some slaves had come to him on one occasion. Fâṭimah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* came and complained to him about how tired she was getting with all the domestic chores and asked him for a servant who would fulfil her domestic chores for her. He ordered her to seek help through *tasbîḥ*, *takbîr*, and *taḥmîd* (glorifying Allâh ﷻ, extolling His greatness, and praising Him) when she goes to sleep. He said: **"I cannot give you which the stomachs of the people of aṣ-Ṣuffah are turning out of hunger."**(3)

His generosity used to multiply in Ramaḍân over other months, just as the generosity of his Lord multiplied in this month. Allâh ﷻ created him naturally inclined towards noble characteristics which he possessed even before becoming a Prophet. Ibn Is-ḥâq narrates from Wahb ibn Kaysân from 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr who said: **"The** Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to spend one month of every year in the

(1) Al-Bukhari (6034) and Muslim (2311).

(2) Al-Bukhari (1277).

(3) Checked by Ahmad (1/79).

cave of Hirâ' and feed the poor people who came to him. He continued doing this until when it was the month in which Allâh ﷻ willed to honour him in the year in which He commissioned him as a Prophet. That month was the month of Ramadân. He went out to Hirâ' as was his habit and remained there till when it was the night when Allâh ﷻ honoured him with His message and showed His mercy to the creation through it. Jibra'îl ﷺ came to him from Allâh ﷻ. After receiving messenger-ship, his generosity in Ramadân was several times more than what it was previously. He and Jibra'îl ﷺ, who was the most superior and most honourable of all angels, used to meet and study the Qur'ân which he brought to him – the Book which is the most superior and most honourable of all books, and which encourages towards kindness and noble characteristics.

The character of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was the Qur'ân in the sense that he approved of all which the Qur'ân approved of, became angry with all that the Qur'ân disliked, hastened to all which it encouraged, and abstained from all which it reprimanded. His generosity was multiplied in this month because of his close interaction with Jibra'îl ﷺ, and his excessive study of this Noble Book which encourages towards noble characteristics and generosity.

There is no doubt whatsoever that interacting and intermingling with another person influences one to be affected by his characteristics and qualities. A poet praised a generous king so the latter gave him an award which would last him an entire year. When he left the king and went outside, he distributed that entire prize among the people and said:

لمست بكفي كفه أبتغي الغنى ولم أدر أن الجود من كفه يعدي

"I touched my palm to his palm out of desire for wealth. But I did not know that the generosity from his palm will be transferred to me."

When the king heard of this, he gave him even more. A poet said in praise of a generous person, but this praise can be applied to none other than the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ:

تعود بسط الكف حتى لو أنه ثناها لقبض لم تجبه أناملـه
تراه إذا جئته متهللا كأنك تعطيه الذي أنت سائله
هو البحر من أي النواحي أتيته فلجته المعروف والجود ساحله

ولـو لـم يكـن فـي كفـه غيـر روحـه لجـــاد بهـــا فليـــتق الله ســـائله

"His open hand always returns open [i.e. it constantly gives] so much so that if he wants to close his hand [and stop giving], his fingers do not respond to him [and he cannot close his hand]. When you go to him [to ask him for anything], you see him beaming as though you are giving him what you went to ask him for. He is an ocean no matter from which side you go to him. Doing good is the depth of his ocean, and generosity is his shore. If he had nothing except his soul in his hand, he would have given that as well. The one who asks him should therefore fear Allâh."

Ash-Shiblî *raḥimahullâh* heard someone saying: **"O Allâh! O the most generous!"** So he sighed and screamed out saying: **"How is it possible for me to describe Allâh as being generous when the rest of the creation is saying something similar?"** He remembered these lines and began crying. He then said: **"Indeed! O You who are the most generous! You are the One who created these limbs and expanded this determination. You are therefore the generous, the absolutely generous. The creation gives within limits, but Your giving knows no limits and is beyond description. O the most generous who is beyond every other generous person, and through whom every generous person became generous."**

There are several benefits in the multiplication of the Messenger's ﷺ generosity specifically in Ramaḍân. Some of them are:

The benefits of the Messenger's ﷺ generosity in Ramaḍân

1. The sanctity of the time and the multiplication of rewards for doing good deeds in it. At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* narrates from Anas ﷺ: **"The most superior charity is the charity in Ramaḍân."**

2. Aiding those who are fasting, engaging in night worship, remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, etc. in fulfilling their different acts of worship. The person who helps them shall receive the same reward as them just as the person who gives provision to a *mujâhid* receives the same reward as the *mujâhid*, and the person who sees to the well-being of the *mujâhid's* family receives the same reward as the *mujâhid*.

Zayd ibn Khâlid narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

"The person who provides food to a fasting person shall receive the same reward as him without the reward of the fasting person being decreased in any way."(1) Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh*, at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh*. At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* also narrated it from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* with the following addition: **"Whatever good deeds the fasting person does, the person who fed him shall receive a reward thereof as long as the nourishment of that food is in him."**(2)

Ibn Khuzaymah *rahimahullâh* narrates a Hadîth in his *Sahîh* from Salmân ﷺ on the merits of Ramadân. He states therein: **"It is the month of beneficence and a month in which the sustenance of a believer is increased. Whoever feeds a fasting person shall be rewarded with forgiveness of his sins, salvation from the Hell-fire, and a reward equal to the fasting person without his reward being decreased."** The Companions ﷺ said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Not all of us have sufficient food to feed a fasting person."** He said: **"Allâh ﷻ shall give this reward to a person who provides some milk, a date, or a sip of water to the fasting person. As for the person who feeds a fasting person till he is satiated, Allâh ﷻ shall provide him with a drink from my fountain after which he will never feel thirsty, until he enters Paradise."**(3)

3. It is in Ramadân that Allâh ﷻ showers His servants with mercy, forgiveness and salvation from the Hell-fire. This is especially so in the night of Power (laylatul Qadr). Allâh ﷻ showers specific mercy to those of His servants who show mercy to others. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ shows mercy to those of His servants who show mercy to others."**(4)

Allâh ﷻ is generous with His bounties and grace to the person who is generous to the servants of Allâh ﷻ. Reward is reciprocal to the deed.

4. Combining fasting with charity is from among the actions which guarantee Paradise. As stated in the Hadîth of 'Alî ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are apartments in Paradise**

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (807), Ahmad (4/114) and Ibn Majah (1846).

(2) Checked by At-Tabarany (7136).

(3) It was checked before.

(4) Al-Bukhari (1284).

whose outside can be seen from the inside, and whose inside can be seen from the outside." The Companions ﷺ asked: **"For whom are they, O Messenger of Allâh?"** He replied: **"For the person who speaks with rectitude, who feeds people, who fasts regularly, who offers ṣalâh at night while people are sleeping."**(1)

All these above qualities are found in Ramaḍân. The believer fasts therein, engages in night worship, gives charity, and speaks with rectitude because a fasting person is prohibited from engaging in futile and obscene conversations.

Fasting, ṣalâh and charity connect a person to Allâh ﷻ. A person of the past said: **"Ṣalâh conveys a person to half his destination. Fasting conveys him to the door of the king. Charity holds him by his hand and takes him before the king."** Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Who from among you is fasting today?"** Abû Bakr ﷺ said: **"I am."** He asked: **"Who from among you attended a funeral today?"** Abû Bakr ﷺ said: **"I did."** He asked: **"Who from among you fed a poor person today?"** Abû Bakr ﷺ said: **"I did."** He asked: **"Who from among you gave in charity?"** Abû Bakr ﷺ said: **"I did."** He asked: **"Who from among you visited a sick person?"** Abû Bakr ﷺ said: **"I did."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When these deeds are collectively found in a person, he is most certain to enter Paradise."**(2)

5. Combining fasting with charity is most effective in atoning for one's sins, saving oneself from Hell, and remaining distant from it. This is especially so if night worship is included with this. It is established that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fasting is a shield."**(3) Another narration states: **"It is a shield against the Hell-fire like the shield which one of you uses in battle."**(4) Mu'âdh ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Charity extinguishes sins as water extinguishes fire. And so does a person's night worship in the darkness of the night."**(5) In other words, it also extinguishes sins. The narration of Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh*

(1) At-Tirmidhi narrated it (1991).

(2) Checked by Muslim (1028).

(3) It was checked before.

(4) It was checked before.

(5) At-Tirmidhi checked it (2216), Ibn Majah (3972), Al-Baihaqi (4/83) and Al-Hakem (2/413).

clearly states this. An authentic Hadîth states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fear the Hell-fire even if it is for a piece of date."**(1)

Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ used to say: **"Offer two rak'ahs of salâh in the darkness of the night in preparation for the darkness of the grave. Fast on an extremely hot day in preparation for the heat of the day of Resurrection. Give in charity to safeguard yourself against the evil of a most difficult day."**

6. It is inevitable for a person to commit shortcomings in his fasting. Fasting can only be an atonement for sins if the person safeguards himself against whatever he was supposed to safeguard himself against. This was mentioned in the Hadîth narrated by Ibn Hibbân in his *Sahîh*. The fast of people in general is not safeguarded by them as it ought to be. It is for this reason that a person is prohibited from saying: **"I kept fast for the entire month of Ramadân"**, or **"I engaged in night worship throughout the month of Ramadân"**. Charity thus makes up for whatever shortcomings were displayed in this month. It is for this reason that *sadaqatul fitr* is obligatory at the end of the month – it purifies the fasting person from the futile and obscene conversations and activities which he engaged in.

Fasting and charity play a role in the atonement of vows, the prohibitions of *ihrâm*, and the atonement of conjugal relations in Ramadân. It is for this reason that in the beginning of Islam, Allâh ﷻ gave the Muslims the choice between fasting and feeding a poor person. This was abrogated later, but the order to feed a poor person applied to the person who was unable to fast because of his old age. The person who delays keeping his missed Ramadân fasts until the next Ramadân is ordered to keep those missed fasts and in addition to this, he has to feed a poor person for each day. This is to provide strength to him according to the majority of the *'ulamâ'*, and as ruled by the Companions ﷺ. Similar is the case with a person who did not fast for some other reason, e.g. a woman who is pregnant or breastfeeding – according to a group of *'ulamâ'*.

7. The fasting person abstains from his food and drink for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. If he helps fasting people to gain strength by providing them with food and drink, he will be like a person who abandons a desire for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, gives someone else

(1) Al-Bukhari (1417).

preference to it over himself, or helps someone else in providing it to him. It is for this reason that he is ordered to provide food to fasting people when he is opening his fast. Food is desirable to him at that time. But he gives it to someone else. In so doing, he will be providing food to another while having desire for it himself. Furthermore, it will be a form of gratitude to Allâh ﷻ for having made food and drink lawful to him [at the time of opening his fast], and for having given it to him after it was prohibited to him. This is a bounty whose value is recognized when one is prohibited from it.

A person of the past was asked: **"Why is fasting promulgated?"** He replied: **"So that the wealthy may get a taste of hunger and not forget the hungry."** This is one of the wisdoms and benefits of fasting. We quoted the Ḥadîth of Salmân ﷺ previously in which he stated: **"It is a month of beneficence."** If a person cannot reach the stage of giving preference to others over himself, he should not fall behind in helping those who are in need. Many people of the past used to share their food at the time of opening the fast, or give it to others and remain hungry. When Ibn 'Umar ﷺ used to fast, he would most certainly open his fast with poor people. When his family members stopped him from this, he would not have supper that night. When a beggar came to him while he was eating, he would take his share of his food and go and give it to the beggar. When he returned, his family would have already eaten whatever was in the plate. He would fast the next day without having eaten anything.

One of the pious predecessors desired some food but he was fasting. The very food which he had desired was placed before him at the time of opening his fast. He then heard a beggar saying: **"Who will loan me in the name of the Being who gives to the full, who gives in totality, and who is all-independent?"** He said: **"His servant who is devoid of good deeds."** He then stood up, took the plate of food, gave it to the beggar and spent the night hungry.

A beggar came to Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* so he gave him two flat round breads which he had prepared to open his fast with. He spent the night hungry and kept fast the next day. It was the practice of al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* to feed his companions on a journey while he himself was keeping optional fast. He would sit and fan them [because of the heat] while they were eating. Ibn al-Mubârak *raḥimahullâh* used to feed his brothers on a journey with different types of sweetmeats while he himself was fasting. The peace

of Allâh ﷻ be on those souls. The mercy of Allâh ﷻ be on those personalities. Nothing but stories and incidents of their lives remain. What a big difference between the person who refuses to give his compulsory dues and those who give preference to others over their own selves!

لا تعرضـــن لذكـــرنا فـــي ذكـــرهم لـيس الـصحيح إذا مـشى كالمقعـد

"When you think of them [people of the past], do not think of us [because we cannot compare with them]. A sitting person cannot compare with a healthy walking person."

There are other benefits in this as well. Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* said: **"I advise a person to be more generous in Ramadân in emulation of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Also because people need this for their own good, and because many of them are unable to earn a livelihood because they are occupied in fasting and salâh."** Al-Qâdî Abû Ya'lâ and others also said a similar thing.

The Hadîth also demonstrates the desirability of studying the Qur'ân in Ramadân, assembling for this purpose, and reciting it before someone who knows it better. It also demonstrates the desirability of increasing the recitation of the Qur'ân in Ramadân.

Fâtimah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that her father ﷺ informed her that Jibra'îl ﷺ used to present the Qur'ân once every year to him and that he presented it two times in the year in which he passed away. Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ states: **"The mutual study between him and Jibra'îl ﷺ used to take place at night."** This demonstrates the desirability of increased recitation of the Qur'ân at night in Ramadân. It is at night that all one's occupations come to an end, there is concentration, and the heart and tongue are able to reflect. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Surely waking up at night has the strongest impression and the word comes out most upright."** *(Sûrah al-Muzzammil, 73, 6)* Furthermore, Ramadân has a special affinity with the Qur'ân. Allâh ﷻ says: **"It is in the month of Ramadân that the Qur'ân was revealed."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 185)*

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"It was revealed all at once from the** Preserved Tablet (al-Lauh al-Mahfûz) to Bayt al-'Izzah on the night of Power (laylatul Qadr). This is attested by the words of Allâh ﷻ: **"Surely We revealed it in the night of Power."** *(Sûrah al-Qadr, 97: 1)*, **"Surely We revealed it in a blessed night."** *(Sûrah ad-Dukhân,*

44: 3)

It was mentioned previously from 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr that the commencement of revelation and descent of the Qur'ân was in Ramadân.

The *Musnad* relates from Wâthilah ibn al-Asqa' ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The Scriptures of Ibrâhîm ﷺ came down on the first night of Ramadân. The Taurâh was revealed on the 6th of Ramadân. The Injîl was revealed on the 13th of Ramadân and the Qur'ân was revealed on the 24th of Ramadân."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to lengthen the recitation of the Qur'ân during the night salâh of Ramadân more than what he did in other months. Hudhayfah ﷺ offered the salâh one night with him in Ramadân. He said: **"He recited Sûrahs al-Baqarah, an-Nisâ' and Âl 'Imrân. When he read any verse which instilled fear, he paused and begged [refuge in Allâh]."** He said: **"He did not complete two rak'ats when Bilâl ﷺ came to him and informed him of the *[fajr] salâh.*"**(1) Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh.* Also narrated by an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* with the words: **"He did not complete four rak'ats..."**

'Umar ﷺ ordered Ubayy ibn Ka'b ﷺ and Tamîm ad-Dârî ﷺ to lead the people in salâh in Ramadân. The imam used to read 200 verses in one rak'ah and the people used to lean against their walking sticks because of the lengthy period of standing. They would continue throughout the night and only depart at the time of dawn. Another narration states that they used to tie ropes between the pillars and hold onto the ropes. It is related that 'Umar ﷺ summoned three readers and ordered the fastest reader among them to lead the people in salâh and recite thirty [verses]. The average reader was ordered to recite twenty five, and the slow reader to recite twenty.

Then during the era of the Tâbi'ûn, they used to recite Sûrah al-Baqarah in eight rak'ahs in the night salâh. If anyone recited this sûrah in twelve rak'ahs, they felt that the reader was lenient with them. Ibn Mansûr said: Is-hâq ibn Râhwayh was asked about how many verses should be recited in the night salâh of Ramadân. He did not concede less than ten verses. Someone told him: **"They are not happy with this number."** He said: **"If they are not happy, do not lead them in salâh if they do not agree to ten verses from Sûrah**

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(1) Checked by Muslim (772), An-Nasa'ei (2/224) and Ahmad (5/400).

al-Baqarah. Then when you reach the shorter verses, recite until they are equal in length to ten verses of Sûrah al-Baqarah." That is, in each rak'ah. Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* also considered it reprehensible to recite less than ten verses.

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* was asked about 'Umar's ﷺ practice with regard to those who read fast and those who read slowly, as mentioned above. He said: **"This imposes difficulty on the people especially during these short nights."** The issue is based on what people can bear. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said to one of his companions who was leading the people in Ramadân: **"These people are weak, read five, six or seven verses."** He said: **"I read as he told me and I completed on the 27th night."** It is related from al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* that the person who 'Umar ﷺ had ordered to lead the people used to recite five or six verses. The statement of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* shows that the condition of the followers must be taken into consideration when deciding how much to read. They must not experience any difficulty. Other jurists including the companions of Imam Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh* are also of the same opinion. Abû Dharr ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ led them in salâh on the 23rd night till one third of the night, and on the 25th night till half the night."** The Companions ﷺ said to him: **"It would have been nice if you continued for the rest of the night."** He said: **"When a person offers salâh with the imam until the end, the remainder of the night is recorded in his favour [as if he offered salâh for the entire night]."** (1)

This shows that when a person spends one third or half the night in the night salâh, the reward for an entire night's worship is recorded in his favour provided he offers this salâh with the imam. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* used to practise on this Hadîth and offer salâh with the imam until the latter departed. He would not depart until the imam departed. A person of the past said: **"The one who spends half the night in worship has in fact spent the entire night in worship."**

The *Sunan* of Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* relates from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who recites ten verses [in the night salâh] will not be included among the heedless. The one who recites 100 verses is**

(1) Checked by Abu Dawoud (1375), At-tirmidhi (806), An-Nasa'ei (3/83) and Ibn Maja (1327).

recorded among the devoted servants. The one who recites 1 000 verses is recorded among those who acquired vast amounts of rewards." A Ḥadîth narrated by Tamîm ﷺ and Anas ﷺ states: **"The one who recites 100 verses in a night has the reward of engaging in night worship recorded in his favour."** There is some weakness in their chain. The Ḥadîth of Tamîm ﷺ is related as a *mauqûf* Ḥadîth and it is more authentic. Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"The one who recites fifty verses in a night will not be recorded among the heedless. The one who recites 100 verses is recorded among the devoted servants. The one who recites 300 verses has a vast amount of rewards recorded in his favour."**

The person who wants to increase and lengthen his recitation, and is offering ṣalâh on his own, may lengthen it as much as he wants, as stated by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Similar is the case with a person who is leading a group of people in ṣalâh and they are happy with his ṣalâh. Some people of the past used to complete the Qur'ân in every three nights during the night worship of Ramaḍân. Others used to do it in every seven nights. Qatâdah *raḥimahullâh* was from among them. Others used to do it in every ten nights. Abû Rajâ' al-'Aṭâridî was from among them.

The people of the past used to recite the Qur'ân in Ramaḍân in ṣalâh and out of it as well. Al-Aswad used to recite the entire Qur'ân in every two nights of Ramaḍân. An-Nakha'î used to do that in the last ten nights, and in every three nights in the rest of Ramaḍân. Qatâdah *raḥimahullâh* always used to complete a recitation every ten days, every three days in Ramaḍân, and every day in the last ten days. Imam ash-Shâfi'î *raḥimahullâh* used to complete sixty recitations in Ramaḍân out of ṣalâh. A similar practice is reported about Imam Abû Ḥanîfah *raḥimahullâh*. Qatâdah *raḥimahullâh* used to teach the Qur'ân in Ramaḍân. When Ramaḍân commenced, az-Zuhrî *raḥimahullâh* used to say: **"It is a month which is reserved for the recitation of the Qur'ân and feeding people."**

Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam said: **"When Ramaḍân commenced, Imam Mâlik *raḥimahullâh* would remain aloof from reading Ḥadîth and sitting in the company of the scholars. He would devote himself to reading directly from the Qur'ân."** 'Abd ar-Razzâq said: **"When Ramaḍân entered, Sufyân ath-Thaurî used to leave aside all [optional] acts of worship and devote himself to the recitation of the Qur'ân."** 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* used to read directly from the Qur'ân during the first part of the day, and she would sleep when

the sun rose. Sufyân said: **"When Ramadân commenced, Zayd al-Yâmî would bring copies of the Qur'ân together and call his friends to recite.**

The prohibition of reciting the Qur'ân in less than three days applies to doing this perpetually. As for doing this during meritorious times, e.g. the month of Ramadân, and especially in the nights when the night of Power is sought; or in sanctified places, such as Makkah for the outsiders who entered it, then in such cases it is desirable to recite the Qur'ân in abundance. This is done to make the best of the time and place. This is the opinion of Imam Ahmad, Is-hâq and other imams. The practice of others indicates this as well, as mentioned previously.

The believer has to strive on two things in Ramadân: (1) fasting by day, (2) engaging in night worship. The person who combines these two, fulfils their rights, and exercises patience over them shall receive his reward without any accounting. Ka'b ﷺ said: **"A caller announces on the day of Resurrection: 'Every harvester shall receive his harvest and some more, except for the people of the Qur'ân and fasting, they shall receive their reward without any accounting.'"**

They will also intercede on his behalf before Allâh ﷻ. The *Musnad* narrates from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fasting and the Qur'ân shall intercede on behalf of a person on the day of Resurrection. Fasting will say: 'O Lord! I prevented him from food and carnal desires during the day.' The Qur'ân will say: 'I prevented him from sleep at night, so accept my intercession on his behalf.' Both their intercessions will be accepted."**

Fasting will intercede on behalf of the person who abstained from food and all unlawful desires, irrespective of whether their prohibition is specific to Ramadân, e.g. the desires of food, drink, conjugal relations and all preludes to these; or whether their prohibition is not specific to Ramadân, e.g. the desire to engage in unlawful futile conversations, looking at the unlawful, listening to the unlawful and earning unlawful income. If fasting is able to keep him away from all these prohibitions, it will intercede on his behalf before Allâh ﷻ on the day of Resurrection. It will say: **"O Lord! I kept him away from his desires, so accept my intercession in his favour."** This is the reward for the person who safeguarded his fast and was kept away from his desires.

As for the person who wasted away his fast and it did not keep him away from all the prohibitions of Allâh ﷻ, he is more worthy of being struck and beaten. Fasting shall say to him: **"May Allâh destroy you as you destroyed me."** A similar statement is related with regard to salâh.

A person of the past said: **"When a believer is on the verge of dying, the angel of death is ordered: 'Smell his head.' He says: 'I find the Qur'ân in his head.' He is ordered: 'Smell his heart.' He says: 'I find fasting in his heart.' He is ordered: 'Smell his feet.' He says: 'I smell engaging in night worship in his feet.' It is said: 'He protected his self, Allâh ﷻ will now protect him.'"**

Similarly, the Qur'ân will intercede on behalf of the person whom it kept away from sleeping at night. The person who recites the Qur'ân and upholds it has in fact fulfilled its dues and it will intercede in his favour.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spoke about a person saying: **"He does not make the Qur'ân a pillow."**(1) In other words, he does not sleep over it whereby it would be a pillow for him.

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates from Buraydah: **"The Qur'ân will meet the person who was attached to it on the day of Resurrection when his grave splits and removes him from it. It will go to him in the form of an emaciated and haggard man and ask him: 'Do you know me?' I am the one who caused you to become thirsty in the burning heat, and I caused you to remain awake at night. Every trader is concerned about his trade.' An angel will stand to his right, eternity will stand to his left, and a crown of honour will be placed on his head. It will then be said to him: 'Read and climb to the levels and rooms of Paradise.' He will continue climbing as long as he continues reciting. Irrespective of whether he recites quickly or with deliberation."**(2)

The following is mentioned in the lengthy Hadîth of 'Ubâdah ibn as-Sâmit ﷺ: **"The Qur'ân will go to the person who was attached to it in his grave and say to him: 'I was the one who used to keep you awake at night, make you thirsty during the day, keep**

(1) Checked by Ahmad (3/449).

(2) Al-Musnad (5/348).

you away from your desires, and I was your ears and eyes [i.e. I prevented you from listening and looking to evil]. You will now find me to be a genuine friend.' The Qur'ân will ascend and request a bed and duvet for the person. A bed from Paradise will be provided for him, and he will also be provided with a candle and jasmine of Paradise. He will place the Qur'ân in the direction of the qiblah of the grave and the grave will then be expanded for him as wide as Allâh ﷻ wills."

Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"A reader of the Qur'ân must be recognized by his [recital at] night when people are asleep, by his [fasting] during the day when people are busy eating, by his crying when people are laughing, by his abstention when people are engrossed, by his silence when people are occupied in conversations, by his humility when people vex their pride, and by his worry when people are rejoicing."**(1)

Muhammad ibn Ka'b said: **"We used to recognize a reader of the Qur'ân by the paleness of his skin."** He was referring to his remaining awake at night and lengthy *tahajjud salâh*. Wahb ibn al-Ward said: **"A man was asked: 'Do you not sleep?' He replied: 'The astonishing facts of the Qur'ân have caused my sleep to fly away.'"** A person remained in the company of another for two months and never saw him sleeping. He asked him: **"Why is it that I never see you sleeping?"** He replied: **"The astonishing facts of the Qur'ân caused my sleep to fly away. No sooner I depart from one astonishing fact, I fall into another."**

Ahmad ibn Abî al-Hawârî said: **"I recite the Qur'ân and look into one verse at a time, and my mind is astounded by it. I am surprised at those who memorized the Qur'ân: how can they sleep, and how is it possible for them to be occupied with any worldly activities while they recite the speech of Allâh? If only they understood what they were reading and recognized the rights of the Qur'ân, took enjoyment from it, and experienced the sweetness of private conversation [with Allâh ﷻ] through it, all their sleep would have departed out of joy with what they have been blessed with."**

Dhû an-Nûn al-Misrî *rahimahullâh* said:

مـــنع القـــرآن بـــوعده ووعـــيده مقـــل العـــيون بلـــيلها لا تهجـــع

(1) Abu Na'eem checked it in Al-Hilya (1/130).

فهمـوا عـن الملـك العظـيم كلامـه فهمًـا تـذل لـه الـرقاب وتخـضع

"The promises and warnings of the Qur'ân prevented the eyes from sleeping peacefully at night. They understood the speech of the Grand King in such a manner that they submitted in humility to it."

As for the person who possesses the Qur'ân but remains aloof from it at night by sleeping away and does not practise on it by day, he is actually causing the Qur'ân to become a disputant against him, and it will ask him for its rights which he trampled upon. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates from Samurah ibn Jundub ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw a dream in which a person was thrown down on his neck. There was another man standing with an axe or rock in his hand. He struck the person's head with it and it rolled like a rock. When he went to take it, his head returned as it was. The man would then repeat what he did to him. The Messenger ﷺ asked about the identity of this person. He was told: **"He is a person whom Allâh ﷻ blessed with knowledge of the Qur'ân, but he remained aloof from it by sleeping away at night and did not practise on it by day. He will be meted out this punishment till the day of Resurrection."**(1) Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* also narrated it but with a different wording.

'Amr ibn Shu'ayb narrates from his father who narrates from his grandfather that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The Qur'ân will be given the appearance of a man on the day of Resurrection. A person who bore the Qur'ân but acted against its injunctions will be brought forward. The Qur'ân will come forward as a disputant and say: 'O Lord! You enabled him to bear me, but he was a terrible carrier. He transgressed my limits, trampled my obligations, committed the sins which are mentioned in me, and abandoned obedience to me.' The Qur'ân will continue establishing proofs against him until it will be said: 'This is enough about him.' He will be taken by his hand and he will not be let loose until he is cast into the Hell-fire on his face. A righteous person who bore the Qur'ân and upheld its injunctions will be brought forward. The Qur'ân will appear as an advocate in his favour. It will say: 'O Lord! You enabled him to bear me and he was an excellent carrier. He safeguarded my limits, practised**

(1) Al-Musnad (5/4) and Al-Bukhari (1386).

on my obligations, abstained from my prohibitions, and obeyed me.' The Qur'ân will continue establishing proofs in his favour until it will be said: 'This is enough for him.' He will be taken by his hand and will not be left until he is made to wear a suit of silk brocade, a crown of royalty will be placed on his head, and made to drink a glass of [pure] wine."(1)

O you who wasted your life in disobedience! O you who displayed shortcomings in this month! In fact, throughout your life. O you whose possession is procrastination and shortcomings! What terrible possessions these are. O you who caused the Qur'ân and Ramadân to become disputants against you! How can you hope for intercession from those whom you made your disputants?!

ويـــل لمـــن شـــفعاؤه خـــصماؤه والـــصور فـــي يـــوم القـــيامة يـــنفخ

"Destruction to the person whose intercessors turn around him and become disputants against him when the trumpet is blown on the day of Resurrection."

Many a fasting person gets nothing from his fast except hunger and thirst. Many a person engaged in night worship gains nothing but sleeplessness from it. Any night worship which does not prohibit a person from immorality and evil only serves to take him further away [from Allâh ﷻ]. Every fast in which the person does not abstain from falsehood and practising on it only serves to make him more loathsome and rejected.

O people! Where are the traces of fasting? Where is the lustre of night worship?

إن كـــنت تـــنوح يـــا حمـــام الـــبان للبـــين فـــأين شـــاهد الأحـــزان

أجفانـــــك للدمـــــوع أم أجفانـــــي لا يقـــــبل مُـــــدع بـــــلا بـــــرهان

"O you distant pigeon! If you are wailing over the great distance [between me and you], where is the proof for your grief? Whether they are my tears or yours, no claim can be accepted without any proof."

O servants of Allâh! **"Ramadan is the month in which the Qur'ân was revealed."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 185)* The remainder of the month is an enjoyment for the ardent worshippers. The Book of

(1) Abu Na'eem checked in Al-Hilya (2/220) and Al-Hindi in "Al-Kanz" (2444) and Al-Zubaidy in Al-Ithaf (322).

Allâh ﷻ is recited and heard in your midst. It is the very Qur'ân which, if it were revealed on a mountain, you would see it humbled and split asunder. Despite this, there is no heart which is humbled, there is no eye which is crying, there is no fast in which the unlawful is abstained from and which would therefore be beneficial, and there is no night worship which is upright whereby the person could hope for intercession. The hearts are devoid of piety and are thus deserted and barren. The darkness of sins have piled onto them, and so they can neither see nor hear. How often the verses of the Qur'ân are recited before us, but our hearts remain like rocks, or even harder. How many months of Ramaḍân come upon us one after the other, but our condition therein is like that of the wretched. Neither do our youth abstain from sensual desires, nor do the old abstain from evil whereby they could join the ranks of the chosen servants of Allâh. Where are we from those who responded to the call of the caller when he called to them? Where are we from those who, when the verses were recited to them, their hearts trembled? When they kept fast, their tongues, ears and eyes also kept fast? Are they not role models for us? The distance between us and the chosen ones is further than the distance between Ṣafâ and Marwah. The more good we speak, the more evil we do. There is no power and might except with Allâh, the most high, the greatest. Allâh ﷻ is sufficient for us.

يـا نفـس فـاز الـصالحون بالتقـى ... وأبـصروا الحـق وقلبـي قـد عمـي

يـا حـسنهم والليـل قـد جـنهم ... ونـورهم يفـوق نـور الأنجـم

تـرنموا بالذكـر فـي لـيلهم ... فعيـشهم قـد طـاب بالتـرنم

قلـوبهم للذكـر قـد تفـرغت ... دمـوعهم كلؤلـؤ منـتظم

أسـحارهم بهـم لهـم قـد أشـرقت ... وخلـع الغفـران خيـر القـسم

ويحـك يـا نفـس ألا تـيقظ ... يـنفع قـبل أن تـزل قدمـي

مـضى الـزمان فـي تـوان وهـوى ... فاسـتدركي مـا قـد بقـي واغتنمـي

"O my soul! The righteous have triumphed through piety. They have seen the truth while my heart is blind. How beautiful they look when the night covers them, and their lustre surpasses the light of the stars. They chant the remembrance [of Allâh] at night, and so their lives have become wholesome through this chanting. Their hearts are emptied of everything and devoted fully to His remembrance. Their tears look like stringed pearls. The morning shines brightly through them, and

the garments of forgiveness is the best share one can receive. O my soul! Away with you! Are you not going to wake up and take benefit before the feet slip [on the day of Resurrection]? Time has passed and was spent in listlessness and desires. So make up [for this loss] with the remaining time which you have, and make the most of it."

THE MIDDLE TEN DAYS AND THE SECOND HALF OF RAMADÂN

Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrî ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to go into seclusion (*i'tikâf*) in the middle ten days of Ramadân. He went into seclusion one year till when it was the 21st – the morning on which he used to come out of seclusion – and he said: 'Whoever was in seclusion with me must remain in seclusion for the last ten days as well. I was shown this night [of Power] and then made to forget it. I saw myself prostrating in mud on the morning following that night. So seek that night in the last ten nights, and seek it in every odd night.' It rained on that night. The musjid was on an arbour and so water dripped into it. I looked at the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and saw traces of mud on his forehead on the morning of the 21st night."**(1)

This Hadîth shows that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to go into seclusion in the middle ten days of Ramadân in search of the night of Power. The context of the above Hadîth suggests that this was his practice. Another narration of this Hadîth states that he went into seclusion in the first ten days and then in the middle ten days. He then said: **"I was shown it [the night of Power] and I was told : 'It is in the last ten nights. So whoever among you would like to remain in seclusion with me may do so. The people remained in seclusion with him."**(2)

This shows that he did this before it was made clear to him that the night of Power is in the last ten nights. When it was made known to him that it is in the last ten nights, he began going into seclusion in the last ten nights until his demise. As narrated by 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*, Abû Hurayrah ﷺ and others.

It is related that 'Umar ﷺ assembled a group of Companions ﷺ

(1) Al-Bukhari (813) and Muslim (1167).

(2) It was checked before.

and asked them about the night of Power. Some of them said: **"We considered it to be in the middle ten nights. We then heard that it is in the last ten nights."** This entire Hadîth will be quoted later – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

Ibn Abî 'Âsim narrates in *Kitâb as-Siyâm* from Khâlid ibn Mahdûj from Anas ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Seek it on the first night, the ninth night or the fourteenth night."** Khâlid is considered to be a weak narrator. This Hadîth shows that the night of Power is sought in two nights from the first ten nights, and in one night from the middle ten nights. The Hadîth of Wâthilah ibn al-Asqa' was quoted previously: **"The Injîl was revealed on the 13th of Ramadân."** There is also an order to seek the night of Power in the second half of Ramadân, and in the odd nights of the remaining middle ten nights of this half. This refers to the seventeenth and nineteenth nights.

At-Tabarânî narrates from 'Abdullâh ibn Anîs ﷺ that he asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about the night of Power so he said: **"I saw it and forgot it. Look for it in the second half."** He went back to him and asked him, so he said: **"Look for it from the 23rd night and continue for the rest of the month."**(1)

It is for this reason – and Allâh ﷻ knows best – that Ubayy ibn Ka'b used to make the *qunût* in the *witr salâh* in the nights of the second half of Ramadân. This is because it is hoped to experience the night of Power in these nights.

Moreover, when any day or night is considered to be meritorious, the latter part of that day or night is more meritorious than the early part. For example, the day of 'Arafah and Friday. Similar is the case with days and nights in general – their latter part is more meritorious to their early part. It is for this reason that the middle salâh [mentioned in the Qur'ân] refers to the *'asr salâh*, as demonstrated by authentic Ahâdîth and the statements of the pious predecessors. Similar is the case with the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah and Muharram, their latter days are more superior to the early days.

The *Sunan* of Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* narrates a *marfû'* Hadîth from Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ: **"Seek it on the 17th, 21st and 23rd nights of**

(1) Checked by At-Tabarany in "Al-Kabir" (12/110).

Ramadân."(1) He then remained silent. Another narration states: **"on the 19th night."** It is said that it is more correct to consider this Hadîth to be *mauqûf* [and not *marfû'*] because it is established that he said: **"Seek the night of Power on the 17th – the morning when the battle of Badr took place – or on the 21st night."** Another narration states: **"on the 17th night, if it is not on that night, then on the 19th."**

At-Tabarânî narrates from Abu al-Mihzam who is a weak narrator from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ who said: **"Seek the night of Power on the 17th, 19th, 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th or 29th."** This Hadîth shows that it must be sought on the odd nights of the second half of the month. A Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* states that when it was the 19th of Ramadân, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ would tighten his loincloth and stay away from his bed until he completed the month of fasting.

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* said: **"'Umar ibn Miskîn is the sole** narrator of this Hadîth and there is no verification for it. It is related from a group of Companions ﷺ that it should be sought on the 17th. They said: **"The following morning was the day when the battle of Badr commenced."** This is also related from 'Alî ﷺ, Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ, Zayd ibn Arqam ﷺ, Zayd ibn Thâbit ﷺ and 'Amr ibn Hurayth ﷺ. Some of these Companions ﷺ say that it is the 19th. This is attributed to 'Alî ﷺ, Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ and Zayd ibn Arqam ﷺ.

The popular opinion of biographers and historians is that the battle of Badr took place on the 17th and that it was a Friday. This is narrated from 'Alî ﷺ, Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ and others. There is another weak narration from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that it was on the 2nd of Ramadân. It was the practice of Zayd ibn Thâbit ﷺ to engage in most worship on the 17th night as opposed to the other nights of Ramadân. He used to say: **"It was on the morning of the 17th that Allâh ﷻ separated truth from falsehood. It was on that morning that He disgraced the leaders of unbelief."**

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* quotes the following from the people of Madînah: **"The night of Power is sought on the 17th."** A narration of Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* makes mention of a person who says to his wife: **"You are divorced on the night of Power."** Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said in this regard: **"He must separate**

(1) Checked by Ibn Abi Shaiba (2/489).

himself from her when the last ten nights commence, and before the last ten nights. The people of Madînah consider it to be the 17th. However, it is established from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that it is in the last ten nights." It is related with regard to 'Âmir ibn 'Abdillâh ibn az-Zubayr that he used to engage in extra worship on the 17th.

It is related that the people of Makkah would not sleep that night and they would perform 'umrah. It is related that Imam Abû Yûsuf *raḥimahullâh* and Imam Muḥammad *raḥimahullâh* – the two students of Imam Abû Ḥanîfah *raḥimahullâh* – were of the opinion that the night of Power is in the second half of Ramaḍân without specifying any particular night, although it is on a specific night according to Allâh ﷻ.

'Abd ar-Raḥmân ibn al-Ḥârith ibn Hishâm said: **"The night of Power is on the 17th, on a Friday night."** Narrated by Ibn Abî Shaybah. The obvious meaning of this is that the night of Power will be on the 17th if this date falls on a Friday – in order to coincide with the battle of Badr.

Abû ash-Shaykh al-Aṣbahânî narrates through a good chain from al-Ḥasan who said: **"A servant of 'Uthmân ibn Abî al-'Âṣ said to him: 'O master! The ocean water gets sweet on a particular night in this month.' The master said: 'When you see that, you must inform me.' When he saw this on a particular night, he went and informed his master. The people went to check and found the water sweet, and it was the 17th night."**

Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to go to Qubâ' on the morning of the 17th of Ramaḍân no matter which day of the week it was. Narrated by Abû Mûsâ al-Madînî.

It is said that the Mi'râj (Ascension) has also taken place on this night. Ibn Sa'd relates from al-Wâqidî from his seniors that the Mi'râj took place to the heavens on the 17th of Ramaḍân before the Emigration (*hijrah*) and that the Isrâ' (Night Journey) took place to Bayt al-Maqdis on the 17th of Rabî' al-Awwal one year before the Emigration. This is according to those who differentiate between the Mi'râj and Isrâ'. The Mi'râj was to the heavens, as mentioned in Sûrah an-Najm, and the Isrâ' was to Bayt al-Maqdis, as mentioned in Sûrah al-Isrâ'.

It is said that the Prophet's ﷺ prophet-hood commenced on the

17th of Ramadân. Abû Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Alî al-Bâqir said: **"Jibra'îl ﷺ came down to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ on Saturday** night and Sunday night. He then appeared before him in the cave of Hirâ' with Allâh's message on a Monday, the 17th of Ramadân. The most authentic incident to be related about this night is that it was on this date that the battle of Badr took place – as mentioned previously that it was on the 17th.

It is said that it took place on the 19th. But the popular narration is that it was the 17th, as mentioned previously. The morning following the 17th night is known as Yaum al-Furqân (the day of distinction), the day when the two armies met. It is named Yaum al-Furqân because it was on this day that Allâh ﷻ distinguished truth from falsehood, manifested the truth and the proponents of the truth over falsehood and the supporters of falsehood, the word and oneness of Allâh ﷻ reigned supreme, and His enemies from the polytheists and people of the Book were disgraced. This took place in the second year of the Emigration. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came to Madînah in Rabî' al-Awwal in the first year of the Emigration. Fasting in Ramadân was not made compulsory in that year. He then kept the fast of 'Âshûrâ'. Fasting in Ramadân became compulsory in the second year. It was the first Ramadân in which he and the Muslims with him kept fast.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ left in pursuit of the Quraysh caravan which was coming from Syria towards Madînah. He left on a Saturday on the 12th of Ramadân. He did not fast on the day when he departed towards this caravan.

Ibn al-Musayyib said that 'Umar ﷺ said: **"We went out for two** battles with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in Ramadân: Badr and the conquest of Makkah, and we did not fast on both occasions. The reason for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ going out was the need of his Companions ﷺ, especially the Emigrants. Allâh ﷻ says: **"[This wealth] is for the indigent among the Emigrants who have been driven from their homelands and their possessions, seeking the bounty of Allâh and His pleasure, and helping Allâh and His Messenger. It is they who are the true ones."** *(Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 8)* This caravan had a lot of goods which belonged to their unbelieving enemies who had driven them out of their homelands and usurped their wealth out of oppression and enmity. Allâh ﷻ says: **"The order is given to those with whom the unbelievers**

fight because they have been wronged. Allâh has the power to help them: those who were unjustly expelled from their homes only because they used to say: 'Our Sustainer is Allâh.'" *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 39-40)*

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ therefore left with the intention of taking this wealth of these unbelievers who were transgressing and oppressing the friends, party and army of Allâh ﷻ. He would then return this wealth to the friends of Allâh ﷻ who were oppressed and driven out from their homes and properties. They would use this wealth to gain strength through it for the worship of Allâh ﷻ, obedience to Him, and waging jihad against His enemies. This is something which Allâh ﷻ permitted to this *ummah* – He permitted booty to them which was not permitted to any nation before them. The Muslims were over 310 in number – the same number of people who had joined Ṭâlût when they crossed the river, and from among whom, there was only one believer.

The *Sunan* of Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh* narrates that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ departed for Badr with 315 soldiers just as when Ṭâlût left to go out in battle. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made the following supplication for them when they departed: 'O Allâh! They are barefooted, so carry them. They are naked, so clothe them. They are hungry, so feed them.' Allâh ﷻ gave them victory in the battle of Badr and when they returned [to Madînah], every single one of them had one or two camels, had clothes to wear, and had eaten to his satisfaction. When the Companions ﷺ departed with very few animals and possessions, they had not departed fully prepared for battle or fighting. They had went in pursuit of the caravan. They had about seventy camels which they took turns to ride. Three people were allotted to one camel. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ also had two people who shared the camel with him. His two companions used to tell him: 'O Messenger of Allâh! You ride and we will walk.' He would say to them: 'You are not stronger than me in walking, nor am I less in need of reward than you.'"**(1) They all had just two horses. Others say that they had three horses, while yet others say that there was just one horse which belonged to al-Miqdâd ﷺ.

(1) Checked by Ahmad (1/411).

The polytheists heard that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ departed in pursuit of the caravan. Abû Sufyân therefore diverted the caravan towards the coast and sent a message to the Makkans informing them of the situation and requesting them to mobilize in order to defend their caravan. They departed boisterously and were joined by their noblemen and leaders who all headed towards Badr. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ consulted the Muslims with regard to fighting. The Emigrants voiced their opinion and he remained silent. He actually wanted to know the opinion of the Helpers (Ansâr) because he felt that their original pledge to help him was only against those who attacked him in their homes [in Madînah, and not outside the city]. Sa'd ibn 'Ubâdah ﷺ stood up and said: **"You really want to know our [Ansâr's] opinion. I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, if you order us to dive into the ocean, we will dive in. If you order us to travel as far as Bark al-Ghimâd, we will do that."** Al-Miqdâd ﷺ said: **"We will not say to you as the Banî Isrâ'îl said to Mûsâ ﷺ: 'Go forth, then, you and your Lord and you two fight. We shall remain sitting here.'** *(Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 24)* **Rather, we will fight to your right and left, from behind you and in front of you."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was most pleased with this answer and resolved to go out into battle.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spent that night – the night of Friday, 17th Ramadân – offering salâh, crying and supplicating to Allâh ﷻ, and seeking His help against His enemies. 'Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ﷺ said: **"I looked around and every one of us was sleeping except for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ who was under a tree, offering salâh and crying till the morning."**(1)

'Alî ﷺ also said: **"A light rain fell on us on that night, so we went under trees and leather shields to shade us from the rain. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spent the night supplicating to his Lord, and saying: 'If You destroy this group [of Muslims], You will not be worshipped.' When the dawn broke, he called out: 'O servants of Allâh, come to salâh.' The people came from under the trees and leather shields. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ led us in salâh and encouraged us for the fight."**(2)

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(1) Al-Musnad (1/125), An-Nasa'ei (1/270) and Ibn Hibban (2257).

(2) Al-Musnad (1/117).

Allâh ﷻ helped His Messenger ﷺ and the believers with His help and His army. As stated by Allâh ﷻ: **"When you implored your Lord for help, whereupon He responded to you [saying]: 'I shall send to your aid a thousand angels coming in succession.' Allâh merely did this as a glad tiding and so that your hearts may be reassured thereby."** *(Sûrah al-Anfâl, 8: 9-10)*

Al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh* narrates: Jibra'îl ﷺ asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"What do you think about those who participated in Badr?"** He replied: **"They are the most superior Muslims"** or he said something similar. Jibra'îl ﷺ said: **"Similar is the case with the angels who participated in Badr."**

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Allâh had already helped you in the battle of Badr while you were weak."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 123)* He says: **"So it was not you who killed them, but it was Allâh who killed them. It was not you who threw the handful of dust when you did throw it, but it was Allâh who threw it."** *(Sûrah al-Anfâl, 8: 17)*

It is said that when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw the enemy, he said: **"O Allâh! These are the Quraysh who have come with their haughtiness. They reject Your Messenger, so fulfil Your promise to me."** Jibra'îl ﷺ came to him and said: **"Take a handful of sand and throw it towards them."** He took a handful of sand from the valley and threw it towards them, saying: **"May their faces be disfigured."** Some of that soil entered the eyes, nostrils and mouth of every polytheist. They were then defeated. Ḥakîm ibn Ḥizâm said: **"On the day of Badr, we heard a voice from the sky which sounded like pebbles falling on a basin. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ flung that handful of soil and we were defeated."** When the news reached the Makkans, they asked the person who came with the news: **"How are the people?"** He said: **"There is nothing left. By Allâh, no sooner we faced them, it was as if we surrendered. They were killing us and imprisoning us as they willed. By Allâh, despite this, I do not fault the people. We faced men on black horses between the heavens and earth, nothing could stand in their way."**

Allâh ﷻ killed the ringleaders of the Quraysh on that day: 'Utbah ibn Rabî'ah, Shaybah, al-Walîd ibn 'Utbah, Abû Jahal and others. Seventy of the Quraysh were imprisoned. The story of the battle of Badr is too long to mention all of it here. It is well known and can be

found in the books of *tafsîr*,[1] the *sihâh*,[2] the *sunan*,[3] the *masânîd*,[4] the *maghâzî*[5] and the history books.

Our purpose here is to draw attention to some of the objectives. The enemy of Allâh, Satan, went to the polytheists in the form of Surâqah ibn Mâlik. His hand was in the hand of al-Hârith ibn Hishâm and he began encouraging them, stirring them up, and filling them with hopes. When he saw the angels, he fled and cast himself into the ocean. Allâh ﷻ speaks about this in the Qur'ân: **"When Satan made their deeds seem fair to them and said: 'None from the people can overcome you today, and I am your protector.' But when the two armies faced each other, he turned back on his heels and said: 'I am not with you. I see that which you do not see. I fear Allâh.' And the punishment of Allâh is severe."** *(Sûrah al-Anfâl, 8: 48)*

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Satan was never seen more despised, more repelled and smaller than on the day of 'Arafah, except for what he saw on the day of Badr."** He was asked: **"What did he see?"** He said: **"He saw Jibra'îl ﷺ restraining the angels."**[6] Satan is the enemy of Allâh. He spends all his efforts to extinguish the light and oneness of Allâh. In order to achieve his objectives, he incites his friends from the unbelievers and hypocrites. When he failed to do this because of Allâh's help to His Messenger ﷺ and the supremacy of His religion over all other religions, he was satisfied with causing friction among the Muslims. When he failed to revert them from their religion, he resorted to causing them to commit **"minor"** sins. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Satan has lost hope in worshippers worshipping him in the Arabian peninsular. However, he has not lost hope in causing friction**

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(1) The commentary and exegesis of the Qur'ân.

(2) Plural of *sahîh*. Here it refers to the Hadîth collections which are classified as *sahîh*, e.g. the *sahîh* of al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*, Muslim *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Khuzaymah *rahimahullâh*, and others.

(3) This refers to the Hadîth collections which are classified as *sunan*, e.g. the *sunan* of an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh*, Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* and others.

(4) This refers to the Hadîth collections which are classified as *musnad*, e.g. the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad ibn Hambal *rahimahullâh*.

(5) This refers to the books which are dedicated to recording the battles.

(6) Al- Mowatta' (1/336) In "Al-hajj", the chapter "Jame' Al-hajj".

among them." Narrated by Muslim *raḥimahullâh* from Jâbir ﷺ.[1] Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh*, at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* narrate from 'Amr ibn al-Aḥwaṣ who said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying during the Farewell Pilgrimage: **"Listen! Satan has lost hope of ever being worshipped in this land of yours. However, he will be obeyed in some actions which you consider to be insignificant. He will be pleased with your committing these actions."**[2]

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ addressed them during the Farewell Pilgrimage saying: **"Satan has lost hope in being worshipped in your land. However, he is satisfied at being obeyed in other matters: he is satisfied with those of your deeds which you consider insignificant. You should therefore be on your guard. O people! I have left something with you which, if you hold on to, you will never go astray: the Book of Allâh ﷻ and the Sunnah of His Prophet ﷺ."**[3] Satan did not consider anything more serious than the commissioning of Muḥammad ﷺ as a Prophet, and the spreading of his message in the east and west. Satan has lost hope in the entire *ummah* of Muḥammad ﷺ going to major polytheism [ascribing partners with Allâh ﷻ].

Sa'îd ibn Jubayr said: **"When Satan saw the Messenger of** Allâh ﷺ offering ṣalâh in Makkah, he began wailing. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ conquered Makkah, he began wailing again. His progeny assembled around him and he said: **"You can lose hope in returning the *ummah* of Muḥammad to polytheism after this day. However, you should test them in their religion by spreading the practice of wailing over the deceased and poetry among them."** Narrated by Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ.

Aṭ-Ṭabarânî *raḥimahullâh* narrates from Mujâhid from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ who said: **"Satan wailed when Sûrah al-Fâtiḥah was revealed, and it was revealed in Madînah."** It is well-known that Mujâhid *raḥimahullâh* said in this regard: **"Satan wailed on four occasions: when he was cursed, when he was cast down from**

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(1) Muslim (2812).

(2) Checked by Ibn Majah (3055), At-Tirmidhi (2159), Al-Baihaqi (5/195) and Ahmad (3/498).

(3) Al-Hakem in Al-Mustadrak (1/93).

Paradise, when Muhammad ﷺ was commissioned as a Prophet, and when Sûrah al-Fâtihah was revealed; and it was revealed in Madînah."(1) Narrated by Wakî' and others.

One of the Tâbi'ûn said: **"When this verse was revealed: 'Those** who, when they commit an open sin or commit an evil to themselves, they remember Allâh and seek forgiveness for their sins.' *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 135)* Satan began crying. He was making reference to his intense grief by its revelation because it contains glad tidings for sinners. Satan is in worry, concern and grief ever since the Messenger ﷺ was commissioned as a Prophet because he saw from him and his *ummah* all that worries and angers him.

Thâbit said: **"When the Messenger ﷺ was commissioned as a Prophet, Satan said to his devils: 'Some major incident has taken place. Go and see what it is.' They went and returned to him saying: 'We do not know.' Satan said: 'I will go and find out, and come with some information.' He went, returned, and said: 'Muhammad ﷺ has been commissioned as a Prophet.' He began sending his devils to the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ. These devils would return to Satan with nothing written on their scrolls. Satan asked them: 'How is it that you are unable to get anything from them?' They replied: 'We have never been in the company of such people. We are able to cause them to commit some sins, but then they stand up to perform salâh and those sins are wiped off.' Satan said: 'Be patient! Maybe Allâh ﷻ will open the riches of the world to them. When that time comes, you will be able to fulfil your objectives from them.'"**

Al-Hasan said: **"Satan said: 'I enticed the followers of Muhammad ﷺ with sins but they broke my back with *istighfâr* (seeking forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ). I then enticed them with sins from which they cannot seek forgiveness, i.e. desires.'"**

Satan constantly experiences misery during the seasons of forgiveness and salvation from the Hell-fire. For example, he is seen to be the smallest, most despised and most detested on the day of 'Arafah when he sees the descent of mercy and Allâh's pardoning of major sins, except for what he saw on the day of Badr.

It is related that when he saw the descent of forgiveness for the

(1) At-Tabarany in Al-Awsat (4788).

ummah of Muhammad ﷺ during the Farewell Pilgrimage on the day of sacrifice at Muzdalifah, he began sprinkling sand on his head, and burst into loud laments. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ began smiling when he saw the anguish of this disgusting creature.

Allâh ﷻ is most affectionate to the *ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ in Ramadân. He enchains Satan and the disobedient jinn so that they do not entice them with sins as they used to do in the other months. It is for this reason that acts of disobedience are lesser in Ramadân. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When Ramadân enters, the doors of the heavens are opened, the doors of Hell are locked, and the devils are enchained."**(1) The narration of Muslim *rahimahullâh* states: **"The doors of mercy are opened."** Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When Ramadân arrives, the doors of Paradise are opened, the doors of the Hell-fire are locked, and the devils are shackled."**(2)

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When it is the first night of Ramadân, the devils and rebellious jinn are shackled. The doors of the Hell-fire are locked, and not a single door is opened. The doors of Paradise are opened, and not a single door is locked. A caller calls out: 'O you who desire good, come forward. O you who desire mischief, stay behind.' Allâh ﷻ sets free some people from the Hell-fire, and this takes place every night."**(3) A narration of an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* states: **"The rebellious devils are shackled in this month."**(4)

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"My followers have been given five things in Ramadân which no nation before them was given: (1) The smell that emanates from the mouth of a fasting person is purer in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the fragrance of musk. (2) The angels seek forgiveness for them till they open their fast. (3) Allâh ﷻ adorns His Paradise for them every day, and says to it: 'Soon My righteous servants will cast their burden aside and come to you.' (4) The rebellious**

(1) Al-Bukhari (1899) and Muslim (1079).

(2) It was checked before.

(3) It was checked before.

(4) An-Nasa'ei in Al-Sunan (4/126).

devils are chained in this month. They are therefore unable to do what they used to do in the other months. (5) They are forgiven in the last night." Someone asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Is this last night the night of power?"** He replied: **"No. However, when a worker completes his task, he is given his wage in full."**(1)

The angels spread throughout earth on the night of Power and the authority of the devils is cancelled. Allâh ﷻ says: **"On that night, the angels and the Spirit come down by the order of their Sustainer with all matters. There is peace on that night till the break of dawn."** *(Sûrah al-Qadr, 97: 4-5)*

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"On that night [of Power], the angels are more than the number of pebbles."**(2) Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said about the night of Power: **"The Satan of the night does not come out until its dawn passes."** 'Ubâdah ibn as-Sâmit ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said about the night of Power: **"No shooting star is permitted to shoot on that night. A sign on this night is that the sun in the morning following it rises without any rays. It appears like a full moon. Satan is not permitted to come out with it on that day."**(3)

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"Satan rises every day with the rising of the sun, but not on the day following the night of Power. The sun rises without any rays on that day."**

With regard to the verse: **"There is peace on that night till the break of dawn"**, Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* says: **"It is safe from any illness occurring on that night, or from Satan doing anything."** He also said: **"The night of Power is a secure night; no illness takes place on that night nor is Satan sent out in that night."** He also said: **"It is secure: Satan can neither do any mischief that night nor can he cause any harm."** Ad-Dahhâk *rahimahullâh* narrates that Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"The rebellious jinn are shackled on that night, the mischievous jinn are enchained, all the doors of the heavens are opened, and Allâh ﷻ accepts the repentance of every repentant person. It is for this reason that He says:**

(1) Checked by Ahmad (2/292).

(2) Al-Musnad (2/519).

(3) Al-musnad (5/324).

'There is peace on that night till the break of dawn.'"

Ubayy ibn Ka'b ﷺ said: **"On that night, Satan cannot afflict anyone with insanity, illness or any type of corruption. Neither can a magician practise his magic."**

It is related through a weak chain from Anas ﷺ who said: **"The stars do not move on that night and the dogs do not bark."**

All these traditions show that the devils are prevented from spreading on earth and they are unable to eavesdrop on matters in the heavens. O man! If you only valued your self, you would not humiliate it with sins. From among all the creations, it is you who have been given a choice, and Paradise has been prepared for you. If you remain righteous, it will be your property. This world is the property of Satan and he has been given a respite in it. How, then, can you agree to turn away from your property and compete with Satan for his property?! How can you agree to being in the Hell-fire with Satan's followers? We repulsed him from Paradise for your sake – when he refused to prostrate to your father. We want you to come close to Us, to be Our special servant, and to be in Our party. But you have become Our enemy and befriended Our enemy: **"Will you then take him and his offspring as friends apart from Me, although they are your enemies? What an evil exchange for the unjust!"** *(Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 50)*

رعى الله من نهوى وإن كان ما رعى حفظنا له العهد القديم فضيعا

وصاحبت قوما كنت أنهاك عنهم وحقك ما أبقيت للصلح موضعا

"May Allâh ﷻ safeguard he whom we love even if he does not safeguard himself. We upheld our old covenant but he did not. You befriended a people whom I had prohibited you from, and you left no place for reconciliation."

Glad tidings to you, O Muslims! The eight doors of Paradise have been opened for you in this month. The cool breezes from it are blowing on the hearts of the believers. All the doors of Hell have been locked for your sake. The feet of Satan and his progeny have been shackled. It is in this month that revenge is exacted from Satan. The rebellious ones from his family are extracted and they have no influence left. They were his little chicks in his nests whom he fed with carnal desires. Today they left those nests breaking down the barriers of his forts with the axes of repentance and *istighfâr* (seeking forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ). They left his prison to the fort of piety and

îmân, and saved themselves from the punishment of the Hell-fire. They broke Satan's back with the creed of *tauhîd* (monotheism) and he is therefore complaining about the pain of his injury. He is grief-stricken during every meritorious season. He calls out for destruction in this month when he sees the descent of mercy and the forgiveness of sins. The party of the Merciful [Allâh] is victorious while the party of Satan has fled in defeat. Satan has no authority left except on the unbelievers. The king of desires has been deposed, and authority has gone into the hands of the king of piety. **"Learn a lesson, then, O you who are endowed with insight!"** *(Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 2)*

يـــا نادمـــاي صـــحا القلـــب صـــحا فاطـــردوا عنـــي الـــصبا والمـــرحا
هـــزم العقـــل جـــنودا للهـــوى فاســـدي لا تعجـــبوا إن صـــلحا
زجـــر الحـــق فـــؤادي فارعـــوى وأفـــاق القلـــب منـــي وصـــحا
بـــادروا الـــتوبة مـــن قـــبل الـــردى فمـــــناديه يناديـــــنا الـــــوحا

"O my remorse! My heart has come to its senses. So repulse all desires and merriment from me. The intellect has defeated the armies of desires. So do not be astonished if my depravity has been rectified. The truth reprimanded my heart so it came to attention. My heart came to its senses and regained consciousness. Hasten with repentance before destruction. The caller is calling us towards inspiration."

O servants of Allâh! Half the month of Ramadân has passed. Who from among you is going to take stock of himself and act justly for the sake of Allâh? Who from among you is going to fulfil the right of this month which he knows? Who from among you is going to make a determined effort to construct multi-storied apartments in Paradise before its doors are shut? Listen! This month has started to diminish. You should therefore increase your good deeds. It is on the verge of departing from you. Every other month may well have another to take its place. As for Ramadân, where are you going to get a replacement for it?

تنـــصف الـــشهر وا لهفـــاه وا نـــدما واخـتص بالفـوز بالجـنات مـن خـدما
وأصـــبح الغافـــل المـــسكين منكـــسرا مثلـي فـيا ويحـه يـا عظـم مـا حـرما
مـن فاتـه الـزرع فـي وقـت الـبذار فمـا تـــراه يحـــصد إلا الهـــم والـــندما
طوبـى لمـن كانـت الـتقوى بـضاعته فـــي شـــهره وبحـــبل الله معتـــصما

"Half the month has passed. How unfortunate! How

remorseful! The one who fulfilled its rights is the one who shall enjoy the gardens [of Paradise]. The poor heedless person like me is left broken. O destruction to me! How great is that which I have been deprived from. You will find that the person who misses the harvest at the time of reaping, reaps nothing but grief and remorse. Glad tidings to the one whose provision was piety and who held on tightly to the rope of Allâh in this month."

THE LAST TEN DAYS OF RAMAḌÂN

'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"When the last ten days [of Ramaḍân] commenced, he tightened his loincloth, engaged in night worship, and woke up his family."**(1) This is the narration of al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh*. The narration of Muslim *raḥimahullâh* states: **"He engaged in night worship, awakened his family, strove hard, and tightened his loin cloth."**

A narration of Muslim *raḥimahullâh* states that 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to strive far more in the last ten days than what he did at other times."**(2) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to reserve the last ten days of Ramaḍân for certain deeds which he did not do during the rest of the month. One of them is engaging in night worship. This most probably refers to spending the entire night in worship.

A Ḥadîth of 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrated through another chain which is weak contains the words: **"He engaged in night worship throughout the night."** The *Musnad* states through another chain that she said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to combine the first twenty nights with worship and sleep. But when it was the last ten nights, he would strive hard and tighten his loincloth."**(3)

Al-Ḥâfiẓ Abû Nu'aym *raḥimahullâh* narrates through a weak chain from Anas ﷺ who said: **"When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ witnessed the month of Ramaḍân, he would [spend the night] in worship and sleep. When it was the 24th night, he did not taste**

(1) Al-Bukhari (2024) and Muslim (1174).

(2) Muslim (1175).

(3) Al-Musnad (6/146).

any sleep."(1)

It is possible that this refers to engaging in worship for the major portion of the night. One of the early scholars from the Banû Hâshim – the narrators thinks that it was Abû Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Alî – explains this as engaging half the night in worship. He said: **"The one who spends half the night in worship is as if he spent the entire night in worship."** A similar statement of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* was quoted previously: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast the entire month of Sha'bân, he used to fast the major portion of Sha'bân."** This is supported by her statement: **"I do not know of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spending the entire night in worship until the morning."**(2)

Some Shâfi'î scholars say with regard to spending the two nights of *'îd* in worship that if a person were to spend the major portion of these nights in worship, he shall acquire the virtue of spending the entire night. It is said that he will acquire this virtue even if he spends an hour in worship. Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* quotes in *al-Umm* from a group of erudite Madînans which supports this view. Some of them quote from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that the reward of spending the entire night in worship is acquired by a person performing the *'ishâ salâh* in congregation and then making a firm resolution of performing the *fajr salâh* in congregation. Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* said in *Muwattâ'*: **"I heard that Ibn al-Musayyib said: 'The one who performs the *'ishâ salâh* in congregation on the night of Power has certainly obtained his share of it."** Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* had a similar opinion in his early years: **"The person who performs the *'ishâ* and *fajr salâhs* on the night of Power has certainly obtained his share of it."** This is narrated in a Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ: **"The person who performs the *'ishâ salâh* in congregation in Ramadân has certainly acquired the night of Power."**(3) Narrated by Abû ash-Shaykh al-Asbahânî. Abû Mûsâ al-Madînî narrated from him and he states that it is narrated in similar form through another chain from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ.

It is also narrated from 'Alî ibn Abî Tâlib ﷺ as a *mursal* Hadîth but its chain is very weak. It is narrated as a *mursal* Hadîth from

(1) Abu Naa'eem in Al-Hilya (6/306).

(2) Muslim (746).

(3) Narrated by Al-Hindi in "Al-Kanz" (24092) and check Al-Majmaa' (2/231).

Abû Ja'far Muḥammad ibn 'Alî that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person to whom Ramaḍân comes while he is healthy and a Muslim, he fasts during its days, offers the night ṣalâh, lowers his gaze, safeguards his private part, tongue and hands; upholds ṣalâh with congregation; and goes early for the Jumu'ah ṣalâh; he has certainly kept fast in Ramaḍân, obtained full reward, acquired the night of Power, and achieved Allâh's prize."**

Abû Ja'far said: **"It is a prize which is different from the prizes of the wealthy."** Narrated by Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ.

If a person takes a vow that he will spend the nigh of Power in worship, it is obligatory on him to spend any of the nights of Ramaḍân in worship regarding which he is convinced that it is the night of Power. The *'ulamâ'* who say that the night of Power falls during any night of Ramaḍân say that it is obligatory on him to spend all the nights of Ramaḍân in worship. Those who say that it is in the second half of the month say that it is obligatory on him to spend the second half of the month in worship. Those who say that it is in the last ten nights say that it is obligatory on him spend the last ten nights in worship. This is the opinion of our [Ḥambalî] scholars. If he made such a vow and some of the last ten nights already passed [without his spending them in worship], he will have to spend the remaining nights in worship, and the following year he must commence with the first of the last ten nights until he reaches the night from which he had commenced the previous year. This ruling applies if we say that the night of Power does not move around in the last ten nights [i.e. it is on the same night every year]. But if we say that it moves around in the last ten nights, he will not have fulfilled his vow without spending all the last ten nights in worship in the year following his vow. If he vows spending an unspecified night in worship, it is obligatory on him to spend half the night in worship, and then sleep. He can then spend another half night in worship. This is the opinion of al-Auzâ'î *raḥimahullâh* as quoted by al-Walîd ibn Muslim in *Kitâb an-Nudhûr*. This is similar to the opinion of our scholars and others who say: In order for an atonement to be valid, it is sufficient for a person to free two halves of two slaves.

Waking up the family for night worship

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to awaken his family for ṣalâh in the ten nights and not the other nights. The Ḥadîth of Abû Dharr ؓ states that when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spent the 23rd, 25th and

27th nights in worship with them, he called his family members and wives specifically on the 27th night. This shows that it is more important to wake them up in the more likely of the odd nights in which it is hoped that it is the night of Power. At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates from 'Alî ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to awaken his family in the last ten nights of Ramadân, and every young and old who is able to perform salâh.(1)

Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* said: **"At the commencement of the last ten nights, I consider it desirable for a person to offer the *tahajjud salâh*, strive hard in worship, and awaken his family and children for salâh if they are able to perform it."** It is established that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to go and knock on 'Alî's ﷺ and Fâtimah's *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* door at night and say to them: **"Are you not going to wake up and perform salâh?"** He used to awaken 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* at night when he completed his *tahajjud salâh* and was about to commence his *witr salâh*. Husband and wife are encouraged to awaken each other for salâh and sprinkle water on the other's face. The *Muwattâ'* states that 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ used to offer the night salâh as much as Allâh ﷻ willed him to offer. Then when half the night passed, he would awaken his family for salâh. He would say to them: **"Salâh, salâh!"** and recite this verse to them: **"Command your house people to establish salâh and you yourself remain steadfast on it."** *(Sûrah Tâ Hâ, 20: 132)*

The wife of Habîb ibn Abî Muhammad used to say to him at night: **"The night has passed and there is a long road ahead of us. Our provisions for the journey are few, and the caravans of righteous people have gone ahead, while we are left behind."**

يـــا راقـــد اللـــيل كـــم تـــرقد ... قـــم يـــا حبيبـــي قـــد دنـــا المـــوعد

وخـــذ مـــن اللـــيل وأوقاتـــه ... وردا إذا مـــا هجـــع الـــرقد

مـــن نـــام حتـــى ينقـــضي لـــيله ... لـــم يـــبلغ المنـــزل أو يجهـــد

قـــل لأولـــي الألـــباب أهـــل التقـــى ... قنطـــرة العـــرض لكـــم مـــوعد

"O you who are sleeping at night! How much are you going to sleep? Wake up, O my beloved! The appointed time has approached. Take from the portions of the night an act of

(1) At-Tabarany in Al-Awsat (7425).

worship when the sleeping people are still sleeping peacefully. The one who sleeps until the night expires will not reach his destination and will have to strive. Say to the intelligent people – the people of piety – the bridge on which you have to present yourselves is your appointed place."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to tighten his loincloth

[The latter part of the previously quoted Hadîth states] that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to tighten his loincloth. The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to the meaning of this. Some say that it is a reference to his intense striving in worship. For example, [an Arabic saying translates thus]: he tightens his middle and strives in doing such and such thing. There is some reservation in this explanation because 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"he strove hard and tightened the loincloth."** She joined **"strove hard"** to **"tightened the loincloth"**.

The correct explanation is that it refers to the fact that he remained aloof from his wives. This is the explanation of the past imams, including Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh*. This meaning is clearly mentioned in a Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* and Anas ﷺ. There is an explanation which says that he did not go to his bed until Ramadân ended. The Hadîth of Anas ﷺ states: **"He folded his bed and remained aloof from his wives."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to spend the last ten nights in seclusion (*i'tikâf*) in most cases. A person in seclusion is prohibited from going close to women – based on explicit texts and the unanimous ruling of the scholars (*ijmâ'*). In explaining the verse: **"Now embrace your wives and seek that which Allâh has written for you."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 187)* Some *'ulamâ'* say that it refers to seeking the night of Power. The meaning of this is that when Allâh ﷻ permitted conjugal relations with one's wife during the nights of fasting until the white thread of dawn becomes clear from the black thread, He ordered seeking the night of Power together with this [permission to engage in conjugal relations]. Allâh ﷻ did this so that the Muslims do not become wholly engrossed in lawful enjoyment [with one's wife] to the extent that they miss out the opportunity of seeking the night of Power. He therefore ordered the *tahajjud salâh* with the order to seek the night of Power. This is more so in the nights when it is most likely to find the night of Power. It is based on this that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to engage in conjugal relations with his wives in the first twenty nights of Ramadân, then remained aloof from them and devoted

himself to seeking the night of Power in the last ten nights.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to delay eating till dawn (*sahar*)

It is related from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* and Anas ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to have his supper at dawn in the last ten nights. The words of the Hadîth narrated by 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* are: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to engage in night worship and sleep during Ramadân. When the last ten nights commenced, he tightened the loincloth, abstained from his wives, took a bath between the two *adhâns*, and had his supper at dawn."** Narrated by Ibn Abî 'Âsim. The Hadîth of Anas ﷺ is narrated by at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* as follows: **"When the last ten nights of Ramadân commenced, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fold his bed, remain aloof from his wives, and have his supper at dawn."**(1) The chain of this Hadîth has Hafs ibn Wâqid. Ibn 'Adîyy said: **"This Hadîth is the strangest which I came across from him."** A similar Hadîth is narrated from Jâbir ﷺ. It is narrated by Abû Bakr al-Khatîb and it contains narrators whose condition is not known.

There is a Hadîth which bears out the above narrations: Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ prohibited continuous fasting, so a Muslim man said: 'You fast continuously, O Messenger of Allâh!' He replied: 'Who from among you is like me? When I sleep, my Lord feeds me and gives me to drink.' When they refused to stop fasting continuously, he kept fast with them for one continuous day and then for another day. They then saw the crescent. So he said: 'Had the crescent not appeared now, I would have made you fast for more days.' This was said as a reprimand to them for not stopping."**(2) This shows that he kept fast continuously with them in the last of the month. 'Âsim ibn Kalîb narrates from his father from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ who said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ never kept fast continuously as you do. Yes, he did delay eating till dawn."** There is no objection to the chain of this Hadîth.

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates from 'Alî ﷺ that the

(1) At-Tabarany in Al-Awsat (5654).

(2) Al-Bukhari (1965) and Muslim (1103).

Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast continuously till dawn.(1) At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* also narrated this from Jâbir ﷺ. Ibn Jarîr at-Tabarî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast continuously till dawn. One of his Companions ﷺ did this so he stopped him. The Companion said: **"But you do this as well."** He said: **"You are not like me. I remain with my Lord who feeds me and provides me with drink."**

Ibn Jarîr *rahimahullâh* says that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not fast continuously except until dawn, and that this is permissible for the person who has the strength to do it, and reprehensible for others. He considers it unlikely that fasting continuously throughout the night will be considered to be an act of worship according to any of the *'ulamâ'*. He said: **"Some of them used to abstain from eating for some other reason, and not for fasting. A person would do this so that he will be more energetic for engaging in worship, he preferred not feeding his self, out of some grief which prevented him from eating, or for some other reason."** What this means is that if a person continues fasting without opening his fast in order to be more energetic for engaging in worship without believing that this abstention from eating is an act of worship, then it is permissible. If he abstained [from eating] as an act of worship and he continued in this way till dawn, and he had the strength to do this, then it is not reprehensible. If not, it is reprehensible. It is for this reason that Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Is-hâq *rahimahullâh* say that continuous fasting till dawn is not reprehensible.

Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Do not fast continuously. But if any of you wants to do this, he may do it till dawn."** The Companions ﷺ said: **"But you fast continuously, O Messenger of Allâh!?"** He said: **"I am not like you. When I sleep, there is someone [Allâh ﷻ] who feeds me and provides me to drink."**(2)

The obvious meaning of this Hadîth is that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast continuously for the entire night. He probably did this because he felt it more conducive to his intense worship in the last ten nights, and it did not weaken him from fulfilling deeds.

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(1) Al-Musnad (1/91).

(2) Al-Bukhari (1963).

This is because Allâh ﷻ used to feed him and provide him with drink.

There are different explanations to the meaning of Allâh ﷻ feeding him. It is said that food from Paradise used to be presented to him and he used to eat it. There is some reservation in this because if this were the case, he would not have been fasting continuously, whereas when the Companions ﷺ told him that he fasts continuously, he did not disagree with them. 'Abd ar-Razzâq narrates from Ibn Jurayj who said: **"'Amr ibn Dînâr informed me** that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ prohibited fasting continuously. The Companions ﷺ said: **"But you fast continuously?!"** He said: **"What do you know? My Lord probably feeds me and provides me with drink."**(1) This is a *mursal* Hadîth.

Anas ﷺ narrates: **"I spend the day with my Lord feeding me and providing me drink."**(2) The verb used in this statement, *azallu*, refers to doing something during the day. If it meant literal eating, then this would negate fasting. The correct explanation in this regard is that it is a reference to all which Allâh ﷻ opened up for him during his fasting and solitude with his Lord. His private conversation with Allâh ﷻ and His remembrance enabled him to enjoy His close affinity and the fragrances of His sanctity. His heart would thus receive such divine experiences and gifts that all this made him independent of food and drink. As a poet says about a camel:

لهـا أحاديـث مـن ذكـراك يـشغلها عـن الطعـام ويلهـيها عـن الـزاد
لهـا بـوجهك نـور تستـضيء بـه وقـت المـسير وفـي أعقابهـا حـادي
إذا شـكت مـن كـلال الـسير أو عـدها روح القـدوم فتحـيا عـند مـيعا

"When she talks about her fond memories of you, she forgets about food and becomes unmindful of her provisions. She obtains light from your face which illuminates the way for her, and she has a camel-driver behind her who sings for her. When she complains about being tired by the journey or from travelling fast, the joy that she will experience at arriving at her destination urges her to move forward."

The remembrance of Allâh ﷻ is the food of the *'ârifûn* (those who truly recognized Allâh ﷻ). It makes them independent of food and

(1) Checked by Abdul Razzak in Al-Musannaf (7756).

(2) Muslim (6/1104).

drink. As a poet says:

أنــت ربــي إذا ظمــئت إلــى المــاء وقوتــــــي إذا أردت الطعامـــــا

"You are my thirst-quencher when I am thirsty for water, and you are my strength when I need food."

When those who are engaged in *tahajjud salâh* become hungry, they fill themselves with the food of private conversation with Allâh ﷻ. Destruction to the person who sells the joy of private conversation with Allâh ﷻ for a morsel of food.

يـا مـن لحـشا المحـب بالـشوق حـشا ذا سـرّ سـراك فـي الـدجا كـيف فـشا

هــذا المولــى إلــى الممالــيك مــشا لا كــان عيــشا أورثَ القلــبَ غــشا

"O you who filled the lover with yearning. How did the secret of your travelling at night become exposed? Here is the master walking towards his slaves. May that life be destroyed which causes the heart to lose consciousness."

It is emphasised to delay the opening of the fast on nights in which it is hoped the night of Power falls. Zurr ibn Hubaysh said with regard to the 27th night: **"Whoever is able to delay the opening of his fast should do so and open his fast with thin milk."** Some narrators narrated the above from Zurr from Ubayy ibn Ka'b as a *marfû'* Hadîth, but this is not authentic. Thin milk refers to milk to which water is added.

Abû ash-Shaykh al-Asbahânî narrates with his chain from 'Alî ﷺ who said: **"If a person experiences the night of Power while he is eating, he will contract an illness which will not leave him till death."** Abû Mûsâ al-Madînî also narrated this through his chain. He probably meant that his eating coincided with the night of Power. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to bath between the *maghrib* and *'ishâ salâhs*

The Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* was quoted previously in which she said: **"He took a bath between the two *adhâns*."** This refers to the *adhâns* of *maghrib* and *'ishâ*.

A Hadîth from 'Alî ﷺ states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to bath every night between the *maghrib* and *'ishâ salâhs*. That is, of the last ten nights of Ramadân. There is some weakness in the chain of narrators. Hudhayfah ﷺ states that he was with the Messenger of

Allâh ﷻ on one of the nights of Ramadân. He took a bath while Hudhayfah ﷺ shielded him [from others looking at him]. Some water was left over and Hudhayfah ﷺ took a bath while the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ shielded him. This is narrated by Ibn Abî 'Âsim.

Another narration of Hudhayfah ﷺ states: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stood up on one of the nights of Ramadân in a room made of palm branches and poured a bucket of water on himself."** Ibn Jarîr said: They considered it desirable to bath on every night of the last ten nights. It was the practice of an-Nakha'î *rahimahullâh* to bath on every night of the last ten nights. Some of them used to take a bath and apply perfume on the nights on which it was most likely for the night of Power to fall. Zurr ibn Hubaysh ordered taking a bath on the 27th night of Ramadân. It is related that when it was the 24th of Ramadân, Anas ibn Mâlik ﷺ would take a bath, apply perfume and wear a suit comprising of a loin cloth and an upper sheet. The next morning he will fold these two garments and would not wear them until the same night the following year.

Ayyûb as-Sakhtiyânî *rahimahullâh* used to bath on the 23rd and 24th nights, wear two new garments, burn incense and say: **"The 23rd night is the night of the people of Madînah, and the night which follows it [the 24th] is our night."** That is, of the people of Basra. Hammâd ibn Salamah said: **"Thâbit al-Bunânî** *rahimahullâh* and Hamîd at-Tawîl used to wear their best clothes, apply perfume, and burn incense in the musjid on the night on which it was hoped was the night of Power. Thâbit said: **"Tamîm ad-Dârî had a suit which he purchased for 1 000 dirhams. He used to wear it on the night on which it was hoped was the night of Power."**

It becomes clear from the above that it is desirable to cleanse oneself, beautify oneself, purify oneself by bathing, applying perfume, wearing good clothes, etc. on the night on which it is hoped is the night of Power. These are actions which are promulgated for Fridays and the days of *'îd* as well. Similarly, we are ordered to beautify ourselves with good clothes for all the salâhs. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Take your adornment at the time of every salâh."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 31)* Ibn 'Umar ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ is most worthy of being adorned for."** It is narrated as a *marfû'* Hadîth from him.

External adornment cannot be completed without internal adornment through repentance, turning to Allâh ﷻ, purifying oneself from the filth and dirt of sins. This is because external adornment

with internal desolation is of no use. Allâh ﷻ says: **"O children of Âdam! We sent down to you clothing which covers your private parts and We sent down clothing of adornment. And the clothing of piety, that is the best."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 26)*

إذا المرء لم يلبس ثيابا من التقى تقلب عريانا وإن كان كاسيا

وخير خصال المرء طاعة ربه ولا خير فيمن كان لله عاصيا

"If a person does not wear the garments of piety, he will be naked even if he is wearing clothes. The best quality of a person is obedience to his Lord. There is no good in the person who is disobedient to Allâh."

The person who engages in private conversations with kings cannot do so unless he adorns and purifies his outer and inner selves. This is especially so when it is with the King of kings who knows all that is hidden and concealed. He does not look at your outward appearance alone. He looks at your hearts and deeds. The person who stands before Him should therefore adorn his outer self with garments, and his inner self with the garment of piety. Ash-Shiblî said:

قالوا غدا العيد ماذا أنت لابسه قلت خلعة ساق حبه جرعا

فقر وصبر هما ثوبان تحتهما قلب يرى إلفه الأعياد والجمعا

أحرى الملابس أن تلقى الحبيب به يوم التزاور في الثوب الذي خلعا

الدهر لي مأثم إن غبت يا أملي والعيد كنت لي مرأى ومستمعا

"They said: 'Tomorrow is 'îd. What are you going to wear?' I replied: 'These same old garments which his beloved gave him. Poverty and patience are two garments between which is a heart which sees its Master on the day of *'îd* and Fridays. The best clothes with which you should meet your beloved on the day when you visit him are the clothes which you discard. My entire life would have been spent in sin if I do not achieve my objective. The days of *'îd* are days of seeing and listening [days of reflection] for me."

Seclusion (*i'tikâf*)

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to go into seclusion in the last ten nights of Ramadân until

Allâh ﷻ caused **him to pass away."**[1] Abû Hurayrah ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to go into seclusion for ten nights in every Ramadân. When it was the year in which he passed away, he remained in seclusion for twenty nights. He used to go into seclusion during these ten nights in which the night of Power is sought to sever all his engagements, make himself free, remain in seclusion to converse with his Lord, engage in His remembrance, and supplicate to Him. He used to barricade himself with a straw mat and remain in seclusion away from the people, without intermingling with them, nor occupying himself with them."**

It is for this reason that Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* is of the opinion that it is not desirable for a person in seclusion to intermingle with people – not even to convey knowledge to them nor to recite the Qur'ân to them. Instead, it is preferable for him to remain in solitude with himself, and remain secluded for engaging in private conversation with his Lord, in His remembrance, and supplicating to Him. This seclusion is the Shar'î seclusion. It is practised in musjids so that a person may not miss the Jumu'ah and congregational salâhs. Any seclusion which prevents a person from the Jumu'ah and congregational salâhs is prohibited.

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ was asked about a person who fasts by day and engages in night worship, but does not attend the Jumu'ah and congregational salâhs. He said: **"He is in the Hell-fire."**

The seclusion which is promulgated to this *ummah* is the *i'tikâf* in musjids, especially in the month of Ramadân, and specifically in the last ten nights, as was the practice of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

The person in seclusion confines himself to the obedience and remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. He severs himself from every occupation which diverts him from this. He devotes his heart and body to his Lord and in doing all that would take him closer to Him. He thus has no concern except for Allâh ﷻ and whatever pleases Him.

Dâ'ûd at-Tâ'î *rahimahullâh* used to say at night: **"My concern for You has curtailed all other worries from me. This concern has become an ally between me and sleeplessness. My desire to see You has destroyed all my pleasures and come as a barrier**

(1) Al-Bukhari (2025) and Muslim (1153).

between me and my desires."

مالـــي شُـــغل ســـواه مالـــي شـــغل مـــا يـــصرف عـــن قلبـــي هـــواه عـــذل
مـــا أصـــنع إن جفـــا وخـــاب الأمـــل منـــي بـــدل ومـــنه مالـــي بـــدل

"I have no occupation except Him, I have no other occupation. No reproach will turn my heart away from His love. What will I do if He banishes me and my hopes go in vain? He has many apart from me, but I have no one but Him."

The meaning and essence of seclusion is this: severing all ties with the creation to attach oneself to the service of the Creator. The stronger one's recognition of Allâh ﷻ, love for Him, and affinity with Him, the more will a person's devotion to Allâh ﷻ be under every condition.

A person remained alone in his house, devoted to his Lord. Someone asked him: **"Don't you feel lonely?"** He replied: **"How can I feel lonely when He says: 'I am the companion of the one who remembers Me.'?"**

أوحـــــشتني خلواتـــــي بـــــك مـــــن كـــــل أنيـــــسي
وتفـــــــردت فعاينـــــــتك بالغـــــــيب جليـــــــسي

"My periods of solitude with You have caused me to retract from all my close friends. I remained in solitude and I saw You as my unseen companion."

O night of Power, bear testimony in favour of the ardent worshippers. O feet of the devoted, bow and prostrate to your Lord. O tongues of the beseechers, strive and be earnest in your supplications.

يـــا رجـــال اللـــيل جـــدوا رب داع لا يـــــــــــــرد
مـــــا يقـــــوم اللـــــيل إلا مـــــن لـــــه عـــــزم وجـــــد

"O people of the night! Strive hard. Many a supplicant is not rejected. None except the person who is determined and earnest engages in night worship."

The night of Power in the sight of the lovers is a time to make the best of gaining nearness and proximity to their Master. They flee from nights which cause distance and separation from Him.

There were two places in Baghdad, one was called Dâr al-Mulk

and the other, al-Qaṭī'ah. An *'ârif* (one who truly recognizes Allâh ﷻ) met a sailor on a ship and said to him: **"Take me with you to Dâr al-Mulk."** The sailor said: **"But I** am going to al-Qaṭī'ah (which literally means **"something which cuts off or severs)."** The *'ârif* screamed and said: **"No, by Allâh, no by Allâh, it is from such a place that I am fleeing [in other words, I cannot bear to be cut off from Allâh ﷻ]."**

ولـــــيلة بـــــت بأكـــــنافها تعـــدل عـــندي لـــيلة القـــدر

كانـــت ســـلاما لـــسروري بهـــا بالوصـــل حتـــى مطلـــع الفجـــر

"The one night which I spent in its bosom was equal to the night of Power in my sight. It was a source of peace for I experienced the joy of attachment [with Allâh ﷻ] till the break of dawn."

O you who wasted your life in futility! Make up for whatever you lost on the night of Power because it is equal to an entire life.

ولـــيلة وصـــل بـــات منجـــز وعـــده ســـميري فـــيها بعـــد طـــول مطـــال

شـــفيت بهـــا قلـــبا أطـــيل علـــيه زمانـــا فكانـــت لـــيلة بليالـــي

"The night of attachment was a night companion who fulfilled his promise to me after a lengthy period of time. I cured with it a heart against which I had been audacious for quite some time. That single night was thus equal to many nights."

Allâh ﷻ says: **"We revealed it on the night of Power. What have you understood as to what the night of Power is? The night of Power is better than a thousand months."** *(Sûrah al-Qadr, 97: 1-3)*

There are differences of opinion with regard to the night of Power and the wisdom behind the descent of angels on this night. Kings and rulers do not like anyone entering their palaces until they are adorned with carpets and mats, and their servants are adorned with uniforms and weapons. When it is the night of Power, Allâh ﷻ orders the angels to descend to earth because the servants have adorned themselves with acts of obedience: with fasting, ṣalâh on the nights of Ramaḍân, and their musjids with lights and candles. Allâh ﷻ says to the angels: **"You accused the progeny of Âdam ﷺ and said: 'Are you going to place in the earth one who makes mischief therein...'** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 30)* **and I said to you: 'I know that which you do not know.'** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 30)* **Go down on**

this night and see them standing, bowing and prostrating [in salâh] so that you may realize that I selected them on the basis of knowledge of the universe."

Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* said: **"I heard that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was shown the ages of the people before him – or of those whom Allâh ﷻ willed to show him – and he considered the age of his *ummah* to be short and felt that his followers will not be able to do the good deeds done by previous nations because of their lengthy life-spans. Allâh ﷻ thus bestowed him with the night of Power which is better than a thousand months."** It is related from Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ spoke of a man from the Banû Isrâ'îl who donned his weapons for 1 000 months [and waged jihad]. The Muslims were astonished at hearing this. Allâh ﷻ thus revealed this sûrah: **"the night of Power is better than a thousand months"**. Allâh ﷻ Himself enabled the man to don his weapons for 1 000 months in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. An-Nakha'î *rahimahullâh* said: **"Deeds on that night are better than deeds done at other times for 1 000 months."**

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who engages in night worship on the night of Power with faith and expectation of reward shall have his past sins forgiven."**(1) 'Ubâdah ibn as-Sâmit ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who engages in night worship in search of the night of Power and it occurs on that night, then his past and future sins are forgiven."**(2) Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to Ramadân: **"In it is a night which is better than a thousand months. The person who is deprived of its good is certainly a deprived person."** Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh*.

Juwaybir said: **"I asked ad-Dahhâk *rahimahullâh*: 'What do you think, does a woman during her post natal bleeding, a woman in her menses, a traveller, and a sleeping person have any share from the night of Power?' He replied: 'Yes. Every person whose deeds Allâh ﷻ accepts shall receive his share from the night of Power.'"**

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(1) Al-Bukhari (1901) and Muslim (760).

(2) Al-Musnad (5/8/3).

The criterion is acceptance and not striving. Consideration is given to the piety of the hearts, not the actions of the bodies. Many a person engaged in night worship receives nothing but sleeplessness. Many a person engaged in night worship is deprived, while a sleeping person is shown mercy. The latter was sleeping but his heart was engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. The former engaged in night worship but his heart was sinning.

إن المقادير إذا ساعدت ألحقت النائم بالقائم

"If fate and destiny are in one's favour, the sleeping person is included with the person engaged in night worship."

However, man is ordered to strive to earn good, and do his utmost to do good deeds. Every deed has people who are created for it. The fortunate ones are facilitated to do the deeds of fortunate people. The wretched ones are facilitated to do the deeds of wretched people. **"As for him who gave and remained fearing [Allâh], and considered the good to be true, We shall gradually convey him to ease. As for him who did not give and remained indifferent, and considered the good to be false, We shall gradually convey him to difficulty."** *(Sûrah al-Layl, 92: 5-10)* So hasten in doing as much good as you can in whatever has remained of this month. You may well make up for all that you wasted in your life.

تولى العمر في سهو وفي لهو وفي خسر
فيا ضيعة ما أنفقت في الأيام من عمري
وما لي في الذي ضيع ت من عمري من عذر
فما أغفلنا عن وا جبات الحمد والشكر
أما قد خصنا الله بشهر أيما شهر
بشهر أنزل الرحما ن فيه أشرف الذكر
وهل يشبهه شهر وفيه ليلة القدر
فكم من خبر صح بما فيها من الخير
رويدا عن ثقات أنـ ـها تطلب في الوتر
فطوبى لامرئ يطـ ـول بها في هذه العشر
ففيها تنزل الأمـ ـلا ك بالأنوار والبر
وقد قال: سلام هي حتى مطلع الفجر

ألا فادخـــــــــــــــــروها إن نهـــــا مـــــن أنفـــــس الذخـــــر
فكـــــم مـــــن معـــــتق فـــــيها مـــــن الـــــنار ولا يـــــدري

"My life has been spent in negligence, play and loss. O how I lost all that I wasted during the days of my life! I have no excuse for whatever I wasted in my life. But now we have not been heedless of fulfilling the duties of praise and gratitude [to Allâh ﷻ]. Allâh blessed us with a month, and what an excellent month it is! It is the month in which the Merciful [Allâh] revealed the best reminder [the Qur'ân]. Is there any month similar to the month in which the night of Power is? There are so many authentic Ahâdîth on the virtues of this night. We have heard from reliable narrators that it must be sought on the odd nights. Glad tidings to the person who seeks it in these ten nights. It is in this night that the angels descend with illumination and goodness. Allâh ﷻ said: 'There is peace on that night till the break of dawn.' Listen! Treasure this night because it is the most valuable of all treasures. Many a person is freed from the Hell-fire on this night without his even knowing this."

THE LAST SEVEN NIGHTS OF RAMADÂN

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ narrates that some Companions ﷺ were shown the night of Power in their dreams in the last seven nights of Ramadân. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"I see that your dreams coincided on the last seven nights. Whoever is searching for the night of Power should do so in the last seven nights."**(1) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Seek it in the last ten nights. If any of you is too weak or unable to do so, he should not allow his weakness or inability to overpower him from seeking it in the remaining seven nights."**(2)

We mentioned previously that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to engage in night worship in Ramadân in his quest for the night of Power. He remained in seclusion in the first ten nights of the month. He then looked for it by remaining in seclusion in the second ten nights. He did this several times. He then settled down to remaining in seclusion in the last ten nights in his quest for the night of Power.

(1) Al-Bukhari (2015) and Muslim (1165).

(2) Muslim (209, 1165).

He also ordered others to seek it in these ten nights. 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Seek the night of Power in the last ten nights of Ramaḍân."**(1) A narration of al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh* states: **"[Seek it] on the odd nights of the last ten nights of Ramaḍân."**

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Seek it in the last ten nights of Ramaḍân."**(2) Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Seek it in the last ten nights."**(3) There are many Aḥâdîth in this regard. He used to order them to seek it on the odd nights of the last ten nights. Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Seek it in the last ten nights of Ramaḍân: the 9th which remains, the 7th which remains and the 5th which remains."**(4)

Another narration states: **"It is in the last ten nights: the seven which passed, or the seven which remain."**

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* narrate from Abû Bakrah who said: **"I will seek it solely in the last ten nights because I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: 'Seek it on the 9th which remains, the seventh which remains, the fifth which remains, the third which remains, or on the last night.'"** Abû Bakrah ﷺ used to perform ṣalâh on the 20th night of Ramaḍân as he did for the rest of the year. But once the last ten nights commenced, he would strive hard, and then ask people to seek it in the last seven nights.

The *Musnad* and the book of an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* relate from Abû Dharr ﷺ who said: **"I used to ask people about the night of Power. I said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! Tell me about the night of Power. Is it in Ramaḍân or in some other month?' He said: 'It is in Ramaḍân.' I asked: 'Will it remain with the Prophets as long as they are present and then be raised when they pass away, or will it remain till the day of Resurrection?' He said: 'It will remain till the day of Resurrection.' I asked: 'In which part of Ramaḍân is it?' He said: 'Seek it in the first ten and last ten**

(1) Al-Bukhari (2017) and Muslim (1169).

(2) Al-Bukhari (2021).

(3) Muslim (1166).

(4) It was checked before.

nights.' I asked: 'In which of the twenty nights is it?' He said: 'In the last ten nights. Now do not ask me anything after this.' The Messenger then started talking [to someone] and so I took advantage of the situation and asked: 'O Messenger of Allâh! I take an oath on my right that you will definitely have to inform me in which of the ten nights it is?' He became extremely angry with me. I never saw him become so angry with me ever since I joined him. He said: 'Seek it in the last seven nights, and do not ask me anything after this.'"

The above is also narrated by Ibn Ḥibbân *raḥimahullâh* in his *Saḥîḥ* and al-Ḥâkim *raḥimahullâh*. A narration of theirs states that he said: **"Did I not prohibit you from asking me anything about it? Had Allâh ﷻ permitted me to inform you, I would have done so. It may well be that it is in the last seven nights."** This narration shows that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ's statement with regard to the night of Power ended at the last seven nights, and he did not add anything to this. This is a proof of the scholars who prefer the view that it is on the 23rd and 25th over the view which says that it is on the 21st. The 21st night is certainly not among the last seven nights. It is related through other narrations that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said that it is on the 27th. This will be explained later on – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

There is difference of opinion with regard to the 1st of the last seven nights. There are those who say that it is the 23rd based on calculating the month to be twenty nine days and not thirty. This is because twenty nine days are certain. This is the opinion of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ and it will be explained later – if Allâh ﷻ wills. Bilâl ﷺ said: **"It is the first of the last seven nights."**(1)

It is narrated by Ibn Abî Shaybah. He says: **"It is the 23rd night."**(2) This is the opinion of Imam Mâlik *raḥimahullâh*. He said: **"I think – and Allâh ﷻ knows best – that the 9th is the 21st night, the 7th is the 23rd night, the 5th is the 25th night."** 'Abd al-Malik ibn Ḥabîb says that it is calculated like this if the month is incomplete, and this is nothing because the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered striving hard on these nights according to this calculation. It is not possible to give consideration to the incompleteness of the

(1) Al-Bukhari (4470).

(2) Ibn Abi Shaiba in Al-Musannaf (2/489).

month at the end of the month.

Ayyûb as-Sakhtiyânî *raḥimahullâh* used to take a bath on every 23rd and 24th night and apply perfume. He used to say: **"The 23rd night is for the people of Madînah and the 24th night is for us."** That is, the people of Basra.

This was also the practice of Thâbit and Ḥumayd. Some people used to strive on the 24th night. This is related with regard to Anas and al-Ḥasan. He also said: **"I observed the sun for twenty years on the day following the 24th night. It used to rise without any rays."** This is also related with regard to Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ as mentioned by al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh*. It is said that his established opinion was that it was on the 23rd, as mentioned previously. The Ḥadîth with regard to the revelation of the Qur'ân on the 24th night was mentioned previously.(1) Similar is the case with Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ and Abû Dharr ﷺ: they counted the month as a full month [of thirty days]. So the first of the seven nights according to them will be the 24th night. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr *raḥimahullâh* preferred this opinion by saying that the original number of days in a month is thirty. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered completing it [thirty days] when it is cloudy, while the possibility of it being less [twenty nine days] still exists. This is also the preferred opinion of some of our scholars. The Ḥadîth of Anas ﷺ was quoted previously wherein he states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not sleep at all when it was the 24th night. The chain of this narration is weak.

There are narrations from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ which indicate that the 23rd night is the first of the last seven nights. The *Musnad* narrates on the authority of Jâbir ﷺ that 'Abdullâh ibn Anîs asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about the night of Power when twenty two nights had passed. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Seek it in these last seven nights which remain of the month."**(2)

'Abdullâh ibn Anîs ﷺ narrates that they asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about the night of Power on the evening on the 23rd night. He said: **"Seek it tonight."** A person asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Does it mean that it is on the first of the last eight nights?"** He

(1) It was checked before.

(2) Al-Musnad (4938).

said: **"It is not the first of the last eight nights but the first of the last seven nights. The month is not a complete month [of thirty days]."**(1) Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: **"How many days of the month have passed?"** We said: **"Twenty two days have passed and eight remain."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"No. Twenty two days have passed and seven remain. Seek it tonight."**(2) It is possible that this refers to a specific month regarding which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ knew that it is going to comprise of twenty nine days. But this is far-fetched. The contrary is inferred from the complete Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: 'The month is like this, like this and like this.' He retracted his thumb the third time."**(3) [He indicated with both his hands two times - equalling twenty - and then retracted his one thumb the third time - to indicate nine, totalling twenty nine. This shows that it is a general ruling and that he always calculated the month as twenty nine because this number is certain. This is the opinion of Ayyûb, Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* and others. Based on their opinion, on the 7th night, twenty three nights will remain; on the 5th night, twenty five nights will remain, and on the 9th night, twenty one nights will remain.

It is related that an-Nu'mân ibn Bashîr ﷺ disliked calculating the night of Power with the days which passed of the month. He states that the Companions ﷺ used to calculate it with what remained of the month. This possibility can be applied for example to the following statement of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"Seek it on the 9th, 7th and 5th."** Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrates it from 'Ubâdah ﷺ(4) and Muslim *rahimahullâh* from Abû Sa'îd ﷺ. It is possible that the 9th, 7th and 5th refer to the days which remain or the days which have passed. As for the Hadîth of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ, Abû Bakrah ﷺ and others of similar meaning, they are confined to the remaining days of the month, and cannot be taken to refer to the days which passed. In such a case, the previously mentioned difference of opinion is with regard to whether it be calculated under the assumption of a complete month [of thirty days] or an incomplete month [of twenty nine days]. The Hadîth of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ is narrated with a doubt

(1) Al-Musnad (3/495).

(2) Al-Musnad (2/251).

(3) It was checked before.

(4) Al-Bukhari (2023).

between what passed or what remains. Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrated it in both ways.

The Hadîth of Abû Dharr ﷺ with regard to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ engaging in night worship on the odd nights of the last ten nights is related by Abû Dâ'ûd at-Tayâlisî clearly stating that he engaged in night worship with them on the even nights of the last ten nights. He counted them as odd nights in relation to what remained of the month and considered it to be a complete month [of thirty days]. The night in which he engaged in night worship regarding which they feared that they would miss its merit was the night of the 28th, which was the 3rd night of what remained [in other words, the 3rd last night]. It is said that this was a change made by one of the narrators based on what he understood. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

Based on the opinion of those who calculated the remaining nights of the month on the assumption that the month was incomplete [i.e. of twenty nine days], it would mean that the 1st of the last ten nights will be the 20th night because there is the possibility that the month will be incomplete and ten nights will not be realized if the 20th night was included in them.

It could be argued that the last ten nights refer to what remains after the completion of twenty nights, irrespective of whether it is a complete or incomplete month. They will still be referred to as the last ten nights. Engaging in night worship in them will mean engaging in night worship in the last ten nights. This is similar to saying: **"He kept fast in the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah"**, whereas he only kept fast for the first nine days. It is for this reason that Ibn Sîrîn considered it reprehensible to say: **"He kept fast in the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah."** He said: **"You should rather say: 'He kept fast for nine days.'"** Those who do not consider it reprehensible to say this [i.e. he kept fast for ten days] – and they are the majority of scholars – say that fasting is attributed to the ten days and it means fasting on the days in which it is possible to fast, and that is [the first ten days] excluding the day of sacrifice [the 10th of Dhû al-Hijjah]. Fasting on these days is referred to as **"ten days"** because it refers to the major portion of the ten days. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

The people have many differences with regard to the night of Power. Some say that it has been raised [to the heavens] but the Hadîth of Abû Dharr ﷺ refutes this. Muhammad ibn al-Hanafîyyah *rahimahullâh* said that it occurs once every seven years, but there is some weakness in this chain of narrators. Others say that it occurs

throughout the year. This opinion is attributed to Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ and a group of scholars of Kûfah. It is related that Imam Abû Ḥanîfah *raḥimahullâh* and the majority of scholars say that it occurs in the Ramaḍân of every year. Then from among these scholars there are those who say that it occurs during any part of Ramaḍân. Some past scholars say that it occurs on the first night of Ramaḍân. Another group says that it occurs in the second half of Ramaḍân. It is related that Imam Abû Yûsuf *raḥimahullâh* and Imam Muḥammad *raḥimahullâh* said that it is on the night of the full moon. There is also differences as to whether it is on the 27th or the 29th. The majority say that it is confined to the last ten nights, but they differ as to which of the ten nights it is most likely to occur in. Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* and Imam Mâlik *raḥimahullâh* are of the opinion that it should be sought in all of the last ten nights – the even nights and the odd nights. Some of our [Ḥambalî] scholars prefer this opinion. They say: this is because if the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ's statement: **"Seek it in the 9th which remains, the 7th which remains or the 5th which remains"** was applied under the assumption that it refers to a full month [of thirty days], it will be on the even nights. If we were to apply it to what remains of the month, the matter will depend on the completion of the month and will not be known before the month ends. If it was a complete month, the nights in which we were ordered to seek it will be the even nights. If it was an incomplete month, it will be the odd nights. It would therefore be necessary to engage in night worship on all the nights – the odd and the even.

The majority say: No. There is more likelihood of it occurring on certain nights. They say that in general, the odd nights are more likely. They then differ as to which of the odd nights are more likely. Some say it is the 21st, and this is popularly attributed to Imam ash-Shâfi'î *raḥimahullâh* based on the Ḥadîth of Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ which we quoted previously. It is also related that Imam ash-Shâfi'î *raḥimahullâh* said that it should be sought on the 21st and 23rd nights. He said in his early days (*qadîm*): **"I consider – and Allâh ﷻ knows best – the strongest Aḥâdîth in this regard referring to the 21st and 23rd nights. It is the night on which 'Alî ibn Abî Ṭâlib ﷺ passed away. It also occurred on the 17th, 24th and 27th nights."** It is related that 'Alî ﷺ and Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said that it should be sought on the 21st and 23rd nights.

Another opinion of Imam ash-Shâfi'î *raḥimahullâh* is that it is most likely to be on the 23rd night. This is the opinion of the people of Madînah. Sufyân ath-Thaurî *raḥimahullâh* narrated it from the

people of Makkah and Madînah. It is related that Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ and 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* were from among those who used to awaken their families on this night. This is the opinion of Mak-hûl.

Rushdîn ibn Sa'd narrates from Zuhrah ibn Ma'bad who said: **"I had a wet dream in the land of the enemy while I was out at sea on the 23rd night of Ramadân. I went to take a bath but fell into the water. I found that the [ocean] water was sweet. I then called out to my companions informing that I was in sweet water."**

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr *rahimahullâh* said: **"This night [the 23rd] is** known as the night of al-Juhanîyy in Madînah – in reference to 'Abdullah ibn Anîs ﷺ [al-Juhanîyy] whom the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered to engage in night worship on this night.

'Abdullâh ibn Anîs ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to the night of Power: **"I saw myself prostrating in mud on the morning following it."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ turned around after the *fajr salâh* of the 23rd night and there were traces of mud **on his forehead."**(1)

Sa'îd ibn al-Musayyib ﷺ narrates: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was with a group of his Companions when he said: **"Should I tell you about the night of Power?"** They said: **"Indeed, O Messenger of Allâh!"** He remained silent for some time and said: **"I asked you something just now, and I knew it at that time. But now I have been made to forget it. Do you remember that day when we were at such and such place [referring to a battle which they fought], what night was it?"** They said: **"We travelled and then we returned."** All the people then said that it was the 23rd night. Narrated by 'Abd ar-Razzâq in his book.(2)

Another group of scholars give preference to the 24th night. They include al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* and the scholars of Basra. It is related that it was also the opinion of Anas ﷺ. Humayd *rahimahullâh*, Ayyûb *rahimahullâh* and Thâbit *rahimahullâh* used to take the precaution of observing both nights, viz. the 23rd and the 24th.

Another group of scholars give preference to the 27th night. Ath-

(1) Muslim (1168).

(2) Abdul Razzak in Al-Musannaf (7687).

Thaurî *raḥimahullâh* relates this with regard to the scholars of Kûfah. He said: **"We say that it is the 27th night based on the** narration which we received from Ubayy ibn Ka'b ﷺ. Ubayy ibn Ka'b ﷺ was from among those who held this opinion, and he used to take an oath without making any exception on this. Zurr ibn Ḥubaysh and 'Abadah ibn Abî Lubâbah were also of the opinion that it is the 27th night.

Qanân ibn 'Abdillâh an-Nahmî said: **"I asked Zurr about the night of Power and he said: "Umar ﷺ, Ḥudhayfah ﷺ and other Companions ﷺ had no doubt that it was the 27th night."'** Narrated by Ibn Abî Shaybah. This is the opinion of Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* and Is-ḥâq *raḥimahullâh.*

Abû Qilâbah and a group of scholars are of the opinion that it moves around in the last ten nights. It is related that he said that it moves around specifically on the odd nights. Al-Muzanî *raḥimahullâh* and Ibn Khuzaymah *raḥimahullâh* were also of the opinion that it moves around in the last ten nights. Ibn 'Abd al-Barr narrates that the same opinion was held by Imam Mâlik *raḥimahullâh*, ath-Thaurî *raḥimahullâh*, Imam ash-Shâfi'î *raḥimahullâh*, Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh*, Is-ḥâq *raḥimahullâh* and Abû Thaur *raḥimahullâh.* The authenticity of attributing this to all of them is far-fetched. The correct opinion of these scholars is that it is in the last ten nights and that it must be sought on all these nights.

The scholars differ with regard to the most likely night, as mentioned previously. Those who give preference to the 27th night use the proof of Ubayy ibn Ka'b ﷺ who used to take an oath in this regard and say: **"Through the sign which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ informed us of, viz. when the sun rises on the morning following it [the night of Power], it has no rays."** Narrated by Muslim *raḥimahullâh.*(1) He also narrated it from Ubayy ibn Ka'b ﷺ with the following words: **"By Allâh, I know which night it is. It is the night on which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered us to engage in night worship. It is the 27th night."**

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates that a man said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! I am an old sick man. It is difficult for me to stand. Tell me one night [in which I could engage in night worship], perhaps Allâh ﷻ will bless me with the night of Power on that night."** He said:

(1) Muslim (762).

"Adhere to the 7th night."(1) The chain of this narration fulfils the prerequisites of al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*.

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrated: Yazîd ibn Hârûn narrated to us, Shu'bah informed us from 'Abdullâh ibn Dînâr from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Whoever of you is seeking it should do so on the 27th night."** Or he said: **"seek it on the 27th night."** That is, the night of Power. Shabâbah and Wahb ibn Jarîr narrated it similarly from Shu'bah. Aswad ibn 'Âmir narrated it similarly from Shu'bah. He adds the words: **"In the remaining seven nights."**

Shu'bah said: **"A reliable person informed me from Sufyân that he said: 'in the remaining seven nights'.** In other words, he did not say the 27th night. Ahmad said in the narration of his son, Sâlih, the **"reliable person"** refers to Yahyâ ibn Sa'îd. Shu'bah said: **"I do not know which of the two this refers to."** 'Amr narrated it from Shu'bah and said in his Hadîth: **"the 27th night"**, or he said: **"in the last seven nights."** He shows doubt here. The matter thus revolves around the fact that Shu'bah was doubtful of the exact wording. Hammâd ibn Zayd narrated it from Ayyûb from Nâfi' from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ who said: **"They continued relating to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that it is the seventh night of the last ten nights. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'I see that your dreams coincide over the fact that it is the seventh night of the last ten nights. Whoever seeks it should therefore do so on the seventh of the last ten nights.'"**(2) As narrated by Hambal ibn Is-hâq from 'Ârim from Hammâd. At-Tahâwî *rahimahullâh* narrated it similarly from Ibrâhîm ibn Marzûq from 'Ârim.

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrated it from 'Ârim but did not mention the words **"the 7th night"**. Instead, he said: **"Whoever seeks it should do so in the last ten nights."**

'Abd ar-Razzâq *rahimahullâh* narrated it in his book(3) from 'Ârim from Ayyûb from Nâfi' from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ who said: **"A man came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! I saw the night of Power in my dream and it seemed to be the 27th**

(1) Checked by Ahmad in Al-Musnad (1/240).

(2) It was checked before.

(3) In his Musannaf (7688).

night." The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"I see your dreams coinciding on the seventh night. Whoever seeks it should do so in the seventh night."** Ma'mar said: **"Ayyûb would therefore take a bath on the 23rd night."** He was referring to the fact that he understood it as the seventh night which was remaining.

Ath-Tha'labî narrates in his *Tafsîr* from al-Ḥasan ibn 'Abd al-A'lâ from 'Abd ar-Razzâq through this chain. He said in his Ḥadîth: **"the seventh night which is remaining."** So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"I see your dreams coinciding on the 23rd night. Whoever of you wants to engage in night worship in this month must do so on the 23rd night."** These words are not established in the Ḥadîth. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

The *Sunan* of Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh* narrates through a chain whose narrators are all of the *Ṣaḥîḥ* [of al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh*] from Mu'âwiyah ﷺ from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ that the night of Power is the 27th night.(1) Ibn Ḥibbân narrated it in his *Ṣaḥîḥ*.(2) Ibn 'Abd al-Barr *raḥimahullâh* labelled it authentic. But it has a defect, viz. it is *mauqûf* at Mu'âwiyah ﷺ. It is more authentic according to Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* and ad-Dâraquṭnî *raḥimahullâh*. There are also differences with regard to the wording of this Ḥadîth. The *Musnad* narrates from Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ that a man came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and asked: **"When is the night of Power?"** He said: **"Who from among you remembers the night of as-Ṣaḥbâwât?"** 'Abdullâh said: **"May my parents be sacrificed for you, I remember it.** I had dates in my hand with which I made *saḥûr* (pre-dawn meal in preparation for the fast) concealing behind my animal at the time of dawn. It was when the moon appeared.(3) Ya'qûb ibn Shaybah narrates the above in his *Musnad* and adds the words: **"that was on the 27th night."** He said: **"It is a sound chain."** As-Ṣaḥbâwât is a place near Khaybar.

The *Musnad* narrates through another chain from Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The night of Power is in the middle of the last seven nights of Ramaḍân."** If we consider the first of the last seven nights to be the 24th night, the 27th night will be the middle of the last seven nights because there are three nights

(1) Abu Dawoud (1386), and Ahmad checked it (5/132), Al-Baihaqi (4/312).

(2) Ibn Hibban in his Ṣaḥiḥ (3/230 number 925) Mawared.

(3) Al-Musnad (1/376).

before it. The point which gives preference to the night of Power being on the 27th night is that it is part of the last seven nights in which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered us to seek it. This is unanimously accepted. As for the 23rd night being included in the last seven or not, there are differences in this regard as mentioned previously. There is no difference of opinion that it [27th night] is more emphasised than the 25th night. This is further inferred from the Hadîth of Abû Dharr ﷺ in which he mentioned that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ engaged in night worship with them on the odd nights of the last seven nights: he engaged in night worship with them till one third of the night on the 23rd night, half the night on the 25th night, and the entire night on the 27th night so that they do not miss out on any goodness. He assembled his family and the people on that night.

All the above shows the emphasis of all the odd nights of the last seven and ten nights. Another incident which supports this view is the proof which Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ provided in the presence of 'Umar ﷺ and the Companions ﷺ who were with him, and which was well received by 'Umar ﷺ. This incident is narrated through several chains. 'Abd ar-Razzâq narrates in his book from Ma'mar, from Qatâdah and 'Âsim that they heard 'Ikramah saying: **"Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: 'Umar ﷺ called the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ and asked them about the night of Power. They unanimously said that it is in the last ten nights. Ibn 'Abbâs said: 'I said to 'Umar ﷺ: 'I know or I think I know which night it is.' 'Umar ﷺ said: 'Which night is it?' I said: 'The 7th night which passed or the 7th night which remains of the last ten nights.' 'Umar ﷺ asked: 'How do you know that?' I said: 'Allâh ﷻ created seven earths, seven heavens, seven days, time revolves around seven, Allâh ﷻ created man in seven stages, he eats seven foods, he prostrates on seven [parts of his body], the circuit (*tawâf*) of the Ka'bah is seven rounds, there are seven stones which are pelted [at Minâ on the occasion of hajj].' And he mentioned several other things. 'Umar ﷺ said: 'You thought of things which we never thought of.'"**

Qatâdah *rahimahullâh* used to add to Ibn 'Abbâs's ﷺ statement **"he eats seven foods"**. He said that it refers to the following verses: **"Thereupon We caused grain to grow therein. And grapes and edible plants. And olives and dates. And gardens of dense foliage. And fruits and pastures."** *(Sûrah 'Abasa, 80: 27-31)* However, this narration states **"The 7th night which passed or the 7th night**

which remains" with doubt.

Ibn Shâhîn narrates from 'Abd al-Wâḥid ibn Ziyâd from 'Âṣim al-Aḥwal who said: Lâḥiq ibn Ḥumayd and 'Ikramah both said: **"'Umar ﷺ asked: 'Who knows when the night of Power is?'"** He then related the Ḥadîth as above, and Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ added: 'The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'It is in the last ten nights, the seven nights which passed or the seven nights **which remain.'"** The narrator contradicts the chain by making it *mursal* while making it *marfû'* at the end.

Ibn 'Abd al-Barr narrates through an authentic chain from Sa'îd ibn Jubayr who said: **"Some people objected to 'Umar ﷺ for bringing Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ close to himself. He therefore gathered them and asked them about the night of Power. They provided many opinions in this regard. One of them said that they used to consider it to be in the middle ten nights, but then they learnt that it is in the last ten nights. This person went into much details in this regard. Another person said that it is on the 21st night. Another said the 23rd night. And another said the 27th night."**

"'Umar ﷺ said: 'O Ibn 'Abbâs, speak!' He said: 'Allâh ﷻ knows best.' 'Umar ﷺ said: 'We know that Allâh ﷻ knows best, but we are asking you about what you know.' Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: 'Allâh ﷻ is a single [odd unit, i.e. one] and He loves odd numbers. He created seven heavens and ascended above them. He created seven earths and made seven days in a week. He promulgated pelting seven stones [during the ḥajj]. He created man from seven components. He made his sustenance from seven foods.' 'Umar ﷺ said: 'He created man in seven stages, and made his sustenance from seven foods? This is something which I do not understand.' Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: 'Allâh ﷻ says: '(1) We created man from the essence of clay. (2) We placed him as a drop of sperm in a safe enclosure. (3) We made the drop of sperm into a clot of blood. (4) We made the clot of blood into a piece of flesh. (5) We made out of that piece of flesh, bones. (6) We clothed the bones with meat. (7) We brought him forth in a new form. Blessed, therefore, is Allâh, the best of creators.' *(Sûrah al-Mu'min, 23: 12-14)* **He then recited these verses: 'Thereupon We caused grain to grow therein. And grapes and edible plants. And olives and dates. And gardens of dense foliage. And fruits and pastures. Of use to you and to your cattle.'** *(Sûrah 'Abasa, 80: 27-*

32) **He then said: 'The pastures are for the animals.'"**

Ibn Sa'd *rahimahullâh* narrated the above in his *Tabaqât* from Is-hâq al-Azraq from 'Abd al-Malik ibn Abî Sulaymân from Sa'îd ibn Jubayr similarly, but added at the end: **"As for the night of Power, if Allâh ﷻ wills, we certainly consider it to be the 23rd night which passed, or the seventh which remains."** It is obvious that Sa'îd ibn Jubayr heard this from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ. It is therefore *muttasil*.

'Âsim ibn Kalîb narrates from his father from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ who said: **"One day 'Umar ﷺ called the senior Companions of Muhammad ﷺ and said to them: 'You know what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to the night of Power: 'Seek it in the odd nights of the last ten nights.' Now which of the odd night do you think it is in?' One person said it is in the 9th, another said 7th, another said 5th and another said 3rd – each according to his opinion. 'Umar ﷺ said: 'O Ibn 'Abbâs! Speak.' I asked: 'Should I speak according to my opinion?' He said: 'I am asking you for your opinion.' I said: 'I heard Allâh ﷻ talking much about the number seven.'"** He then mentioned the rest of the incident as quoted previously. In the end, 'Umar ﷺ said: **"Why can't you say something similar to what this youngster who hasn't matured yet say?"** Al-Ismâ'îlî narrated it in the *Musnad 'Umar* and so did al-Hâkim. He said: **"Its chain of narrators is authentic."** Ath-Tha'labî narrated it in his *Tafsîr* and added: **"Ibn 'Abbâs said: 'I consider it to be the 23rd night with seven nights remaining.'"** 'Alî ibn al-Madînî said in *Kitâb al-'Ilal* that the *marfû'* Hadîth, although sound, cannot be used as a proof.

Muslim al-Malâ'î – a weak narrator – narrates from Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that 'Umar ﷺ said to him: **"Give me your opinion about the night of Power."** He mentions similar to what was quoted previously and says that Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"I consider it to be on the seventh night which remains of Ramadân [i.e. the 23rd night]."** 'Umar ﷺ said: **"My opinion coincides with yours."**

It is narrated through a weak chain from Muhammad ibn Ka'b from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that 'Umar ﷺ was sitting with a group of Companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and they began talking about the night of Power. He mentioned similar to what was quoted previously and added: **"Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: 'He [Muhammad ﷺ] was**

given the seven-oft repeated verses [i.e. Sûrah al-Fâtiḥah], Allâh ﷻ prohibited seven categories of relatives in marriage in the Qur'ân, He distributed the inheritance to seven categories of people, we fall on seven parts of our body when we are in prostration. I therefore consider it to be in the last seven nights of Ramaḍân.'"

None of these narrations states that it is the 27th night with certainty. In fact, in some there is doubt between the 23rd and 27th, while others say that it is the 23rd because it is the first of the last seven nights according to him.

It is established that Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ used to sprinkle water on his family on the 23rd night [in order to wake them up for night worship]. This is narrated by 'Abd ar-Razzâq.(1) Ibn Abî 'Âṣim narrated it as a *marfû'* Ḥadîth, but the *mauqûf* Ḥadîth is more authentic.

A group of latter day scholars concluded from two places in the Qur'ân that it is the 27th night:

1. Allâh ﷻ repeats the words *laylatul Qadr* (the night of Power) three times in Sûrah al-Qadr. The words *laylatul Qadr* in Arabic comprise of nine letters. If these nine letters are multiplied by the three times that these words are mentioned in this sûrah, you will get twenty seven.

2. Allâh ﷻ said: ***"Salâmun hiya"*** (there is peace). The word *hiya* is the 27th word of this sûrah, while the entire sûrah has thirty words.

Ibn 'Aṭîyyah *raḥimahullâh* said: **"This is the wittiness of *tafsîr* and not absolute knowledge."** It is as he said.

Those who give preference to the 27th night provide the various signs which were related both in the past and present. They also use the acceptance of supplications on this night as proof. It was related previously that Ubayy ibn Ka'b ﷺ used the proof of the sun not having any rays on the morning following this night. 'Abadah ibn Abî Lubâbah used to say: **"It is the 27th night."** And he used to provide his experiences with various things and with the stars as his proof. Narrated by 'Abd ar-Razzâq *raḥimahullâh*.(2) It is related that 'Abadah tasted the ocean water on the 27th night and found it sweet. As

(1) Abdul Razzak in Al-Musannaf (7686).

(2) Abdul-Razzak in Al-Musannaf (7693).

mentioned by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* with his chain of narrators.

A pious predecessor was circuiting the Ka'bah when he saw angels circuiting it above the heads of the people. Abû Mûsâ al-Madînî narrates from Abû ash-Shaykh al-Asbahânî through his chain from Hammâd ibn Shu'ayb from a man from among them who said: **"I was at as-Sawâd and when it was the last ten nights [of Ramadân], I began observing the night. A man said to me: 'What are you looking at?' I said: 'I am looking for the night of Power.' He said: 'You may sleep now, and I will inform you when it is the night of Power.' When it was the 27th night, he came and took me by my hand to a date palm. The date palm had placed its leaves on the ground. He said to me: 'We do not see this throughout the year except on this night.'"** Abû Mûsâ narrated through several chains that a paralysed person supplicated to Allâh ﷻ on the 27th night and was cured. A woman was also cured in this way. There was a man in Basra who remained dumb for three years. He supplicated to Allâh ﷻ on the 27th night and He enabled him to speak.

Al-Wazîr Abû al-Muzaffar ibn Hubayrah relates that he saw on the 27th night – it was a Friday night – an open door in the sky to the north of the Ka'bah. I assumed it to be in line with the blessed room of the Prophet ﷺ. It remained like that until I turned to the east in order to see the sunrise. When I turned back towards it, it had disappeared. He said that if a Friday night falls on one of the odd nights, it is more likely to be the night of Power as opposed to the other nights.

Understand well that all these signs do not necessarily make it definitive that the night of Power will occur if these signs are seen. Salamah ibn Shabîb narrates in *Fadâ'il Ramadân*: Ibrâhîm ibn al-Hakam related to us saying: my father narrated to me, who said: Farqad narrated to me that some Companions ﷺ were in a musjid when they heard some conversation in the sky, saw a light in the sky, and a door in the sky. This was in the month of Ramadân. They went and informed the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ of what they saw. He claims that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"As for the light which you saw, it was the light of Allâh ﷻ. The door was the door to the heavens. The conversation which you heard was that of the Prophets ﷺ talking among themselves. This occurs on every night of Ramadân but it was displayed to you on this night."**

This is a weak *mursal* Ḥadîth.

As for actions on the night of Power, it is established that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who engages in night worship on the night of Power with îmân and expectation of reward shall have his past sins forgiven."** Engaging in night worship entails offering the *tahajjud ṣalâh*. He also ordered 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* to occupy herself in supplication on that night.

Sufyân ath-Thaurî *raḥimahullâh* said: **"I prefer supplication on that night to ṣalâh."** He said: **"If a person is reading and supplicating, he must display his yearning in his supplication and in begging to Allâh ﷻ."** What he means by this is that excessive supplication is superior to ṣalâh in which there is no supplication. If he reads and supplicates, it will be good. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to engage in night worship in the nights of Ramaḍân and recite the Qur'ân with deliberation. When he read a verse of mercy, he begged for it. When he read a verse of punishment, he sought refuge from it. In so doing, he combined ṣalâh, recitation, supplication and reflection. This is the most superior and perfect of deeds for the last ten nights and for other nights as well. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

Ash-Sha'bî said with regard to the night of Power: **"Its night is like its day."** Imam ash-Shâfi'î *raḥimahullâh* said in his early days: **"I prefer a person's striving during the day to be as it was during the night."** This shows the desirability of striving in worship at all times during the last ten days – the days and the nights. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

The true lovers consider these nights to be far away and therefore count the time for the arrival of the last ten nights every year. Once they get these ten nights, they obtain their objective and serve their beloved [Allâh ﷻ].

قد مزق الحب قميص الصبر وقد غدوت حائرا في أمري

آه على تلك الليالي الغر ما كن إلا كليالي القدر

إن عدن لي من بعد هذا الهجر وفيت لله بكل نذر

وقام بالحمد خطيب شكري

"Love tore the shirt of patience and I was left astounded over my life. Oh! Those luminous nights which were certainly like the nights of Power. If they were to return to me after this

separation, I will fulfil every vow for the sake of Allâh ﷻ." He stood up expressing his gratitude with praises."

The winds of these dawns carry the sighing of the sinners, the breathing of the lovers, and the stories of the repentant ones. They then return with a reply without any record.

أعلمـــتم أن النـــسيم إذا ســـرى حمل الحديث إلى الحبيب كما جرى
جهـل العـذول بأننـي فـي حـبهم سـهرُ الدجـى عـندي ألـذ مـن الكـرى

"I told you that when the sweet breeze moves at night, it conveys the speech to the beloved as it was. The critic is ignorant of the fact that remaining awake at night out of love for them is more enjoyable to me than sleep."

When the post is returned at dawn bearing affectionate messages, none but the one to whom it is addressed understands it.

نـسيم صـبا نجـد متـى جـئت حـاملا تحيـتهم فاطـو الحـديث عـن الـركب
ولا تـــذع الـــسر المـــصون فإننـــي أغـار علـى ذكـر الأحـبة مـن صـحبي

"When the easterly breeze of Najd arrives bearing their greetings, stop speaking with the rest of the caravan and do not announce the safely guarded secret. This is because I become jealous when my beloveds are mentioned to my companions."

O the Ya'qûb who is separated [from Yûsuf ﷺ]! The wind of Yûsûf has blown and joined you to him. If you were to inhale this wind, your eyesight will be restored, and you will find the thing which made you poor.

كـــان لـــي قلـــب أعـــيش بـــه ضـــاع منـــي فـــي تقلـــبه
رب! فـــاردده علـــي فقـــد عـــيل صـــبري فـــي تطلـــبه
وأغثنـــي مـــا دام بـــي رمـــق يـــا غـــياث المـــستغيث بـــه

"I had a heart by which I lived. It got lost from me in the course of its movements. O Lord! Return it to me because I have lost all my patience in its quest. Help me as long as I am alive, O the one who comes to the rescue of the person who is crying out for help."

If the sinners were to stand up during these dawns with humility and raised the sorrowful stories whose themes are: **"O 'Azîz! Hardship has afflicted us and our family. We have brought**

merchandise of low value. Give us in full, then, the measure, and be charitable to us." *(Sûrah Yûsuf, 12: 88)* they would get the affirmative reply: **"There is no reproach on you this day. May Allâh forgive you. He is the most merciful of those who show mercy."** *(Sûrah Yûsuf, 12: 92)*

أشكو إلى الله كما قد شكى أولاد يعقوب إلى يوسف
قد مسني الضر وأنت الذي تعلم حالي وترى موقفي
بضاعتي المزجاة محتاجة إلى سماح من كريم وفي
فقد أتى المسكين مستمطرا جودك فارحم ذله واعطف
فأوف كيلي وتصدق على هذا المقل البائس الأضعف

"I complain to Allâh as the sons of Ya'qûb ﷺ complained to Yûsuf ﷺ. Hardship has afflicted me, and You alone know my condition and see my position. I have merchandise of low value which is need of pardon from the generous One who gives in full. This poor person has come begging for the rain of Your generosity. Show mercy to his despicable position and be kind to him. Give my measure in full and be charitable to this person who has so little, who is so unfortunate, and who is the weakest of all."

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"If I were to experience the night of Power, what should I say?"** He said: **"Say:**

أَللهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوٌّ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّيْ

"O Allâh! You are most pardoning, You love to pardon, so pardon me."

The word *al-'Afuwwu* is one of the names of Allâh ﷻ. It refers to the Being who overlooks the evils of His servants and wipes out the effects of those evils. He loves to pardon and therefore loves to pardon His servants. He loves His servants to act under His pardon and pardon each other. His pardon is more beloved to Him than His punishment.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to say: **"I seek refuge in Your pleasure from Your wrath, and in Your pardon from Your punishment."**

Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh said: **"If pardoning was not the most beloved of deeds to Him, He would not have tried the most honourable of His creations by causing them to sin."** He is making reference to the fact that Allâh ﷻ tried many of His friends and beloveds into committing sins so that He may treat them with pardon. This is because Allâh ﷻ loves to pardon.

A pious predecessor said: **"Had I known what is the most beloved deed in the sight of Allâh ﷻ, I would have strived to do it."** He saw someone saying to him in his dream: **"You want something which cannot happen. Allâh ﷻ loves to pardon and forgive."** He loves to pardon so that all the servants could be under His pardon and no one can show off to Him with his good deeds.

A Hadîth of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ states: **"On the night of Power, Allâh ﷻ looks at the believers from the *ummah* of Muhammad ﷺ. He pardons them and shows mercy on them, except for four categories of people: (1) one who consumes intoxicants, (2) one who is disobedient to his parents, (3) one who bears malice towards his Muslim brother, (4) one who severs ties of kinship."**

When the *'ârifûn* (those who truly recognized Allâh ﷻ) recognize His might, they humble themselves before Him. When the sinners hear of His pardon, they become hopeful. There is nothing except the pardon of Allâh ﷻ and the Hell-fire. If the sinners did not hope for His pardon, their hearts would have got burnt out of their despondence for His mercy. But when the hearts think of the pardon of Allâh, they gain solace from the coolness of His pardon.

A person of the past used to say in his supplication: **"O Allâh! My sins are very serious and beyond description. But they are insignificant in the light of Your pardon. So pardon me."**

Another said: **"My sin is great, and Your pardon is huge. O the most kind! Combine my sin and Your pardon."**

يا كبير الذنب عفو الله من ذنبك أكبر

أكبر الأوزاري في جنب عفو الله يصغر

"O you who committed major sins! The pardon of Allâh is greater than your sins. The greatest of my sins are insignificant before the pardon of Allâh."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered us to seek pardon on the

night of Power after striving with good deeds in it and in the last ten nights because the *'arifûn* strive in doing good deeds. Thereafter they feel that they did no good, their condition is not good, and they did not utter any good. They therefore return and ask for pardon as though they are sinners who displayed shortcomings. Yaḥyâ ibn Mu'âdh said: **"The person whose highest hope in Allâh is not pardon is not a true *'ârif*."**

إن كـــنتُ لا أصـــلح للقـــرب فـــشأنكم عفـــو مـــن الـــذنب

"If I am not worthy of gaining Your proximity, Your pardoning my sin is sufficient."

Muṭrif used to say in his supplication: **"O Allâh! Be pleased with us. If You are not pleased with us, pardon us."** The person who considers his sins to be serious will not desire Allâh's pleasure. Instead, his highest aspiration will be to gain Allâh's pardon. The person whose recognition of Allâh ﷻ is perfect will only see himself in this position.

يـــا رب عـــبدك قـــد أتـــا ك وقـــد أســـاء وقـــد هفـــا
يكفـــيه مـــنك حـــياؤه مـــن ســـوء مـــا قـــد أســـلفا
حمـــل الذنـــوبَ علـــى الذنـــو ب المـــوبقات وأســـرفا
وقـــد اســـتجار بـــذيل عفـــ ـــوك مـــن عقابـــك ملحفـــا
يـــا رب فاعـــف وعافـــه فلأنـــت أولـــى مـــن عفـــا

"O my Lord! Your servant has come to You while having committed evils and errors. His shame is sufficient for the sins which he committed in the past. He bore the weight of sins upon destructive sins and committed excesses. He is urgently seeking refuge in Your pardon from Your punishment. O my Lord! Pardon him and overlook him. You alone are the most worthy of pardoning."

BIDDING FAREWELL TO RAMAḌÂN

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who fasts in Ramaḍân with îmân and expectation of reward shall have his past sins forgiven. The person who engages in night worship on the night of Power with îmân and**

expectation of reward shall have his past sins forgiven."(1) Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who engages in night worship in Ramadân with îmân and expectation of reward shall have his past sins forgiven."**(2)

A narration of an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* states: **"The person who fasts in Ramadân with îmân and expectation of reward shall have his past and future sins forgiven."**(3)

A similar narration of 'Ubâdah ibn as-Sâmit ﷺ with regard to engaging in night worship on the night of Power was quoted previously. The atonement [of sins] by fasting in this month is pre-conditioned with abstaining from whatever a person is supposed to abstain from. Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who fasts in Ramadân while recognizing its limits and abstaining from whatever he is supposed to abstain from, the fasting will atone for the past."**(4)

The majority of the scholars state that it atones for minor sins. This is inferred from the following Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ in which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The five salâhs, the Friday salâh to the next Friday salâh, and one Ramadân to the next Ramadân are all atonements for whatever is committed during the intervening periods provided the major sins are abstained from."**(5)

There are two explanations to the above:

1. These deeds serve as atonements provided majors sins are abstained from. So these deeds will not atone the major sins, and the minor sins of the person who does not abstain from major sins.

2. These compulsory deeds are atonements specifically for the minor sins under all conditions irrespective of whether the person abstained from the major sins or not. They do not atone for the major sins under any condition.

Ibn al-Mundhir said with regard to engaging in worship on the

(1) Al-Bukhari (1901) and Muslim (760).

(2) Al-Bukhari (37) and Muslim (759).

(3) An-Nasa'ei in As-Sunan (4/155).

(4) Checked by Ahmad (3/55) and Ibn Hibban (879).

(5) Muslim (233).

night of Power: **"There is hope that sins will be forgiven – the major and the minor sins."** Others also hold a similar view with regard to fasting. The majority of scholars are of the opinion that there has to be sincere repentance for major sins. We mentioned these issues in detail in other places.

The Ḥadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ shows that each of these three causes are atonements for past sins, viz. fasting in Ramaḍân, engaging in night worship in Ramaḍân, and engaging in worship on the night of Power. Mere engagement in worship on the night of Power atones for sins committed by a person, as mentioned previously in the Ḥadîth of 'Ubâdah ibn aṣ-Ṣâmit ﷺ. This is irrespective of whether it falls in the first ten nights, middle ten nights, or last ten nights. And irrespective of whether the person perceives the night of Power or not. Furthermore, the atonement of sins through worship on this night is not deferred till the completion of the month.

As for fasting and engaging in night worship in Ramaḍân, the atonement is deferred till the completion of the month. Once the month ends, a person has completed his fasting and night worship. Forgiveness for his past sins follows with the completion of these two causes, i.e. fasting and engaging in night worship. It is also said that they are forgiven with the completion of night worship on the last night of Ramaḍân by virtue of their night worship before the end of that day. Forgiveness for fasting is delayed until the end of that day with fasting. They are thus forgiven for their fasting on the night of 'Îd. This is inferred from the Ḥadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ who said that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"My followers have been given five things in Ramaḍân which no nation before them was given: (1) The smell that emanates from the mouth of a fasting person is purer in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the fragrance of musk. (2) The fish seek forgiveness for them till they open their fast. (3) Allâh ﷻ adorns His Paradise for them every day, and says to it: 'Soon My righteous servants will cast their burden aside and come to you.' (4) The rebellious devils are chained in this month. They are therefore unable to do what they used to do in the other months. (5) They are forgiven in the last night."** Someone asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Is this last night the night of power?"** He replied: **"No. However, when a worker completes his task, he is given his wage in full."**

It is related that the fasting persons shall return forgiven on the

day of fitr (*'id al-fitr*) and that this day is referred to as the day of prize-giving. There are weak Ahâdîth in this regard. Az-Zuhrî *rahimahullâh* said: **"When it is *'id al-fitr*, the people go out towards the common place of salâh (the *musallâh* or *'id gâh*). Allâh ﷻ appears before them and says: 'O My servants! You kept fast for Me and you engaged in night worship for Me. You may go back forgiven.'"** Mauriq al-'Ajalî said to one of his companions in the *musallâh* on the day of 'id: **"Today some people shall go back as when their mothers had given birth to them."**

A *mursal* Hadîth of Abû Ja'far al-Bâqir states: **"The person to whom Ramadân comes while he is healthy and a Muslim, he fasts during its days, offers the night salâh, lowers his gaze, safeguards his private part, tongue and hands; upholds salâh with congregation; and goes early for the Jumu'ah salâh; he has certainly kept fast in Ramadân, obtained full reward, acquired the night of Power, and achieved Allâh's prize."** Abû Ja'far said: **"It is a prize which is different from the prizes of the wealthy."**

When the fasting people complete their fasting and night worship of Ramadân, they have fulfilled the task which was delegated to them, but they are owed their wage which is forgiveness. When they go out for the *'id* salâh, their wages are distributed to them. They thus return to their homes having received their wage in full. A Hadîth of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ states: **"When it is the day of *'id* al-fitr, the angels descend to earth and stand at the entrances of the alleys and announce in a voice which all the creations except man and jinn hear. They say: 'O *ummah* of Muhammad! Go out towards a generous Sustainer who gives abundant reward and forgives serious sins.' Then when they appear at their place of salâh, Allâh ﷻ says to the angels: 'What is the reward of the labourer when he has completed his task?' They reply: 'Our Lord and Master, his reward is that he should be paid his wage in full.' Allâh ﷻ says: 'I make you witness to the fact that I have made My pleasure and My forgiveness their reward.' Go back, you are forgiven."** Narrated by Salamah ibn Shabîb in *Fadâ'il Ramadân* and other books. There is some objection to the chain of narrators of this Hadîth.

It is narrated through another chain from 'Ikramah ﷺ from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ. Part of it is *mauqûf*. It is also narrated as a *mauqûf* Hadîth through several chains which are weak. The person who completes the deeds which are on him in full shall receive his reward in full.

The person who fulfils in totality whatever he was supposed to shall receive his reward in cash, and not deferred.

مـــا بعـــتك مهجتـــي إلا بوصـــلكم ولا أســـــلمها إلا يـــــدا بـــــيد

فـــإن وفيـــتم بمـــا قلـــتم وفـــيت أنـــا وإن أبيـــتم يكـــون الـــرهنُ تحـــت يـــدي

"I will only sell my heart when I meet you. I will only hand it over for cash. If you fulfil your word, I will fulfil my word. If you refuse, the mortgage will be under my control."

The person who does less than what he was supposed to do shall receive a less reward accordingly. He should therefore blame none but himself. Salmân said: **"Salâh is a scale; the one who gives in full shall receive in full, the one who gives less, you know what the Qur'ân says about him.** Fasting and all other deeds are judged accordingly. The one who fulfils their dues, he is from among the good servants of Allâh ﷻ. The one who gives less, destruction to those who give in short measure. Is the person not ashamed of the fact that he fills his scale of carnal desires while gives in short measure for his scale of fasting and salâh! Listen, destruction to the Madyan [a nation which was well known for giving in less measure]. A Hadîth states: **"The worst of people is the thief who steals from his salâh."** If there is destruction for the person who gives in short measure for the scale of this world, what can be said of the condition of the one who gives in short measure in the scale of religion!? **"So destruction to those performers of salâh who delay with their salâh."** *(Sûrah al-Mâ'ûn, 107: 4-5)*

غـــدا توفـــى الـــنفوس مـــا كـــسبت ويحـــصد الـــزارعون مـــا زرعـــوا

إن أحـــــسنوا أحـــــسنوا لأنفـــــسهم وإن أســـاوا فبـــئس مـــا صـــنعوا

"Tomorrow the souls shall receive their share of what they earned. The harvesters shall reap what they sowed. If they did good, they did good for their own selves. If they did wrong, how evil is what they did!"

The pious predecessors used to strive hard in completing their deeds, perfecting them, and being proficient in them. They would then pay particular attention to the acceptance of their deeds and feared their rejection. They are described as: **"who give whatever they [have to] give with their hearts trembling."** *(Sûrah al-Mu'minûn, 23: 60)*

It is related that 'Alî ﷺ said: **"Pay more attention to the**

acceptance of deeds than the actual doing of deeds. Have you not heard Allâh ﷻ saying: 'Allâh only accepts from the pious ones.'" *(Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 27)*

Fudâlah ibn 'Ubayd said: **"It would be more beloved to me if I were to know that Allâh ﷻ accepted an atom's weight from me than the entire world and whatever is in it. This is because Allâh ﷻ says: 'Allâh only accepts from the pious ones.'"**

Mâlik ibn Dînâr *rahimahullâh* said: **"The fear of a deed not being accepted is more severe than the deed itself."** 'Atâ' as-Salîmî *rahimahullâh* said: **"Caution refers to safeguarding against an action not being for the sake of Allâh."** 'Abd al-'Azîz ibn Ruwâd said: **"I found them striving in good deeds. When they completed the deeds, they were overtaken by worry – not sure whether the deeds have been accepted or not."**

A person of the past said: **"They used to supplicate to Allâh ﷻ for six months to convey them to Ramadân, then they used to supplicate to Him for another six months to accept it from them."**

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *rahimahullâh* appeared before the people on *'îd* al-fitr and said in his sermon: **"O people! You kept fast for Allâh ﷻ for thirty days and you engaged in worship for thirty nights. You have come out today asking Allâh ﷻ to accept all this from you."** Grief used to be obvious on a pious predecessor on *'îd* al-fitr. Someone said to him: **"Today is a day of joy and happiness."** He said: **"You are right. However, I am a servant and my Master ordered me to work for Him. I do not know whether He accepted my work or not."**

Wuhayb ibn al-Ward saw some people laughing on the day of 'îd, so he said: **"If the fasting of these people has been accepted, this [laughing] of theirs is not the practise of those who are grateful. If their fasting is not accepted, it is not the practise of those who are fearful."** Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Allâh ﷻ made the month of Ramadân a race track for His creation in which they compete with acts of obedience towards gaining His pleasure. Some people surpassed and triumphed. Others lagged behind and lost. It is thus surprising that a person has the audacity to play and laugh on a day on which the doers of good triumph and those who do evil lose."**

لعلـــك غـــضبان وقلبـــي غافـــل سـلام علـى الـدارين إن كـنت راضـيا

"You are probably angry and my heart is heedless. I have no need for both the worlds as long as You are pleased."

It is related that ʻAlî ﷺ used to announce in the latter part of the nights of Ramaḍân: **"If only I knew who has been accepted so that I could congratulate him, and who has been rejected so that I could console him."** It is said that Ibn Masʻûd ﷺ used to say: **"Who is the one who has been accepted from among us so that we could congratulate him? Who is the one who has been rejected from among us so that we could console him? O you who are accepted! Congratulations to you. O you who are rejected! May Allâh ﷻ be kind to you in your time of affliction."**

لـيت شـعري مـن فـيه يقـبل مـنا فيهـنا يـا خيـبة المـردود
مـن تولـى عـنه بغيـر قـبول أرغـم الله أنفـه بخـزي شـديد

"If only I knew who among us is accepted so that we could congratulate him. O the destruction of the one who is rejected! The one whom He turns away from without accepting him, Allâh ﷻ has most certainly disgraced him severely."

What a great loss has been incurred by the person who missed out on the goodness of Ramaḍân! What great deprivation has been experienced by the person who is deprived in this month! What a vast difference between the person who received acceptance and forgiveness, and the person who received failure and loss! Many a person engaged in night worship receives nothing but sleeplessness. Many a fasting person receives nothing but hunger and thirst from his fasting.

مـا أصـنع؟ هكـذا جـرى المقـدور الجبـر لغيـري وأنـا المكـسور
أسـير ذنـب مقـيد مهجـور هـل يمكـن أن يغيـر المقـدور

"What can I do? This is how destiny operates. Others have the power while I am broken. I am the prisoner of my sins, I am confined, and I am kept in isolation. Is it possible to change destiny?"

Another poet said:

سـار القـوم والـشقا يقعدنـي حـازوا القـرب والجفـا يبعدنـي
حـسبي حـسبي إلـى متـى تطردنـي أعدائـي دائـي وكلهـم يقـصدني

"The people have journeyed while wretchedness confines me

to remain here. They gained proximity, while banishment has kept me far away. This is enough, this is enough. For how long are you going to repulse me? My illnesses are my enemies, and they are all heading towards me."

Another poet said:

أســـباب هـــواك أوهـــنت أســـبابي مـن بعـد جفـاك فالـضنى أولـى بـي
ضـاقت حيلـي وأنـت تـدري مـا بـي ارحـــم، فالعـــبد واقـــف بالـــباب

"The causes of your love have weakened my causes after you banished me. Weakness has overtaken me. I have exhausted all my plans, and you know the situation in which I am. Have mercy on me, your servant is standing at your door."

There are many means of forgiveness in the month of Ramadân. Some of the means of forgiveness are: fasting, engaging in night worship, and engaging in worship on the night of Power, as mentioned previously. There are other means of forgiveness as well. They are:

Providing food to those opening their fast, and lightening the burden of servants. These are mentioned in the Hadîth of Salmân ﷺ [quoted previously].

Another means of forgiveness is remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. A Hadîth states: **"The person who engages in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ in Ramadân is forgiven."**(1)

Another means of forgiveness is seeking forgiveness. The supplication of a fasting person is accepted in the course of his fasting and at the time of opening his fast. When Ibn 'Umar ﷺ used to open his fast, he used to say: **"O Allâh! The most expansive in forgiving! Forgive me."** Abû Hurayrah ﷺ relates in a Hadîth on the merit of Ramadân: **"Every person is forgiven in this month except the person who refuses."** The people asked: **"O Abû Hurayrah! Who is the one who refuses?"** He replied: **"The one who refuses to ask Allâh ﷻ for forgiveness."**

Another means of forgiveness is the angels' seeking forgiveness in favour of the fasting ones until they open their fast. This was mentioned previously.

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(1) At-Tabarany checked it in Al-Awsat (7170).

Since there are many means of forgiveness in Ramadân, the person who misses out on forgiveness is certainly deprived.

The *Sahîh* of Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ who said that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ climbed the pulpit and said: **"Âmîn, âmîn, âmîn."** He was asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! You climbed the pulpit and said: 'Âmîn, âmîn, âmîn.'"** He replied: **"Jibra'îl ﷺ came to me and said: 'A person experienced Ramadân but was not forgiven and was cast into the Hell-fire. May Allâh ﷻ distance him [from His mercy].' Say: 'Âmîn.' So I said: 'Âmîn.' 'A person has both or one of his parents but was not obedient to them. He passes away and enters the Hell-fire. May Allâh ﷻ distance him [from His mercy].' Say: 'Âmîn.' So I said: 'Âmîn.' 'Your name is mentioned in the presence of a person and he does not send salutations to you. He passes away and enters the Hell-fire. May Allâh distance him [from His mercy]. Say: 'Âmîn.' So I said: 'Âmîn.'"**(1) It is also related by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh* through another chain from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ. This narration contains the words: **"May he be disgraced."**(2) At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* considers this Hadîth to be sound.

Sa'îd ibn Qatâdah said: **"It used to be said that if a person is not forgiven in Ramadân, he will not be forgiven in other months."** Another Hadîth states: **"If he is not forgiven in Ramadân, when is the person going to be forgiven if he is not forgiven in this month?"** If a person is rejected on the night of Power, when is he going to be accepted? If a person does not become righteous in Ramadân, when is he going to become righteous? If a person has the illness of ignorance and heedlessness in Ramadân, when is he going to be cured? The trees which do not bear fruit during the fruit-bearing season are chopped off and cast into the fire. The person who commits excesses with the crop and at the time of sowing will harvest nothing but remorse and loss on the harvesting day.

The first one third of Ramadân is a mercy, the middle one third is forgiveness, and the last one third is salvation from the Hell-fire. This is related from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ by Salmân ﷺ. It is

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(1) (907 Mawared).

(2) Ahmad (2/254) and At-Tirmidhi (3545).

narrated by Ibn Khuzaymah *rahimahullâh* in his *Sahîh*. It is also related by Abû Hurayrah ﷺ as narrated by Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ and others.

The entire month of Ramadân is a month of mercy, forgiveness and salvation from the Hell-fire. An authentic Hadîth states: **"The doors of mercy are opened in it."** At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate: **"Allâh ﷻ sets free certain people from the Hell-fire, and this is on every night [of Ramadân]."** However, the major share of mercy is set aside for the first one third of the month. This mercy is for the doers of good and pious people. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Surely the mercy of Allâh ﷻ is near those who do good."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 56)* **"My mercy encompasses all things. I shall therefore write it for those who have fear, who give the zakâh..."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 156)* The robes of mercy and pleasure are donned on the pious in the first third of the month, and the doers of good are treated with virtue and affection.

As for the second third of the month, the major share of forgiveness is set aside for it. Those who keep fast are forgiven. If they commit a few minor sins, it does not prevent them from this forgiveness. Allâh ﷻ says: **"You Lord also forgives the people despite their wrong doing."** *(Sûrah ar-Ra'd, 13: 6)*

As for the last third of the month, the person who is destroyed by evils and became eligible for the Hell-fire because of his sins is given salvation from the Hell-fire. Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates: **"On every night of Ramadân at the time of opening the fast, Allâh ﷻ sets free one million people from the Hell-fire. When it is Friday or the night of Friday, He sets free one million people every hour from the Hell-fire, all of whom were eligible for punishment. When it is the last night of Ramadân, He sets free an equal number of all those whom He had set free from the beginning of the month till the end."** Narrated by Salamah ibn Shabîb and others.

The *'îd* al-fitr is a day of celebration for all the Muslims because the fasting people who had committed major sins are free from the Hell-fire. In so doing, the sinners are made to join the pious. The day of sacrifice (*yaum an-nahr* – *'îd* al-ad-hâ) is a major day of celebration because it is preceded by the day of 'Arafah [9th Dhû al-Hijjah], and the day of 'Arafah has the largest number of people freed from the Hell-fire – no other day enjoys this status. So these two days are days of celebration for the person who is freed in them. As for the

person who misses out on this, then these two days are days of warning for him.

Ash-Shiblî *raḥimahullâh* said:

لـيس عـيد المحـب قـصد المـصلى وانـــتظار الأميـــر والـــسلطان

إنمـــا العـــيد أن تكـــون لـــدى الله كـــريما مقـــربا فـــي أمـــان

"The *'îd* of the lover [of Allâh ﷻ] does not entail going to the *muṣallâ* (place where the *'îd* ṣalâh is performed) and waiting for the leader and king. The *'îd* for him is that he must be honoured by, be close to, and in peace with Allâh ﷻ."

An *'ârif* (a person who truly recognizes Allâh ﷻ) was seen in a desolate place on the night of 'îd. He was crying and saying:

بحـــرمة غربتـــي كـــم ذا الـــصدود ألا تعطـــف علـــيَّ ألا تجـــود

ســـرور العـــيد قـــد عـــمَّ النواحـــي وحزنـــي فـــي ازديـــاد لا يبـــيد

فـــإن كـــنتُ اقتـــرفت خـــلال ســـوء فعـــذري فـــي الهـــوى أن لا أعـــود

"By the inviolability of my banishment, how much longer do I have to bear your turning away from me? Will you not show your kindness to me? Will you not be generous to me? The joy of *'îd* has spread everywhere, but my grief is increasing without relenting. If I have committed evils, I offer this excuse that I will not go back to following my desires."

Since forgiveness and salvation from the Hell-fire are both dependent on fasting and engaging in night worship in Ramaḍân, Allâh ﷻ ordered us to extol His greatness at the end of this period. He says: **"that you may complete the number, and so that you may magnify Allâh for His having guided you, and so that you may be thankful."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 185)*

The servants are thus required to show gratitude to Allâh ﷻ for having inspired them to fast, helping them to fast, forgiving them, and freeing them from the Hell-fire. This gratitude entails remembering Him, thanking Him and fearing Him as He ought to be feared. Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ explains the words **"fearing Him as He ought to be feared"** as follows: Allâh ﷻ must be obeyed without being disobeyed, He must be remembered and not forgotten, and He must be thanked and not rejected. O you who committed major sins! Your booty lies in these noble days. There is no alternative to them and they are priceless. Many a sinner and offender is freed from the Hell-

fire in this month. The person who is freed from the Hell-fire in this month has certainly acquired an all-encompassing prize and a mighty reward.

O you whose Master frees him from the Hell-fire! Beware of returning to the slavery of sins after you have become a free person. Are you going to allow yourself to go near the Hell-fire when your Master distanced you from it? Are you going to cast yourself into it and not move away from it after He rescued you from it?!

وإن امـرءًا يـنجو مـن الـنار بعـدما تـزودَ مـن أعمالهـا لـسعيدُ

"Fortunate indeed is the person who is saved from the Hell-fire after having committed sins which make him eligible for it."

If mercy is for the doers of good, the sinner must not despair of it. If forgiveness is written in favour of the pious, the one who has wronged himself is not denied it.

إن كـان عفـوك لا يـرجوه ذو خطـأ فمـن يجـود علـى العاصـين بالكـرم

"If a sinner cannot hope for Your pardon, who is going to shower his affection to the sinners?"

Another poet says:

إن كـان لا يـرجوك إلا محـسن فمـن الـذي يـرجو ويدعـو المـذنب

"If only a doer of good can have hope in You, in whom is the sinner going to place his hope, and to whom is he going to supplicate?"

Another poet says:

لـم لا يرجـى العفـو مـن ربـنا وكـيف لا يطمـع فـي حلمـه
وفـي الـصحيحين أتـى أنـه بعـبده أرحـم مـن أمـه

"Why should we have no hope for pardon in our Lord, and why should we not desire His forbearance, when it is stated in the *Saḥîḥayn* (the Ḥadîth collections of al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh* and Muslim *raḥimahullâh*) that He is more merciful to His servant than his mother is to him?"

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Say: O My servants who have committed excesses against their own selves! Do not despair of the mercy of Allâh. Surely Allâh forgives all sins."** *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 53)*

O sinner! All of us are like that. So do not despair of Allâh's

mercy because of your evil deeds. He frees many like you from the Hell-fire during these days. Have good thoughts about your Master and repent to Him because Allâh ﷻ only destroys the person who destroys himself.

إذا أوجعـــتك الذنـــوب فـــداوها بـرفع يـد فـي اللـيل والليل مظلـم

ولا تقـــنطن مـــن رحمـــة الله إنمـــا قـنوطك مـنها مـن ذنـوبك أعظـم

فـــرحمته للمحـــسنين كـــرامة ورحمـــته للمذنبـــين تكـــرُّمُ

"If sins have injured you, treat them by raising your hand in the dark of the night. Never despair of Allâh's mercy because your despairing of His mercy is more serious than your sins. His mercy to the doers of good is an honour, and His mercy to the sinners is an act of generosity."

The person who hopes for salvation from the Hell-fire in Ramadân must do the things which would ensure that he earns that salvation, and which are provided to him in this month. It was the practice of Abû Qilâbah to free a beautiful slave woman at the end of the month in the hope that this deed would earn him freedom from the Hell-fire. The Hadîth of Salmân al-Fârisî ﷺ [quoted previously] states: **"The person who provides food to a fasting person shall earn salvation from the Hell-fire. The person who lightens the burden of his servant [worker] in this month shall earn salvation from the Hell-fire."** It also states: **"Do four things excessively in this month. You will please your Lord with two of these, and the other two you cannot do without. The two with which you will please your Lord are: (1) testifying that there is none worthy of worship except Allâh ﷻ, (2) seeking forgiveness. The two which you cannot do without are: (1) begging Allâh ﷻ for Paradise, (2) seeking refuge in Him from the Hell-fire."**

Each of the four things mentioned in the above Hadîth is a cause of salvation and forgiveness. As for testifying to the oneness of Allâh ﷻ, it destroys and completely wipes off all sins. It leaves behind no sin at all, and no deed can surpass it. It is equal to freeing slaves which ensures freedom from the Hell-fire. The one who says this *kalimah*[1] four times in the morning and evening, Allâh ﷻ shall free him from the Hell-fire. The one who says it with sincerity from his

(1) There is none worthy of worship except Allâh ﷻ and Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allâh.

heart, Allâh ﷻ shall make him forbidden to the Hell-fire.

As for seeking forgiveness, this is one of the greatest means of forgiveness. This is because seeking forgiveness is actually a supplication for forgiveness. The supplication of a fasting person is accepted when he is fasting and at the time of opening his fast. The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ was quoted previously: **"Every person is forgiven in this month except the person who refuses."** The people asked: **"O Abû Hurayrah! Who is the one who refuses?"** He replied: **"The one who refuses to ask Allâh ﷻ for forgiveness."**

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Seek forgiveness in abundance because you do not know when mercy is descending."** Luqmân said to his son: **"O my son! Habituate your tongue into seeking forgiveness because there are certain times which Allâh ﷻ set aside in which He never refuses a beggar."** Moreover, Allâh ﷻ combined *tauhîd* (oneness of Allâh ﷻ) and seeking forgiveness in this verse: **"Know, then, that none is worthy of worship but Allâh; and seek forgiveness for your sins..."** *(Sûrah Muhammad, 47: 19)*

It is stated in some traditions that Satan said: **"I destroyed people through sins, and they destroyed me with *lâ ilâha illallâh*... and seeking forgiveness."** Seeking forgiveness is the seal of all good deeds. Salâh, hajj and the night worship are concluded with it. Assemblies [and meetings] are also concluded with it. If they were assemblies of remembrance [of Allâh ﷻ], this seeking forgiveness is like a stamp on them. If they were assemblies of play and amusement, this seeking forgiveness is an atonement for all this. Similarly, it would be appropriate to conclude the fasts of Ramadân with seeking forgiveness.

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *rahimahullâh* wrote to all the governors in the different cities ordering them to conclude Ramadân with seeking forgiveness and charity, i.e. the charity that is given on the day of *'îd* (*sadaqatul fitr*). This *sadaqatul fitr* is a purification for the fasting person from the futilities and obscenities which he may have committed in this month. Seeking forgiveness makes up for the wastage that was caused by the futilities and obscenities. It is for this reason that one of the *'ulamâ'* of the past said: **"The *sadaqatul fitr* for a fasting person is like the two *sajdah sahw* (two prostrations which a person makes when he forgets something in his salâh) of salâh."**

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *rahimahullâh* said in his letter: **"Say as**

your father, Âdam ﷺ, said: 'O our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall certainly be destroyed.' *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 23)* **Say as Nûh ﷺ said: 'If You do not pardon me and do not have mercy on me, I will be of the losers.'** *(Sûrah Hûd, 11: 47)* **Say as Ibrâhîm ﷺ said: 'It is He of whom I hope that He will forgive me my faults on the day of Judgement.'** *(Sûrah ash-Shu'arâ', 26: 82)* **Say as Mûsâ ﷺ said: 'O my Lord! I have wronged myself, so forgive me.' He then forgave him. Surely He is forgiving, merciful.'** *(Sûrah al-Qasas, 28: 16)* **Say as Dhû an-Nûn [Yûnus ﷺ] said: 'there is no deity but You. You are pure of all deficiency. I was of the sinners.'** *(Sûrah al-Ambiyâ', 21: 87)***"**

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ said: **"Back biting causes holes in the fast while seeking forgiveness patches it. Whoever of you is able to come with a patched fast should do so."** Ibn al-Munkadir said: **"This means that fasting is a shield against the Hell-fire as long as no speech makes holes in it. Evil speech makes holes in this shield while seeking forgiveness patches these holes."** Our fast is thus in need of beneficial seeking forgiveness, and good deeds are intercessors in its favour. How often we make holes in our fast with the arrows of our speech. We then patch them while the holes are gone bigger and bigger. How many holes we stitch with the needle of good deeds, and then cut them with the sword of evil deeds!

A pious predecessor was in the habit of seeking forgiveness from the shortcomings which he displayed in his ṣalâh just as a sinner seeks forgiveness from his sins. If this is the condition of the doers of good in their acts of worship, what can be said of sinners like us in our acts of worship?! Have mercy on the one whose good deeds are actually evil [because they are not fulfilled correctly], and whose acts of obedience are all performed negligently.

أستغفر الله من صيامي ... طول زماني ومن صلاتي
صيامنا كله خروق ... وصلاتنا أيما صلاتي
مستيقظ في الدجى ولكن ... أحسن من يقظتي سباتي

"I seek forgiveness from Allâh from my fasting and ṣalâh throughout my life. Our fasts all have holes in them, and as for my ṣalâh, it is not worthy of being called a ṣalâh. I am awake in the darkness of the night, but my sleeping is better than my wakefulness."

Close to this is the Messenger's ﷺ order to 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* to ask for pardon on the night of Power. A believer strives in fasting and engaging in night worship during Ramadân. When the end of the month draws near and he comes upon the night of Power, he asks Allâh ﷻ for nothing but pardon, like a sinner who has shortcomings. Silah ibn Ashyam used to spend the night in worship and at the time of dawn he used to say this in his supplication: **"O Allâh! I ask You to give me refuge from the Hell-fire. How can someone like me have the audacity to ask You for Paradise?"** Mutraf used to say in his supplication: **"O Allâh! Be pleased with us. If You are not pleased with us then pardon us."** Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh said: **"That person is not an *'ârif* (one who truly recognizes Allâh ﷻ) whose sole object is pardon from Allâh ﷻ."**

إن كـــنتُ لا أصـــلح للقـــرب فـــشأنكم عفـــو مـــن الـــذنب

"If I am not worthy of proximity to You, pardoning my sin is sufficient for me."

The most beneficial *istighfâr* is the one which is accompanied by repentance. It entails untying the knot of persistence [in sin]. The one who seeks forgiveness with his tongue while his heart is knotted in sin and he is determined to return to sin after Ramadân, and also returns to it, then his fasting is rejected and the door of acceptance is shut off from him. Ka'b ﷺ said: **"The person who fasts in Ramadân while thinking to himself that he will not disobey Allâh ﷻ after Ramadân shall enter Paradise without questioning and accounting. The person who fasts in Ramadân while thinking to himself that he will disobey Allâh ﷻ after Ramadân, then his fast is rejected."** Narrated by Salamah ibn Shabîb.

ولـو لا التقـى ثـم النهـى خـشية الـردى لعاصـيت فـي وقـت الـصبا كـل زاجـر

قضى مـا قضى فيما مضى ثـم لا تـرى لـــه عـــودة أخـــرى الليالـــي الغوابـــر

"Were it not for fear and knowledge of falling into destruction, I would have disobeyed every admonisher during my youth. He did whatever he did in the past, and you do not see him returning once again to the bygone times."

Abû Bakrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"None of you should say: 'I kept fast for the entire month of Ramadân', nor: 'I remained in night worship for the entire**

month of Ramadân.'"[1] Abû Bakrah ﷺ said: **"I do not know whether I should dislike thinking highly of myself or whether there has to be heedlessness."**

Where is the person who, when he kept fast, safeguarded his fast; and when he engaged in night worship, he remained steadfast and upright in his night worship? Where are those who did well in Islam and then departed peacefully? Today the only one remaining is the one who, when he fasts, he is proud about it and announces it. When he engages in night worship, he becomes conceited by it. What a vast difference between the person who is carefree and the one who is fearful, the one who finds and the one who misses, the one who conceals and the one who displays?!

Asking for Paradise and seeking refuge from the Hell-fire are the most important supplications. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"We buzz around them."**[2] The supplication of a fasting person is likely to be accepted. He should therefore ask for the most important things. Abû Muslim said: **"Whenever I got the opportunity to supplicate, I directed it towards seeking refuge from the Hell-fire."** He said: **"Not equal are the people of the Hell-fire and the people of Paradise. The people of Paradise are the truly triumphant ones."** *(Sûrah al-Hashr, 59: 20)*

A Hadîth states: **"Seek goodness throughout your lives and seek the fragrances of your Lord's mercy. Allâh ﷻ most certainly has fragrances of His mercy which He pours onto whomever He wills from His servants. Ask Allâh to conceal your private matters and give you security from all which causes you fear."**[3] The person who receives these fragrances is most fortunate and will never experience misfortune thereafter. The greatest of these fragrances is for a person to coincide with a time of acceptance in which he asks for Paradise and salvation from the Hell-fire, and his supplication is accepted. He thus triumphs with eternal fortune. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Whoever is drawn far away from the Hell-fire and entered into Paradise – he has succeeded."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 185)* **"As for those who are wretched, they shall be in the fire – shouting and roaring therein. Abiding therein as long as the**

(1) Checked by Abu Dawoud (2415), An-Nasa'ei (4/435), Ahmad (5/49), and Ibn Khouzayma (2085).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (3/474).

(3) Checked by Al-Baihaqi in "Ash-Shu'ab" (1121).

heavens and the earth endure, except that which your Lord wills. Surely your Lord does whatever He wills. As for those who are fortunate, they shall be in Paradise." *(Sûrah Hûd, 11: 106-108)*

لـيس الـسعيد الـذي دنـياه تـسعده إن الـسعيد الـذي يـنجو مـن الـنار

"A fortunate person is not the one whose worldly life makes him fortunate. A truly fortunate person is the one who is saved from the Hell-fire."

Servants of Allâh! Ramadân is on the verge of departing and only a few days of it are left. Those of you who did good deeds in this month must complete them. The one who displayed shortcomings in it must conclude it with good because deeds are judged by the manner in which they are concluded. So take benefit from the few days and nights which remain of it, and bid farewell to it with good deeds which will testify in your favour before the all-knowing King. Bid farewell to it with the purest greetings and peace.

سـلام مـن الـرحمن كـل أوان على خير شـهر قـد مـضى وزمـان
سـلام علـى شـهر الـصيام فإنـه أمـان مـن الـرحمن أي أمـان
لـئن فنـيت أيامـك الغـرُّ بغـتة فمـا الحـزن مـن قلبـي علـيك بفـان

"May there be peace from the Merciful at all times upon the best month and time which passed. Peace be on the month of fasting for it is a source of peace from the Merciful, and what a source of peace it is! Your wonderful days may have ended all of a sudden, but the grief in my heart over you has not ended."

The days of this month have passed but you did not obey [Allâh ﷻ]. All the sins and whatever time you wasted in this month have been recorded against you. Those who strove hard in this month reached their goal, but you have been cut off from your path. Do you think that this scolding is not directed to you? Can you not hear?!

مـا ضـاع أيامـنا هـل يغـرم هـيهات والأزمـان كـيف تقـوم
يـوم بـأرواح يـباع ويـشترى وأخـوه لـيس يـسام فـيه درهـم

"Can we ever pay back for whatever we wasted in the days that passed? Never! How can time come back? The day when souls will be bought and sold, and one's brother will not be able to bargain with dirhams [because money will be of no use]."

The hearts of the true lovers of Allâh ﷻ yearn for this month,

and they sigh out of the pain of separation.

دهـــاك الفـــراق فمـــا تـــصنع أتـــصبر للبـــين أم تجـــزع

إذا كـــنت تبكـــي وهـــم جيـــرة فكـــيف تكـــون إذا ودعـــوا

"Separation has befallen you, now what are you going to do? Are you going to exercise patience over this separation, or are you going to become anxious? If you cry when they are still your neighbours, what are you going to do when they bid farewell [and depart]?"

How can the tears of a believer not flow over the departure of this month when he does not know whether he has enough of his life to see it returning [the following year]?

تذكـــرت أيامـــا مـــضت ولياليـــا خلـت فجـرت مـن ذكـرهن دمـوع

ألا هـل لهـا يـوما مـن الدهـر عـودة وهـل لـي إلـى وقـت الوصـال رجـوع

وهـل بعـد إعـراض الحبـيب تواصـل وهـــل لـــبدور قـــد أفلـــن طلـــوع

"I thought of the days and nights which passed and departed, and so tears began flowing from their remembrance. O, will a single day ever return? Will I be able to return and reunite? Will I be able to meet my beloved after his departure? Can the full moons which set ever rise again?"

Where is the burning of those who are toiling during the day? Where is the uneasiness of those engaged in *tahajjud* at dawn?

اســـــمع أنـــــين العاشـــــقين إن اســـــتطعت لـــــه ســـــماعا

راح الحبـــــــيب فـــــــشيعته مدامعـــــي تهمـــــي ســـــراعا

لـــو كلـــف الجـــبل الأصـــم فـــراق إلـــف مـــا اســـتطاعا

"Listen to the sighing of the lovers [of Allâh ﷻ] if you are able to listen to them. My beloved is departing so I went out to bid him farewell. My tears are flowing swiftly. If a solid mountain were made to bear [the pain of] separation from its beloved, it would not have been able to bear it."

If this is the trembling of the person who profited in this month [by doing good deeds], what can be said of the condition of the one who bore losses in its days and nights [by committing evils]? How is the crying of the person who committed excesses be of any avail to him when his affliction is so serious? The poor man was admonished

so much, but he did not accept any admonishment. He was invited so much towards rectification but he did not respond to any of it. He saw those who gained proximity [to Allâh ﷻ] but he remained at a distance. How many groups of travellers went ahead, but he remained sitting! He continued in this way until no time remained and the punishment hovered around him. He expressed regret over his shortcomings at a time when regret is of no use. He tried to make up at a time when there is no time.

أتتـــرك مـــن تحـــب وأنـــت جـــار وتطلـــــبهم إذا بعـــــد المـــــزار

وتبكـــــي بعـــــد نـــــأيهم اشـــــتياقا وتـــسأل فـــي المـــنازل أيـــن ســـاروا

تـــركتَ ســـؤالهم وهـــم حـــضور وتـــــرجو أن تخبـــــرك الـــــديارُ

فنفـــسك لـــم ولا تلـــم المطايـــا ومـــت كمـــدا فلـــيس لـــك اعـــتذار

"Do you remain aloof from those whom you love when you are near them, yet you seek them when they are gone far away? You cry out of yearning when they have gone far away and you inquire about their whereabouts at the different stations. You did not inquire about them when they were present, and now you want their [empty] abodes to inform you about them. Blame your self and not the animals [which are conveying you]. Die in your grief because you have no excuse."

O month of Ramadân! Be kind to us. The tears of the lovers are gushing forth, and their hearts are bursting out of the pain of separation. Perhaps a single moment for bidding farewell will extinguish whatever the fire of yearning has burnt. Perhaps a single moment of repentance and renouncement [of sins] will mend all the holes in the fast. Perhaps the one who is cut off from the caravan of those who have been accepted [by Allâh ﷻ] will be able to join them. Perhaps the prison of his sins will be freed. Perhaps the one who was eligible for the Hell-fire will be freed. Perhaps the mercy of the Master will inspire the sinner.

عـسى وعـسى مـن قـبل وقـت التفـرق إلـى كـل مـا تـرجو مـن الخيـر ترتقـي

فيجبـــر مكـــسور ويقـــبل تائـــب ويعـــتق خطـــاء ويـــسعد مـــن شـــقي

"Perhaps, perhaps you will acquire all the good which you hope for before the time of separation. The one who is broken will be restored, the repentant one will be accepted, the sinner will be freed, and the unfortunate one will become fortunate."

SHAWWÂL

FASTING THE ENTIRE MONTH OF SHAWWÂL AND FOLLOWING RAMADÂN WITH SIX FASTS OF SHAWWÂL

Abû Ayyûb al-Ansârî ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who fasts in Ramadân and follows it with six fasts in Shawwâl is like a person who kept fast throughout the year."**(1) There are differences of opinion with regard to the Hadîth itself, and then with regard to practising on it. There are those who say that it is authentic while others say it is *mauqûf*. This is stated by Ibn 'Uyaynah and others. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* is inclined to this view. There are those who object to its chain of narrators.

As for practising on this Hadîth, the majority of *'ulamâ'* consider it desirable to fast for six days in Shawwâl. This opinion is shared by Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ, Tâwûs, ash-Sha'bî, and Maymûn ibn Mihrân. It is also the opinion of Ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh*, Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh*, Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Is-hâq *rahimahullâh*. But others reject this.

When these six fasts were mentioned before al-Hasan *rahimahullâh*, he said: **"Allâh ﷻ is pleased with this month [Ramadân] for the entire year."** He probably raised his objection against those who believe in the obligation of keeping these fasts, and do not consider the fasts of Ramadân to be sufficient in fulfilling the obligation of fasting. His statement apparently makes reference to this. Ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh*, Imam Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh* and Imam Abû Yûsuf *rahimahullâh* considered these fasts to be reprehensible. They all provide the reason that it amounts to similarity with the people of the Book. That is, adding to the obligatory fasts something which is not part of it. But the majority of the latter scholars of these schools say that there is no harm in keeping these fasts. They provide the reason that the gap [of not fasting] has been acquired by abstaining from fasting on the day of 'îd. This is related by the author of *al-Kâfî*. Ibn Mahdî considered

(1) Muslim (1164).

these fasts to be reprehensible but did not prohibit them. Imam Mâlik *raḥimahullâh* also considered them reprehensible. He states in *al-Muwaṭṭâ'* that he did not see any people of knowledge and jurist keeping these fasts. He said: **"I did not hear about this from anyone of the past. The scholars consider it reprehensible and fear that it is an innovation. They fear that fasts which are not of Ramaḍân may be attached to it if the ignorant ones see any scholar doing it."** It is said that he himself used to keep these fasts but disliked keeping them in a manner that would cause a person to believe in their obligation, so that a person may not add something to Ramaḍân which is not part of it.

As for those who consider keeping these fasts to be desirable, they have three opinions on the manner in which they should be kept.

1. It is desirable to commence fasting at the beginning of the month consecutively. This is the opinion of Imam ash-Shâfi'î *raḥimahullâh* and Ibn al-Mubârak *raḥimahullâh*. A Ḥadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ states: **"The person who keeps six consecutive fasts after the day of *'îd* is as though he kept fast for the entire year."** Narrated by aṭ-Ṭabarânî and others through weak chains. It is also narrated as a *mauqûf* Ḥadîth. It is also narrated as a statement of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ with similar meaning, also through a weak chain.

2. There is no difference between keeping them consecutively or separately throughout the month. This is the opinion of Wakî' *raḥimahullâh* and Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh*.

3. These fasts should not be kept immediately after the day of *'îd* because these are days of eating and drinking. Instead, a person should commence fasting three days before or after the days of *bîḍ* (13th, 14th and 15th). This is the opinion of Ma'mar and 'Abd ar-Razzâq, and also attributed to 'Aṭâ'. In fact, it is said that he considered it reprehensible for the person who has to keep missed fasts of Ramaḍân to join them to these fasts of Shawwâl. Instead, he must separate between the two. This is a singular opinion.

The majority of the *'ulamâ'* say that it is not reprehensible to fast the day after the day of 'îd. This is inferred from the Ḥadîth of 'Imrân ibn Ḥusayn ﷺ in which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to a person: **"Once you have eaten, you may fast [the next day]."** We quoted this under the discussion on fasting at the end of Sha'bân.

A group of Companions ﷺ and Tâbi'ûn used to fast continuously

apart from the days of *'îd* al-fiṭr and al-aḍ-ḥâ. It is related that Umm Salamah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* used to say to her family: **"Whoever has missed fasts of Ramaḍân must start the day after the day of 'îd. The one who fasts the day after the day of *'îd* is as if he kept fast in Ramaḍân."** There is some weakness in its chain.

Ash-Sha'bî said: **"I prefer fasting a day after Ramaḍân than fasting throughout the year."** The following is narrated through a weak chain from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ: **"The one who fasts one day after the day of *'îd* is as if he kept fast for the entire year."** Another narration from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ states: **"The one who fasts after Ramaḍân is like a person who turns around and attacks after fleeing."**(1)

Fasting the entire month of Shawwâl

A person from the Quraysh heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: **"The person who keeps the fasts of Ramaḍân, Shawwâl and Wednesdays and Thursdays shall enter Paradise."**(2) Narrated by Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* and an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh*.

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh*, Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* narrate from Muslim al-Qurashî that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about fasting perpetually, so he said: **"Your family has a right over you. You should rather fast in Ramaḍân, the month which follows it, and every Wednesday and Thursday. If you do this, you would have kept fast perpetually while having eaten."**(3) [In other words, you shall receive the reward of fasting perpetually although you did not fast perpetually].

Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* narrates through a *munqati'* (cut off or severed) chain that Usâmah ibn Zayd ﷺ used to fast throughout the [four] sanctified months. So the Messenger of Allâh said to him: **"Keep fast in Shawwâl."**(4) He stopped fasting in the sanctified months and continued fasting in Shawwâl until his death.

Abû Ya'lâ al-Mauṣalî narrated the above through a continuous

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(1) Checked by Al-Baihaqi in Ash-Shu'ab (3737).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (3/416), and An-Nasa'ei in Al-Kubra (2778).

(3) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (748), An-Nasa'ei (2/174) and Abu Dawoud (2432).

(4) It was checked before.

chain: Usâmah ﷺ said: **"I used to fast one month in the year. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked me: 'What about Shawwâl?'"** Consequently, he would commence fasting the day after *'îd* till the end of Shawwâl. Fasting in Shawwâl is like fasting in Sha'bân because both months are like sanctuaries for Ramadân and they follow it in virtue. We mentioned in our discussion on the merit of fasting in Sha'bân that fasting in this month is superior to fasting in the sanctified months, and there are no differences in this regard. Fasting in Ramadân and following it with six fasts in Shawwâl is equal to fasting throughout the year because the reward of a good deed is multiplied ten times. This is clearly explained in the Hadîth of Thaubân ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fasting in Ramadân is equal to fasting for ten months. Fasting for six days in Shawwâl is equal to fasting for two months. This equals fasting for a full year."**(1) In other words, Ramadân and six days after it. Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* and this Hadîth is quoted from him. It is also narrated by Ibn Hibbân in his *Sahîh*. Abû Hâtim ar-Râzî considers it to be an authentic Hadîth.

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* said: **"There is no Hadîth more authentic than this one on this subject."** He remained silent about the other narration.

There is no difference whether Ramadân is of twenty nine days or thirty days. Some scholars apply the following Hadîth in the same light: **"The two months in which *'îd* falls are not incomplete: Ramadân and Dhû al-Hijjah."**(2) He said: This refers to the completion of the end of the month irrespective of whether it was of twenty nine days or thirty days. So if a person follows it with six fasts in Shawwâl, it will equal fasting the entire year under all conditions [whether Ramadân was of twenty nine or thirty days]. It was because of the above narration that Is-hâq ibn Râhwayh disliked referring to Ramadân as **"incomplete"** even if it was twenty nine days.

Someone could make the objection that if a person keeps these six fasts in any month apart from Shawwâl, he will still receive this reward. Why, then, is fasting specified in Shawwâl? The reply to this is that fasting in Shawwâl is attached to the virtue of fasting in

(1) Checked by Ahmad (5/280) Ibn Hibban (3627), and An-Nasa'ei in Al-Kubra (2860).

(2) Al-Bukhari (1912) and Muslim (1089).

Ramadân. The person will therefore receive the reward of keeping compulsory fasts for a full year. This is stated by Ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh*. It is stated that at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrated it from him in a part of a Hadîth.(1) He was probably referring to what is related from Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* in which she said that the person who fasts the day after the day of *'îd* is as though he kept fast in Ramadân.

The benefits of fasting habitually after Ramadân

1. Keeping six fasts in Shawwâl after fasting in Ramadân enables one to acquire the reward of fasting for a full year, as explained previously.

2. The fasts of Sha'bân and Shawwâl are like the Sunnah salâhs which are performed before and after the compulsory salâhs. These serve to fill the shortcomings and gaps which were committed in the compulsory act. Compulsory acts will be filled and perfected by the optional acts on the day of Resurrection as narrated from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ through several Ahâdîth. The majority of people have some shortcomings and gaps in their compulsory fasts and these need to be filled and mended. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ prohibited a person from saying: **"I kept fast for the entire month of Ramadân, or I engaged in night worship for the entire month."** A Companion ﷺ said: **"I do not know whether I should dislike showing off my deeds or whether I should be heedless of them."**

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *rahimahullâh* used to say: **"The person who is unable to give in charity should fast."** In other words, the person who does not have the means to pay the *sadaqatul fitr* at the end of Ramadân must fast after that because fasting takes the place of feeding for the sake of atonement from sins. This is similar to how fasting takes the place of atonement for breaking oaths and other similar atonements such as the atonement for killing, engaging in conjugal relations in Ramadân, and *zihâr*.(2)

3. Being in the habit of fasting after the fast of Ramadân is a

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(1) Check Sunan At-Tirmidhi (3/123) chapter of what was mentioned in Fasting six days of shawwal hadith (759).

(2) *Zihâr* refers to likening one's wife to one's mother. This was a pre-Islamic way of issuing divorce. Refer to the books of jurisprudence for further details.

sign of acceptance of the Ramadân fasts. This is because when Allâh ﷻ accepts a deed from a servant, He enables him to follow it with another good deed. A person said: **"The reward of a good deed is following it with another good deed."** So if a person does a good deed and follows it with another good deed after it, it is an indication of the acceptance of his first deed. If a person does a good deed and follows it with an evil deed, it is a sign of rejection of the good deed and its non-acceptance.

4. The fasts of Ramadân enable the forgiving of past sins, as mentioned previously. Those who kept fast in Ramadân are given their full reward on the day of *'îd* which is the day of prize-giving. Fasting habitually after the month of Ramadân would entail expressing gratitude for this bounty. There is no bounty greater than the forgiveness of sins. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to remain standing in night worship to the extent that his feet would become swollen. He was asked: **"Why do you do this when Allâh ﷻ has forgiven you your past and future sins?"** He replied: **"Should I not be a grateful servant?"**(1)

Allâh ﷻ ordered His servants to be grateful for the bounty of fasting in Ramadân by engaging in His remembrance and through other forms of expressing gratitude. He says: **"that you may complete the number, you may magnify Allâh for His having guided you, and so that you may be thankful."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 185)* One of the ways a person can give thanks to Allâh ﷻ for enabling him to fast in Ramadân, helping him in this regard and forgiving him his sins is for the servant to fast in gratitude after the month. Whenever a pious predecessor was inspired to engage in night worship, he would follow it with fasting the next day as a way of thanks for the inspiration to engage in night worship.

People used to ask Wuhayb ibn al-Ward about the rewards for certain deeds, such as circuiting the Ka'bah, etc. He would reply: **"Do not ask about its reward. Rather ask about how the person who was inspired to do this deed ought to give thanks for being inspired and helped to do it."**

إذا أنت لم تزدد على كل نعمة لمولـيكها شكرا فلست بشاكر

"If you do not increase your gratitude for every bounty

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (1130) and Muslim (2819).

which the Master bestowed you with, you are not a grateful person."

Every bounty which a servant receives from Allâh ﷻ - whether related to religion or this world – is in need of gratitude. Then the inspiration to give thanks for that bounty is another bounty in itself which needs another gratitude. Then the inspiration for this second gratitude is another bounty which needs another gratitude. This will continue till infinity. Servants are thus unable to really fulfil their gratitude to Allâh ﷻ. The essence of gratitude is to acknowledge one's inability to be truly grateful. A poet says:

إذا كـــان شـــكري نعمـــةَ الله نعمـــةً علـى لـه فـي مـثلها يجـب الـشكر

فكـــيف بلـــوغ الـــشكر إلا بفـــضله وإن طالـــت الأيـــام واتـــصل العمـــر

"If my gratitude to Allâh ﷻ for a bounty which He bestowed to me is a bounty in itself, it is obligatory on me to express similar gratitude to Him again. None can truly thank Him except through His grace, even if many days pass and life is continuous."

Abû 'Amr ash-Shaybânî said: **"Mûsâ ﷺ said on the day when he went to Mt. Tûr: 'O my Lord! If I offer salâh, it is through Your inspiration. If I give in charity, it is through Your inspiration. If I convey Your message, it is through Your inspiration. So how can I show my gratitude to You?' Allâh ﷻ said: 'O Mûsâ! Now you have shown Your gratitude to Me.'"**

As for returning the bounty of fasting in Ramadân with committing sins, this amounts to changing the bounty of Allâh ﷻ with disbelief. The person who resolves to returning to sins after the expiry of Ramadân shall have his fasting is rejected, and the door of mercy is shut to him. Ka'b ؓ said: **"The person who fasts in Ramadân while thinking to himself that he will not disobey Allâh ﷻ after Ramadân shall enter Paradise without questioning and accounting. The person who fasts in Ramadân while thinking to himself that he will disobey Allâh ﷻ after Ramadân, his fast is rejected."**

5. The deeds with which a person was gaining proximity to Allâh ﷻ do not end with the expiry of Ramadân. Rather, they continue after its expiry as long as the person is alive. This is the meaning of the Hadîth mentioned previously in which it is stated that the person who fasts after Ramadân is like a person who goes back to face the

enemy after having fled from the battlefield. Many people express joy over the expiry of Ramadân because they consider fasting to be heavy on them, they get tired of it, and they feel that it has prolonged too much. The person who experiences all of this is unable to return quickly to fasting. So the person who returns to fasting soon after the day of *'îd* shows his desire to fast, and that the entire month of fasting did not make him fatigued, did not bear down on him, and he did not become averse to it.

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates: **"The most beloved deeds in the sight of Allâh ﷻ are those of the person who stops and departs."**(1) This refers to the person who recites the Qur'ân from beginning to end, and commences once again when he ends. Each time he comes to the end [of his journey of reciting the Qur'ân], he commences once again. The person who commences fasting soon after the month of Ramadân is similar to the person who recites the Qur'ân and returns to its recitation as soon as he completes it. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

Someone said to Bishr: **"The people are worshipping and striving hard in Ramadân."** He said: **"Evil are those who only fulfil the rights of Allâh ﷻ in the month of Ramadân. A righteous person is he who worships and strives hard throughout the year."** Ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* was asked: **"Which month is superior, Rajab or Sha'bân?"** He said: **"Be an ardent worshipper of Allâh ﷻ and do not be a person who confines himself to worship in Sha'bân or Rajab alone."** He then said:

إذا كـنت فـي حـرب الهـوى متجـردا فكـل أرض ثغـر لـي وطرسـوس

"If I am devoted to doing battle for the sake of love, every land is a battlefield for me and every land is Tarasûs(2) for me."

There was constancy in the deeds of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* was asked if the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ set aside any particular day for any particular act of worship. She replied: **"No. there was constancy in his deeds."**(3) She said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not offer more than eleven rak'ahs –**

(1) At-Tirmidhi in As-Sunan (2948).

(2) A place which was under the Armenians and then came under the control of the Muslims.

(3) Al-Bukhari (1987).

neither in Ramadân nor in other months."(1) The different recitals and remembrances of Allâh ﷻ which he missed out in Ramadân would be fulfilled in Shawwâl. He left out the *i'tikâf* (seclusion) of the last ten days of Ramadân one year and thus fulfilled this in Shawwâl by going into seclusion in the first ten days of this month.(2)

He asked a person if he kept any fasts at the end of Sha'bân. The man replied in the negative so the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered him to fulfil whatever he missed of Sha'bân in the month of Shawwâl.

We mentioned previously that Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* used to order her family members to make up for the missed fasts of Ramadân by fasting them after the day of *'îd* because it is the quickest way of absolving oneself of one's responsibility, and this is better than fasting the six fasts of Shawwâl.

The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to the person who has compulsory fasts to keep: can he keep optional fasts before them or not? Those who permit optional fasts before keeping the missed compulsory fasts say that the objective of six fasts of Shawwâl can only be achieved by the person who completes the fasting of Ramadân, and then follows this with the six fasts of Shawwâl. If a person has to keep missed fasts of Ramadân but starts by keeping the six optional fasts of Shawwâl shall not receive the reward of the person who kept the fasts of Ramadân and then followed them with the six fasts of Shawwâl because he did not complete the prescribed number of the Ramadân fasts. This is just as a person who misses a fast of Ramadân for a valid reason. If he keeps the six fasts of Shawwâl, he will not receive the reward of fasting for a full year. If a person commences keeping his missed fasts of Ramadân and then follows them with the six fasts of Shawwâl, this will be considered to be a good practice. This is because he would have completed the fasts of Ramadân and now followed them with the six fasts of Shawwâl. He will not receive the reward of the six fasts of Shawwâl if he were to merely fulfil the missed fasts of Ramadân because the six fasts of Shawwâl are subject to the completion of the fasts of Ramadân.

The deed of a believer does not end until death approaches him. Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Allâh ﷻ assigned nothing but death**

(1) Al-Bukhari (2013).

(2) Al-Bukhari (2045).

as a time limit for the deeds of man." He then recited this verse: **"Continue worshipping your Lord till the inevitable comes to you."** *(Sûrah al-Hijr, 15: 99)*

These months, years, days and nights are all means of calculation for life-spans and time-limits for our deeds. They expire quickly and they all continue [on their way, without waiting for anyone]. As for the Being who brought them into existence, made them, set aside merits for them, and placed them [in this universe], He is existing and will never die, He is eternal and will never depart. He is one Allâh at all times, and is constantly watching and observing the deeds of His servants. So glory to the Being who directed His servants during different times to render various acts of service. In so doing, He pours superior virtues onto them and treats them with utmost generosity and kindness.

When the three noble months [Rajab, Sha'bān, Ramaḍān] which commence with a sanctified month [Rajab] and end with the month of fasting came to an end, another three months [Shawwāl, Dhū al-Qa'dah, Dhū al-Ḥijjah] commenced. They comprise the months of pilgrimage to the Sanctified House of Allâh ﷻ. Just as a person who fasts in Ramaḍân and engages in night worship has his past and future sins forgiven, the person who performs the pilgrimage without committing any obscenity and iniquity shall return like the day his mother gave birth to him. Not a single hour of a believer's life passes without there being some type of worship and obedience for him. A believer moves around between these acts of worship, and gains proximity to his Master with both fear and hope.

A lover does not become bored of proximity to his Master through optional acts, and he hopes for nothing but His proximity and pleasure.

مـــا للمحـــب ســـوى إرادة حـــبه إن المحـــب بكـــل بـــر يـــضرع

"The lover has nothing but yearning for his beloved. The lover humbles himself with every act of obedience."

A servant has certainly lost each time which he leaves devoid of obedience to his Master. Every hour in which he is unmindful of the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ shall be a source of regret for him on the day of Resurrection. O how sorrowful for the time which was wasted in disobedience to Him. O how remorseful for the time which was spent without serving Him!

مـــن فاتـــه أن يـــراك يـــوما فكـــل أوقاتـــه فـــوات
وحيـــثما كـــنت مـــن بـــلاد فلـــي إلـــى وجهـــك الـــتفات
إلـــيكم هجرتـــي وقـــصدي وأنـــتم المـــوت والحـــياة
أمـــنت أن توحـــشوا فـــؤادي فآنـــسوا مقلتـــي ولات

"The person who misses the opportunity of seeing you in any day, then all his time has gone to waste. No matter in which part of the land you are, I have to turn towards your face. My emigration and my destination has to be to you. You are my life and death. I feel safe from your causing my heart to feel lonely. Well-wishers have perceived my destitution."

When a person completes an act of obedience, the sign of its acceptance is that he follows it with another act of obedience. The sign of its rejection is that he follows it with an act of disobedience. How excellent is a good which follows an evil and thereby obliterates it! But better than that is a good which is followed by another good. How repugnant is the evil which follows a good and thereby destroys it. A single sin after repentance is more repugnant than seventy sins before it.

A relapse is more difficult than an illness, and it often destroys a person. Ask Allâh ﷻ for steadfastness on acts of obedience till your death. Seek refuge in Him from the turning of the hearts and from a bad state of affairs after a good state. How desolate the disgrace of disobedience is after the honour of obedience! More repugnant is the poverty of greed after the wealth of contentment.

Have mercy on the honourable who became despicable through disobedience, and the wealthy who became paupers through sins.

تـــرى الحـــي الأولـــى بانـــوا علـــى العهـــد كمـــا كانـــوا
أم الدهـــر بهـــم خانـــوا ودهـــر المـــرء خـــوّان
إذا عـــزّ بغيـــر الله يـــوما معـــشر هانـــوا

"You see the people becoming separated from the covenant as they were. Is it time which cheated them? Time always cheats man. If any people become honourable without Allâh ﷻ, they are in fact despicable."

O you who repented recently! Do not go back to satisfying the breast of desires after being weaned from it. Breastfeeding is for

infants, not for adults. Yes, you have to exercise patience over the bitterness of weaning. If you remain patient, you will receive the sweetness of îmân in your hearts in exchange for the enjoyment of your desires.

The person who forsakes something for the sake of Allâh ﷻ will never miss it and Allâh ﷻ will give him something better in exchange: **"If Allâh finds any good in your hearts, He shall give you something better than that which was taken away from you, and He shall forgive you."** *(Sûrah al-Anfâl, 8: 70)*

A Hadîth states: **"The sight is one of the poisonous arrows from Satan. Whoever abandons [looking at anything unlawful] out of the fear of Allâh ﷻ, He shall bless him with îmân whose sweetness he will experience in his heart."**(1) Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*. This is addressed to the youth. As for the old person, if he returns to disobedience after the expiry of Ramadân, he is far more repugnant. This is because a youth can be expected to repent towards the end of his life, although he is in danger and death could seize him suddenly. As for an old man, his boat is on the verge of the shore of death, what does he have to hope for?

نعى لك ظل الشباب المشيب ... ونادتك باسم سواك الخطوب

فكن مستعدا لداعي الفناء ... فكل الذي هو آت قريب

ألسنا نرى شهوات النفو ... س تفنى وتبقى علينا الذنوب

يخاف على نفسه من يتوب ... فكيف يكون حال من لا يتوب

"The shade of youth announced the death of the old person. Calamities announced the name of someone other than you. So you must remain prepared for the one who calls towards death. Everything that is approaching is very near. Do we not see the desires of the souls destroyed while our sins remain with us? The one who repents fears for his life. What, then, can be said of the one who does not even repent?"

THE MERIT OF HAJJ

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

(1) Checked by Al-Hakem (4/314) and Al-Munthery in "At-Targheeb" (3413) and Az-Zubaidy in "Al-Ithaf" (4/245) and Al-Ajloony in Kashf Al-Khafaa` (2/438).

"The most superior deeds are: belief in Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, then jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ, then a blessed hajj."(1) In reality, these three deeds revert to two deeds:

(1) Belief in Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. This entails absolute affirmation in Allâh ﷻ, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and the Last Day. Allâh ﷻ mentions belief in these fundamentals in various places in His Book, e.g. the beginning, middle and end of Sûrah al-Baqarah.

(2) Jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ mentions both these fundamentals together in many places in His Book: **"O believers! Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from a painful punishment? Believe in Allâh and His Messenger, and fight in the cause of Allâh with your wealth and your lives."** *(Sûrah as-Saff, 61: 10-11)* **"The true believers are they who believe in Allâh and in His Messenger, and thereafter have no doubt; and who fight in the cause of Allâh with their wealth and their lives. It is they who are the truthful ones."** *(Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 15)*

There are many authentic Aḥâdîth in which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stated that belief in Allâh ﷻ and waging jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ are the most superior deeds. Îmân – according to the pious predecessors and Ḥadîth scholars – includes physical deeds. Îmân accompanied with deeds refers to attestation in the heart accompanied by verbal proclamation. This is especially so if îmân in Allâh ﷻ is attached to îmân in His Messenger ﷺ as in this Ḥadîth. So îmân which is established in the heart is the source of all good and is the best which a servant can receive in this world and in the Hereafter. It is through this that he can acquire the good fortune of this world and the Hereafter, and salvation from the misfortune of this world and the Hereafter. When îmân is firmly established in the heart, all the parts of the body are propelled towards good deeds, and the tongue is propelled to utter pure speech. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Listen! There is a piece of flesh in the body: if it is sound, the entire body shall be sound. If it is unsound, the entire body shall be unsound. Listen! It is the heart."**(2) The heart can experience no soundness without îmân in Allâh ﷻ and all other factors which are included in this, viz. recognition of Allâh ﷻ, belief

(1) Al-Bukhari (1519) and Muslim (83).

(2) Al-Bukhari (52) and Muslim (1599).

in His oneness, fear for Him, love for Him, hope in Him, responding to Him, turning to Him, and placing one's trust in Him. Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Îmân is not acquired by mere hopes or by merely adorning oneself. It is acquired by what is embedded in the hearts and the outward deeds which testify to what is in the heart."** This is affirmed by the following verses: **"Believers are only they whose hearts tremble when the name of Allâh is mentioned, and whose faith increases when His words are recited to them, and they place their trust in their Sustainer. Who establish the salâh and spend of the sustenance which We provided them with. It is they who are the true believers. They shall have ranks [of excellence and dignity] with their Lord, forgiveness and a provision of honour."** *(Sûrah al-Anfâl, 8: 2-4)*

A poet says in this regard:

مـــا كـــل مـــن زوق لـــي قـــوله يغرنـــــي يـــــا صـــــاح تـــــزويقه
مـــن حقـــق الإيمـــان فـــي قلـــبه لا بـــــد أن يظهـــــر تحقـــــيقه

"O you who are calling out! Every person who embellishes his speech to me does not necessarily deceive me. When îmân is firmly entrenched in a person, it will most certainly express itself."

When a servant tastes the sweetness of îmân and experiences its taste and sweetness, the fruit of that manifests itself on his tongue and limbs. The tongue enjoys the sweetness of engaging in remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and all that is associated to it, and the limbs hasten towards the obedience of Allâh ﷻ. It is then that the love of îmân enters the heart. This is just as the love of extremely cold water enters the person who is extremely thirsty on an extremely hot day. Moreover, leaving îmân becomes more detestable to the heart than being cast into the Hell-fire, and he is ordered to exercise patience over this. Ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh* states that Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ entered Madînah and said: **"O people of Madînah! How is it that I do not see the sweetness of îmân on you? I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, if an animal of the forest were to experience the taste of îmân, the sweetness of îmân would be seen on it."**

لـــو ذاق طعـــم الإيمـــان رضـــوى لكـــــاد مـــــن وجـــــده يمـــــيد
قـــد حملونـــي تكلـــيف عهـــد يعجـــز عـــن حملـــه الحديـــد

"If Radwâ [a mountain in Madînah] were to get the taste of îmân, it would have tilted out of emotion. They have made me to bear a covenant which even steel is unable to bear."

Îmân in Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ is thus a duty of the heart and the tongue. This is followed by deeds which are performed by the rest of the body parts. The most superior of these is waging jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.

The two types of jihad

The first type

There are two types of jihad. The most superior of the two is when a believer wages jihad against his unbelieving enemy, and fights against him in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. This entails inviting him towards Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ so that he may also embrace îmân. Allâh ﷻ says: **"You are the best of all nations which has been sent into the world – you enjoin good and forbid evil, and you believe in Allâh."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 110)* Abû Hurayrah ﷺ said with regard to this verse: **"They are brought in chains and eventually admitted into Paradise."** A Hadîth states: **"Your Lord is most astonished by a group of people who are led towards Paradise in chains."**(1)

Jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ thus entails inviting the creation towards belief in Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ through the sword and tongue. This is done after having inviting them towards it with proofs and evidences. In the beginning, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ would not go into battle against any people unless he first invited them towards Islam. It is through jihad that the creed of îmân is elevated, the circle of Islam is expanded, and those who enter it increase in number. This is a duty of the Messengers ﷺ and those who follow them. It is through jihad that the word of Allâh ﷻ reigns supreme. The purpose of jihad is for the religion in its entirety to be solely for Allâh ﷻ, and obedience be to Him alone. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Go on fighting them till there remains no corruption, and authority in its entirety belongs to Allâh alone."** *(Sûrah al-Anfâl, 8: 39)* The person who wages jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ does so specifically so that the word of Allâh ﷻ may reign supreme.

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(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (3010).

The second type

The second type of jihad entails the striving of the soul in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The *mujâhid* is the one who strives against his soul in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ."**(1) A Companion ﷺ was asked by someone about doing battle, so he said: **"Start doing battle against your self. Start waging jihad against your self."** The greatest striving of the soul in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ entails inhabiting His houses [i.e. the musjids] with His remembrance and obedience. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Only he shall inhabit the mosques of Allâh who believed in Allâh and the Last Day, who established the salâh, who continually gave the zakâh, and did not fear [anyone] other than Allâh."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 18)*

A Hadîth of Abû Sa'îd ﷺ states: **"If you see a person frequenting the musjid, testify to his îmân."**(2) He then recited this verse. Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh*.

Allâh ﷻ says: **"In those houses which Allâh has ordained to be raised and that His name be remembered therein – remembering Him therein morning and evening. Men whom neither trade nor sale can divert from the remembrance of Allâh."** *(Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 36-37)*

The first type of jihad is superior to this type. **"Have you made the providing of drinking water to the pilgrims and tending to the Sacred Musjid equal to the one who has conviction in Allâh, the Last Day, and who fought in the path of Allâh? They are not equal in the sight of Allâh. And Allâh does not guide the wrongdoing people. Those who believed and emigrated, and fought in the path of Allâh with their wealth and their lives – for them is a high status by Allâh. And it is they who shall reach their goal."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 19-20)*

An-Nu'mân ibn Bashîr ﷺ narrates: **"I was near the pulpit of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when a person said: 'I am not bothered about doing any deed after embracing Islam except providing water to the pilgrims.' Another person said: 'I am not bothered about doing any deed after embracing Islam except inhabiting**

(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (1621) without pronouncing (by Allah).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (2617), Ahmad (3/68) and Ibn Majah (802).

the Sacred Musjid.' Another said: 'Waging jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ is superior to what you said.' 'Umar ﷺ reprimanded them and said: 'Do not raise your voices near the pulpit of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. [It was a Friday]. Once I have performed the Jumu'ah salâh, I will go to him and ask him about your different opinions.' Allâh ﷻ then revealed: **"Have you made the providing of drinking water to the pilgrims and tending to the Sacred Musjid equal to the one who has conviction in Allâh, the Last Day..."** till the end of the verse.(1)

This Hadîth which relates the circumstances behind the revelation of these verses makes it clear that this refers to the most superior optional deeds through which a person could gain proximity to Allâh ﷻ. The verse shows that the most superior of all this is jihad accompanied with îmân. It shows that optional jihad is superior to optional inhabiting of the Sacred Musjid and providing water to the pilgrims. The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ will be applied in the same light.

Jihad is superior to optional hajj. The obligation of hajj was – according to the majority of *'ulamâ'* –delayed till the ninth year of the Emigration. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ probably said this before the absolute obligation of hajj. It would thus be optional.

It is said that jihad was *fard 'ayn* (compulsory on every single person) at the beginning of Islam. There is therefore no objection to fulfilling it before the obligation of hajj. But when jihad became *fard kifâyah* (compulsory on the community as a whole) and hajj is *fard 'ayn*, then in such a case, the *fard* hajj will be superior to jihad. 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ said: **"A pilgrimage performed before a battle is better than ten battles. And a battle after a pilgrimage is better than ten pilgrimages."** This is narrated as a *marfû'* Hadîth through several ways but there is some reservation with regard to their chains. As-Sabîy ibn Ma'bad said: **"I was a Christian and then I embraced Islam. I asked the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ: 'What is better, jihad or hajj?' They said: 'Hajj.'"** This means – and Allâh ﷻ knows best – that hajj is superior in respect of the person who did not perform the compulsory hajj. As in the case of this person who just embraced Islam. The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ could mean that jihad in general is superior to hajj in

(1) Checked by Muslim (1879).

general. But hajj in itself possesses a quality which distinguishes it from jihad, viz. it is *farḍ ʻayn*. So such a specific hajj is superior to jihad. If not, jihad is superior. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

The Ḥadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ shows that the most superior deed after jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ is the inhabiting of musjids with the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and His obedience. This would include ṣalâh, remembrance, recitation of the Qur'ân, seclusion (*iʻtikâf*), teaching beneficial knowledge, and listening to it. The most superior is to inhabit the most superior and noblest of all musjids, viz. the Sacred Musjid, by visiting it and circuiting it (*ṭawâf*). It is for this reason that it is mentioned specifically, and journeying to it for the hajj is the most superior after jihad. Ibn al-Mundhir also related it with the words: **"Then a blessed hajj or 'umrah."**

Allâh ﷻ mentioned this House in His Book in the greatest and most laudable way: **"When We designated the Kaʻbah a place of congregation for the people and a place of peace - and make the spot where Ibrâhîm stood, as a place of prayer. We commanded Ibrâhîm and Ismâ'îl [saying]: 'Keep My house purified for those who will circuit it, and those who will retire in it [in meditation], and those who will bow down and prostrate [themselves].'"** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 125)* **"Surely the first house which was set up for the people is this very one which is in Makkah: blessed and a guidance for the people of the world. In it are manifest signs, like the station (maqâm) of Ibrâhîm. Whoever enters it attains security."** *(Sûrah Âl ʻImrân, 3: 96-97)* **"When We prepared for Ibrâhîm the site of this House, [We said]: 'Associate nothing with Me. Keep My House purified for those who circuit it, for those who stand upright [in prayer], for those who bow down and for those who prostrate. Proclaim to mankind the hajj. They will come to you on foot and riding upon lean camels – coming from every distant place.'"** *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 26-27)*

Inhabiting all the musjids apart from the Sacred Musjid and journeying in order to perform ṣalâh in them and engage in other acts of worship are all regarded as **"keeping guard in the cause of Allâh ﷻ"**. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to performing a complete ablution despite hardships [such as cold water on a cold day], walking constantly to the musjid, waiting for the ṣalâh upon the completion of one ṣalâh: **"That entails keeping guard in the cause of Allâh ﷻ, that entails keeping guard in the cause of Allâh**

ﷺ."[1] As for the Sacred Musjid itself, journeying to it in order to visit it and circuit it (*ṭawâf*) which cannot be done anywhere else, this is a type of jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.

'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! We consider jihad to be the most superior deed. Should we [women] not go out for jihad?"** He said: **"The most superior jihad is a blessed ḥajj."**[2] In other words, it is the most superior jihad for the women. Others narrated it explicitly with this meaning [that it is for women]. Al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh* narrates it thus: **"The jihad of you women is ḥajj."**[3] The *Musnad* and *Sunan Ibn Mâjah* narrate from Umm Salamah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Ḥajj is the jihad of every weak person."**[4] Al-Bayhaqî *raḥimahullâh* and others narrate from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ: **"The jihad of an old person, a weak person and a woman is ḥajj and 'umrah."**[5]

A *mursal* Ḥadîth states: **"Ḥajj is a jihad, and 'umrah is an optional act."**[6] Another *mursal* Ḥadîth narrated by 'Abd ar-Razzâq *raḥimahullâh* states that the man said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"I am a cowardly person and I cannot confront the enemy."** He said: **"Should I inform you of a jihad in which there is no fighting?"** He said: **"Indeed."** He said: **"Adhere to performing ḥajj and 'umrah."**[7] He also narrates from the *marâsîl* of 'Alî ibn al-Ḥusayn that a man asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ about jihad so he said: **"Should I tell you of a jihad in which there are no thorns [no hardships and difficulties]? It is ḥajj."**[8] He also narrates from 'Umar ﷺ that he said: **"Once you have laid down the saddles – that is, after returning from jihad – then prepare your animals for the journey to ḥajj and 'umrah because it is one of the two jihads."**[9] Al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh* narrated this as a *mu'allaq*

(1) Muslim (251).
(2) Al-Bukhari (1520).
(3) Al-Bukhari (2875).
(4) Checked by Ibn Majah (2902).
(5) Al-Baihaqi in As-Sunan Al-Kubra (4/350).
(6) Checked by Ibn Majah (2489).
(7) Abdul Razzak in his Musannaf (8810).
(8) Abdul Razzak (8810).
(9) Abdul Razzak (8808).

Hadîth.[1]

Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"You get saddles and saddlebags. The saddles are used in the cause of Allâh ﷻ while the saddlebags are used for hajj."** Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* in his *Manâsik*. Jihad and 'umrah are referred to as jihads because they impose on a person's wealth, soul and body. Abû ash-Sha'thâ' said: **"I looked at the different acts of obedience. Salâh imposes on the body but not on one's wealth. Similar is the case with fasting. But hajj imposes on both. I therefore consider it to be superior."**

'Abd ar-Razzâq *rahimahullâh*[2] narrates from Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arî ﷺ that a man asked him about hajj. He said: **"The pilgrim intercedes on behalf of 400 families from his tribe; because of the one female camel which carried him, forty female camels are blessed [with offspring]; and he comes out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him."** So a man said to him: **"O Abû Mûsâ! I used to be regular in performing hajj. Now I am gone old and weak. Is there anything equal to hajj?"** He said: **"Are you able to free seventy believing slaves from the progeny of Ismâ'îl ﷺ? I do not see anything equal to journeying for hajj."** Or he said: **"similar to..."**

He also narrates from Tâwûs that he was asked: **"After the compulsory hajj, what is better, the [optional] hajj or [optional] charity?"** He replied: **"How can anything compare with journeying, sleepless nights, fatigue, circuiting the Ka'bah, offering salâh there, spending the day at 'Arafah, and pelting the stones?"**[3] It is as though he is saying that hajj is superior.

The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to the superiority of optional hajj over charity. Some give preference to hajj, as stated by Tâwûs and Abû ash-Sha'thâ'. This is also the opinion of al-Hasan *rahimahullâh*. Others give preference to charity. This is the view of an-Nakha'î. There are others who say that if there is a needy relative or a time of drought, then charity is superior, if not, it is hajj which is superior. This is explicitly stated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*. A similar meaning is given by al-Hasan *rahimahullâh*, that maintaining ties of

(1) (3/444) Al-Fath after Hadith (1516).

(2) Abdul Razzak (8807).

(3) Abdul Razzak (8822).

kinship and removing the difficulties of a suffering person are superior to optional hajj.

'Abd ar-Razzâq *rahimahullâh* narrates through a weak chain from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about a person who performed hajj many times. Should he spend his wealth to maintain ties of kinship or to free slaves? The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Circuiting the Ka'bah seven times without indulging in any sin in it is equal to freeing a slave."**(1) This shows the superiority of hajj. There are those who use this as a proof to show that spending in hajj is superior to spending in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.

Buraydah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Spending in hajj is multiplied 700 times over spending in the cause of Allâh ﷻ."**(2) Anas ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"A single dirham spent in the cause of Allâh ﷻ is equal to spending 700 dirhams."**(3) Reference is made to this in the following verse: **"Spend in the cause of Allâh and do not throw your lives into destruction. And do good, surely Allah loves the doers of good. Complete the hajj and 'umrah for Allâh."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 195-196)* This proves that spending in hajj and 'umrah is included as spending in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.

A Companion ﷺ had dedicated his camel for the cause of Allâh ﷻ but his wife wanted to perform hajj on it. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to her: **"You may perform hajj on it because hajj is also in the cause of Allâh ﷻ."**(4) This is narrated through several chains of narrations by the different Hadîth compilers. Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* also narrated it as a *mu'allaq* Hadîth.

This can be used to prove that the share of **"in the cause of Allâh"** which is mentioned in the verse on zakâh can be spent for the purposes of hajj, as is the opinion of some *'ulamâ'*. Thus, a person who has not performed hajj may be given from zakâh funds to perform his hajj. There is difference of opinion among them as to

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(1) Abdul Razzak (8833).

(2) Checked by Ahmad in Al-Musnad (5/355).

(3) Ibn 'Udday in Al-Kamel (7/2553).

(4) Checked by Abu Dawoud (1989) and Ahmad (6/405) and Al-Hakem (1/482).

whether zakâh can be given for an optional hajj or not.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"A blessed hajj – there is no reward for it except Paradise."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: **"Which deeds are the most superior?"** He said: **"Belief in Allâh alone, then jihad, then a blessed hajj surpasses all deeds like the distance between the east and west."**(1) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who makes pilgrimage to this House without committing any obscenity and sin comes out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him."**(2) The forgiveness of sins and entry into Paradise through hajj are both dependent on the hajj being blessed. A hajj is considered blessed when the following two factors are present:

1. Carrying out good deeds in the course of hajj.

2. Kindness towards people, and this refers to piety and maintaining ties of kinship. The opposite of this is severing ties of kinship. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked about piety, and he said: **"Piety entails good character."**(3)

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ used to say: **"Piety is easy: a smiling face and soft speech."** This is something which is required a lot in the course of hajj. I am referring to treating people affectionately with both words and actions. A person said: **"A *safar* (journey) is referred to as a *safar* because it uncovers (from the verb *safara yasfiru*) the character of people."** Jâbir ibn 'Abdillâh ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"A blessed hajj, there is no reward except Paradise for it."** The Companions ﷺ asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! What is the blessedness of hajj?"** He said: **"Providing food and making the *salâm* (Islamic greeting) common."** Another Hadîth adds: **"and good speech."**(4)

Sa'îd ibn Jubayr was asked : **"Which pilgrim is the most superior?"** He said: **"The one who provides food and restrains his tongue."** Ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* said: **"I heard that this is from among the pious acts of hajj."** The *Marâsîl* of Khâlid ibn Mi'dân

(1) Al-Musnad (4/342).

(2) It was checked before..

(3) Muslim (2553).

(4) Checked by Ahmad (3/325).

states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"What will a person who comes to this House do if he does not have these three qualities: (1) Piety which prevents him from doing whatever Allâh ﷻ prohibited. (2) Forbearance which restrains his ignorance. (3) Being a good companion to those in whose company he is. If he does not possess these three qualities, Allâh ﷻ does not need his hajj."** Abû Ja'far al-Bâqir said: **"There is no worth in a person who comes to this House if he does not possess these three qualities: (1) Piety which prevents him from disobeying Allâh. (2) Forbearance with which he restrains his anger. (3) Being a good companion to the Muslims who accompany him."** These are three qualities which are needed when travelling, especially on the journey of hajj. The person who perfects these three has perfected his hajj.

The most comprehensive qualities of piety which a pilgrim needs are those which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ advised to Abû Jary al-Hujaymî: **"Do not look down on any good act even if it involves pouring water from your bucket into the utensil of a person asking for water, even if it entails giving a piece of rope, even if it entails giving a sandal strap, even if it entails removing an obstacle from the people's path, even if it entails meeting your brother with a smiling face, even if it entails meeting your Muslim brother and offering *salâm* to him, and even if it entails being cordial towards barbaric people in the land."**(1)

In short, the best person is the one who is most beneficial to people, and most patient over the difficulties caused by them. Allâh ﷻ describes the pious as follows: **"Who go on spending in prosperity and in adversity, and suppress their anger, and pardon the people. Allâh loves the doers of good."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 134)* A pilgrim has to interact with people. A believer who interacts with people and exercises patience over the difficulties caused by them is better than the one who does not interact with them and does not exercise patience over the difficulties caused by **them."** Rabî'ah said: **"High-mindedness on a journey entails spending one's provisions on others, refraining from arguments with one's companions, and joking a lot provided it does not entail anything which earns the wrath of Allâh ﷻ."**

Two men came to Ibn 'Aun to bid him farewell and to ask him

(1) Checked by Ahmad (5/63).

for advice. He said to them: **"Be particular about suppressing your anger and spending your provisions [on your fellow travellers]."** One of them saw a dream in which Ibn 'Aun presented them with two sets of clothing.

Kindness towards one's fellow travelling companions is superior to a short period of worship. This is especially so if a worshipper is in need of the service of his brothers. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was on a journey during intense heat. Some of his companions were fasting while others were not. Those who were fasting fell down [out of hunger and thirst]. Those who were not fasting undertook to pitch the tents and provide water to the animals. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Today, those who are not fasting have taken all the rewards."**(1)

It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was on a journey when he saw a person fasting. He said to him: **"Why did you fast when you are travelling?"** He replied: **"I have my two sons who are travelling with me and seeing to my needs."** He said: **"They shall continue enjoying merit over you."**

The *Marâsîl* of Abû Dâ'ûd narrates from Abû Qilâbah ﷺ who said: **"Some Companions ﷺ of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ returned from a journey praising one of their fellow travellers. They said: 'We never came across anyone like him. As long as we were moving, he was engaged in the recitation of the Qur'ân. When we stopped over at any place, he occupied himself in salâh.' He asked: 'Who was the one who saw to his needs?' [He asked several questions until he eventually asked]: 'Who was feeding his animals?' [To all the questions they replied]: 'We.' He said: 'All of you are better than him.'"**

Mujâhid *raḥimahullâh* said: **"I accompanied Ibn 'Umar ﷺ on a journey so that I may attend to him. But he ended up attending to me."** Many pious predecessors used to make a precondition to their travelling companions that they will serve them. They used to make this precondition so that they would be rewarded for it. 'Âmir ibn 'Abd Qays and 'Amr ibn 'Utbah ibn Farqad were from among such people despite their engagement in abundant worship. Ibrâhîm ibn Ad-ham *raḥimahullâh* also used to make a condition with his fellow travellers that he would take the responsibility of serving them

(1) Al-Bukhari (2890) and Muslim (1119).

and calling out the *adhân*.

A righteous person used to accompany his brothers on jihad and other journeys. He used to make a precondition that he would serve them. If he saw a person wanting to wash his garment, he would say to him: **"This is included in my precondition."** He would then wash the garment for him. If he saw a person wanting to wash his head, he would say to him: **"This is included in my precondition."** He would then wash this head for him. When he passed away, they saw the following inscribed on his hand: **"From among the inhabitants of Paradise."** When they examined it closely, they saw that it was inscribed between his skin and flesh.

Bahîm al-'Ajalî – an ardent worshipper who used to cry profusely – and a wealthy trader went together for hajj. When it was the day of their departure, Bahîm cried so much that his tears began falling on his chest and then on the ground. He said: **"This journey of mine made me think of my journey to Allâh ﷻ."** He then raised his voice and began wailing. His trader companion disliked this and feared that his journey will be spoilt by his excessive crying. When they returned from hajj, a person who was their mutual friend came to greet them. He commenced with the trader, greeted him and asked him about his journey with Bahîm. He said: **"By Allâh, I do not think that there is any creation like him. By Allâh, he used to oblige me by spending on me while he is poor and I am wealthy. He used to oblige me by seeing to my needs while he is an old weak man and I am young. He used to cook for me while he was fasting and I was not fasting."** He then asked him about his aversion to his excessive crying. So he said: **"By Allâh, I became attached to that crying and my love for it penetrated my heart to such an extent that I used to help him in crying. Eventually, our other fellow travellers became attached to it and they would cry when they saw us crying. They would say to each other: 'How is it that they are crying more than us while the destination of all of us is the same?' By Allâh, they would start crying and we would cry with them.' The man then left him and went to Bahîm. He greeted him and asked: 'What do you think of your companion?' He replied: 'He was a wonderful companion. He used to engage in abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, recite the Qur'ân for lengthy periods of time, was quick in crying, and used to bear the mistakes of his fellow travellers. May Allâh reward him well on my behalf.'"**

Ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh* used to feed his fellow travellers with the best of foods while he himself was fasting. When he intended going for hajj from his hometown, Marw, he called his companions and asked: **"Who among you wants to go for hajj?"** He would then take their money and keep it in a box and lock it. He would take them with him and spend the most he can on them and feed them the best of foods. When in Makkah, he would purchase whatever gifts and presents they wanted. He would then return with them to his hometown. When they all reached there, he would prepare a meal for them, assemble all of them, call for the box in which their money was placed, and return to each person the money which he had given him.

The second meaning of virtue is doing all acts of obedience. The opposite of this is sin. Allâh ﷻ explains this meaning of virtue as follows: **"but great virtue is of him who believes in Allâh, and the Last Day, the angels, all the Books, the Prophets; and gives wealth – out of His love – to relatives, the orphans, the needy, the travellers, the beggars, and in the freeing of slaves."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 177)* This verse states that virtue entails six categories. The person who perfects them has perfected virtue:

1. Belief (îmân) in the five fundamentals of îmân.

2. Giving one's beloved wealth to relatives, orphans, the needy, travellers, beggars, and in the freeing of slaves.

3. Establishing salâh.

4. Paying zakâh.

5. Fulfilling covenants [and promises].

6. Exercising patience in adversity, hardship, and at the time of war.

A pilgrim needs all of these. His hajj is not valid without îmân. His hajj cannot be complete and blessed without establishing salâh and paying zakâh. The pillars of Islam are interlinked with each other, and îmân and Islam cannot be complete unless a person fulfils all the pillars. The virtue in hajj cannot be complete without fulfilling one's promises in all transactions and partnerships which are needed during the course of the hajj journey. Nor can it be complete without giving one's beloved wealth to those whom Allâh ﷻ wants the pilgrim to give to. In addition to this, the pilgrim needs to exercise patience over the difficulties and hardships of the journey. So these

are the categories of virtue, and the most important of them for a pilgrim is the establishment of salâh. The person who performs hajj without establishing salâh – especially if his hajj is optional – is like a person who strives to earn one dirham while losing his capital which amounts to thousands of dirhams. The pious predecessors were very particular about even optional salâh while on hajj. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was regular with night worship on his conveyance on all his journeys and he used to offer his *witr salâh* on his conveyance.

When Masrûq *rahimahullâh* went on hajj, he only slept while he was in prostration. Muhammad ibn Wâsi' used to perform salâh on the road to Makkah throughout the night while he was in his palanquin. He used to perform his salâh with gestures [because he was not on the ground, and could not carry out all the postures of salâh], and he used to order his camel-driver behind him to raise his voice to divert the attention of others towards his voice and no one would know that he was engaged in salâh.

Al-Mughîrah ibn Hakîm as-San'ânî *rahimahullâh* used to go for hajj from Yemen on foot. He had set aside a devotion at night in which he used to recite one third of the Qur'ân every night. He would stand and offer his salâh until he completed this devotion. He would then catch up with the rest of the caravan whenever he could. At times he would only catch up with them towards the end of the day. May the peace of Allâh ﷻ be on those souls. May the mercy of Allâh ﷻ be on those personalities. If we had to compare ourselves to them, we would be as the poet said:

نـــزلوا بمكـــة فـــي قـــبائل هاشـــم ونـــزلتُ بالبـــيداء أبعـــد منـــزل

"They settled down in Makkah among the Hâshim tribes, while I settled down at Baydâ', which is the furthest stopping point."

We have been commanded to safeguard the salâh by performing it at its appointed time even if it means offering two salâhs combined in one time.(1) Apart from that, no person is permitted to offer the night salâh during the day or vice versa. Neither is a person permitted to offer the compulsory salâh while sitting on his animal unless he fears becoming separated from the rest of his fellow

(1) Combining two salâhs at one time is permitted under certain circumstances. Refer to books of jurisprudence for details.

travellers or other instances where he fears over his life. As for a sick person or a person who is in a muddy place, there is difference of opinion among the *'ulamâ'* as to whether he can perform his compulsory salâh on his animal or not. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* has two opinions in this regard. Another prerequisite of salâh is that the person must be in a Shar'î state of purity by performing ablution with water if he able to use it, or to make *tayammum* (purifying oneself with soil) in the case where he is unable to use water either because of physical or Shar'î impediments. Once Allâh ﷻ gauges a servant's yearning to perform his salâh as it ought to be performed, He helps him in fulfilling this yearning.

A scholar said: **"I was travelling for hajj. The leader of our caravan would stop all the people on the journey every day for the *fajr salâh*. He would get off, offer salâh, and we would then continue on our journey. One day it was close to sunrise and the people had not stopped. So I called out to them but they did not turn to my call. I performed ablution on the palanquin, and got down from my animal to perform my salâh on the ground. I thought to myself that I will then walk until they stop at mid-morning. They were in the habit of only stopping when it was close to *zuhr* time. I knew that it was difficult for me to catch up with them and that I might not be able to do it. When I completed my salâh I looked towards my fellow travellers and saw that they had stopped. Whereas, had they been asked to stop, they would not have stopped. So I asked them the reason for their stopping and they replied: 'When you stopped and got down, the reins of the camels became tangled with each other and we are still trying to untie them.' I mounted my animal, thanked Allâh ﷻ and realized that when a person gives preference to the rights of Allâh ﷻ over his own desires and personal comforts, he is certain to see good fortune in this world and in the Hereafter. If anyone does the opposite by giving preference to his own self over the rights of Allâh ﷻ, then he certainly experiences misfortune in this world and in the Hereafter."** He then quoted this poem:

والله مـــــا جئـــــتكم زائـــــرا إلا وجـــدت الأرض تطـــوى لـــي

ولا ثنـــيتُ العـــزم عـــن بـــابكم إلا تعثـــــــرتُ بأذيالـــــــي

"By Allâh, whenever I came to visit you, I found that the earth was folded for me [and I was able to cover the distance quickly]. Whenever I changed my mind about coming to you, I

met with failure."

Remembrance of Allâh ﷻ is one of the greatest categories of virtue during ḥajj

One of the greatest categories of virtue during ḥajj entails excessive remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ commanded His excessive remembrance on several occasions when performing the rites of ḥajj. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: **"Which pilgrim is the most superior?"** He replied: **"The one who engages in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ the most."**(1) Narrated by Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh*. It is also narrated as a *mursal* Ḥadîth through several chains.

Excessive remembrance in the form of the *talbiyah* (saying *Labbayk*) and *takbîr* (saying *Allâhu akbar*) is specified when a person is in a state of *iḥrâm*. At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The most superior ḥajj is *al-'ajj* and *ath-thajj*."**(2) The Ḥadîth of Jubayr ibn Muṭ'im states: **"Raise the voices with *takbîr* and *talbiyah*, and shed the blood of the camels."** The word *al-'ajj* refers to raising the voice with *takbîr* and *talbiyah*. The word *ath-thajj* refers to shedding the blood of the sacrificial animals. Slaughtering the sacrificial animals is one of the most superior deeds of ḥajj. Allâh ﷻ says: **"The camels driven to the Ka'bah [for sacrifice] have We appointed for you as symbols of Allâh's name, therein is much good for you."** *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 36)* **"You have heard this. Whoever honours the symbols of Allâh, it is surely from the piety of the hearts."** *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 32)*

Abstention from sins is one of the things which perfect the virtue of ḥajj

Among the things which perfect the virtue and blessedness of ḥajj is abstention from sins whether it is obscenity, iniquity or sins. Allâh ﷻ says: **"it is neither permissible [for him] to be informal with his wife, to commit any sin, nor to quarrel during the period of ḥajj. Whatever good you do, Allâh is aware of it. And take provision for the journey, for surely the best provision for the journey is piety."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 197)*

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(1) Checked by Ahmad (3/438).

(2) At-Tirmidhi (827).

An authentic Hadîth states: **"The person who performs pilgrimage to this House without committing any obscenity and sin returns like the day his mother gave birth to him."** We quoted this Hadîth previously: **"Allâh ﷻ has no need for the hajj of a person who does not possess piety which prevents him from disobeying Allâh."**

So the best thing which a pilgrim and anyone else can imbibe in himself is the provision of piety (*taqwâ*). Piety is the best thing which a person can supplicate for in favour of a pilgrim when he is departing. It is related that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was bidding farewell to a youngster who was going for hajj, so he said to him: **"May Allâh ﷻ imbibe you with the provision of piety."**(1)

A pious predecessor was bidding farewell to a person so he said: **"Fear Allâh. Surely the person who fears Allâh ﷻ experiences no loneliness."** Another was bidding farewell to a person who was leaving for hajj, so he said: **"I am advising you with the same advice which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ gave to Mu'âdh ﷺ when he was bidding farewell to him: 'Fear Allâh wherever you are. Follow an evil with a good deed – the latter will wipe off the former. When interacting with people, do so with good character.'"** This is comprehensive advice combining all the qualities of virtue. Abû Dharr ﷺ said:

يريد المرء أن يؤتى مناه ... ويأبى الله إلا ما أرادا

يقول المرء فائدتي ومالي ... وتقوى الله أفضل ما استفادا

"A man wants to be given whatever he desires. But Allâh ﷻ only gives what He wills. Man says: 'I am concerned about my own benefit and my own wealth', whereas the fear of Allâh is the most superior benefit which he can acquire."

The pilgrim must abstain from the unlawful

One of the greatest obligations on a pilgrim is his abstention from the unlawful. His spending must be pure during hajj and he must ensure that it was not earned in an unlawful way. At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* and others narrate from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When a person departs for hajj with pure wealth and places his foot in the stirrup, and says:**

(1) At-Tirmidhi (3444).

'*Labbayk, Allâhummah labbayk*! (Here I am, O Allâh, here I am)', a caller from the heavens says: 'Your *labbayk* is accepted and you are fortunate. Your provision is lawful, your animal is lawful, and your hajj is blessed and aided.' When a person departs with impure wealth and places his foot in the stirrup, and says: *'Labbayk, Allâhumma labbayk!'*, a caller from the heavens says: 'Your *labbayk* is not accepted and may you not enjoy any fortune. Your provision is unlawful, your wealth is unlawful, and your hajj is not blessed.'"

A person passed away on the way to Makkah. His companions dug a grave and buried him. They forgot their axe in his grave. They uncovered his grave to retrieve the axe. They found his head and neck twisted in the ring of the axe. They threw the soil back into his grave, went to his family and asked about him. They said: **"He was in the company of a person and usurped his wealth. He used this wealth to go for hajj and to go out in battle."**

إذا حججت بمال أصله سحت فما حججت ولكن حجت العيرُ

لا يقبل الله إلا كل طيبة ما كل من حج بيت الله مبرور

"If you perform hajj with wealth whose origins are unlawful, you have not performed hajj. Rather, the caravan [with which you travelled] performed hajj. Allâh ﷻ accepts nothing except that which is pure. Every person who makes pilgrimage to the House of Allâh ﷻ is not necessarily blessed."

The pilgrim must abstain from ostentation

One of the things which the pilgrim must abstain from, and through which the virtue in his hajj will be perfected is that he must not have any intentions of ostentation, showing off, pride and haughtiness in his hajj. His objective must be the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ and nothing else. He must be humble in his hajj and be submissive to his Lord. Anas ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ performed hajj on a worn out saddle and an outer garment whose value was not even four dirhams. Yet he said: **"O Allâh! Make this hajj in which there is no ostentation and showing off."**(1)

'Atâ' *rahimahullâh* said: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ performed the *fajr salâh* at Minâ on the day of 'Arafah. He then proceeded towards

(1) Checked by Ibn Majah (2860).

'Arafât while he was sitting on an outer garment which was bought for him for four dirhams. He was saying: 'O Allâh! Make it a hajj which is blessed and accepted, which is devoid of ostentation and **showing off.'"** 'Abdullâh ibn al-Hârith said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ mounted a camel and it shook with him. He thus submitted before Allâh ﷻ saying: '*Labbayk*. There is no life except the life of the Hereafter.'"**(1) A person said to Ibn 'Umar ﷺ: **"There are so many pilgrims [this year]."** Ibn 'Umar ﷺ said: **"They are so few in number."** He then saw a man on a camel sitting on a worn out saddle with reins which were made of rope. He said: **"He is probably a pilgrim."** Shurayh said: **"Pilgrims are few while those who have come are many. There are so many who are doing good, but so few who desire the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ alone."**

خليلي قطاع الفيافي إلى الحمى كثير وأما الواصلون قليل

وجوه عليها للقبول علامة وليس على كل الوجوه قبول

"O my friend! There are many who traverse the deserts to go into battle. But there are few who reach their destination. The signs of acceptance are seen on the faces, but there is no acceptance on every single face."

A person of the past used to go for hajj on foot every year. One night he was asleep on his bed when his mother asked him for a drink of water. He found it difficult to get up from his bed to give water to his mother. He thought of how he goes for hajj on foot every year and does not find any difficulty in that. He took stock of himself and realized that the only reason why it was easy for him to go on foot was that people would see him and praise him. He realized that he was deceived.

A Tâbi'î said: **"Many a person in *ihram* says: '*Labbayk, Allâhumma labbayk.*' Allâh ﷻ says to him: 'Your *labbayk* is not accepted, and you may not experience any good fortune. This is rejected and flung back to you.'"** Someone asked him: **"Why?"** He replied: **"He probably purchased a camel for 500 dirhams, saddlebags for 200 dirhams, a saddle blanket for so much, and so much. He then mounted his camel, raised his head high, and looked sideways with pride. The hajj of such a person is rejected and flung back to him."**

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(1) Checked by Ahmad (3/216).

It is thus considered desirable for a pilgrim to be dishevelled and dusty. On the day of ʻArafah, Allâh ﷻ will say with pride to His angels: **"Look at My servants! They have come to Me dishevelled, dusty and sunburnt. Bear witness to the fact that I have forgiven them."**(1)

One day, when ʻUmar ﷺ was on the road to Makkah, he said: **"You are dishevelled, dusty, foul-smelling and sunburnt. You do not desire any worldly benefits from all of this. I do not know of any journey better than this."** He was referring to the hajj journey. He also said: **"A true pilgrim is dishevelled and foul-smelling."**(2) Ibn ʻUmar ﷺ said to a person whom he saw seeking shade in his *ihrâm*: **"Go out in the sun. You did not go into *ihrâm* to seek shade."**

أتـــاك الـــوافدون إلـــيك شـــعثا يـــسوقون المقلـــدة الـــصواف

فكـــم مـــن قاصـــد للـــرب رغـــبا ورهـــبا بـــين منـــتعل وحـــاف

"The delegates have come to you in a dishevelled state. They are herding animals which are wrapped in wool. How many a person heads towards his Lord with yearning and fear, some of whom are wearing shoes while others are bare-footed."

Glory to the Being who made His Sanctified House a place of refuge and security for the people. They continually travel to it and return from it, but still feel that they have not fulfilled their objective. Allâh ﷻ attached that House to His self and attributed it to Himself. He said to His friend [Ibrâhîm ﷺ]: **"Purify My House for those who shall circuit it."** *(Sûrah al-Hajj, 22: 26)* In so doing, the hearts of the lovers became attached to the House of their Beloved. Each time that Sanctified House is mentioned to them, they yearn for it. Each time they think of how far they are from it, they sigh.

لا يُذكـــر الـــرملُ إلا حـــن مغتـــرب لـــه بـــذي الـــرمل أوطـــار وأوطـــانُ

تهفـــو إلـــى الـــبان مـــن قلبـــي نـــوازعه ومـــا بـــي الـــبانُ بـــل مـــن داره الـــبانُ

"Whenever the sand is mentioned, the stranger yearns for those who are inhabiting that soil in the homelands. The tendencies of my heart yearn for that great distance, but there is no distance [between me and my beloved, I am close to my

(1) Checked by Ahmad (2/224).

(2) Checked by Al-Baihaqi in Al-Kubra (5/58).

beloved]. Yes, there is a vast distance [between me and the house of my beloved.]"

A righteous man saw the pilgrims departing so he began crying and said: **"O my weakness!"** He then said this poem:

فقلــتُ دعونــي واتباعــي ركــابكم أكـن طـوعَ أيـديكم كمـا يفعـل العـبدُ

"I said: 'Permit me to follow you, and I will be at your beck and call like a slave.' [Permit me to join you and I will attend to all your needs]."

He then sighed and said: **"This is the remorse of the person who is unable to reach the House. How will the remorse be of the person who is unable to reach the Lord of the House?!"**

It is natural for the person who is unable to go to be despondent when he sees others going. It is natural for a person who sees others travelling to the house of the beloved while he is left to remain seated to feel grief.

يــا ســائق العــيس تــرفق واســتمع منــي وبلــغ إن وصــلت عنــي
عــرض بذكــري عــندهم لعلهــم إن ســمعوك ســائلوك عنــي
قـل: ذلـك المحـبوسُ عـن قـصدكم معــذبُ القلــب بكــل فــن
يقــول أملــتُ بــأن أزوركــم فــي جملــة الــوفد فخــاب ظنــي
أقعدنــي الحــرمانُ عــن قــصدكم ورمــتُ أن أســعى فلــم يدعنــي

"O camel driver! Wait a bit, listen to what I have to say, and convey what I am saying when you reach your destination. Make mention of me to them, perhaps when they hear you, they will ask you about me. Say to them: 'That person who is confined [and unable to] come to you is experiencing all types of emotional pain. He says: 'I wished to visit you together with these people who have come to you, but I failed in realizing my wish. My destiny caused me to remain behind. I tried to come, but my destiny would not permit me."

Those who are unable to go should ask those who are going to supplicate in their favour so that they may also acquire [the honour] of joining them and being with them [in their supplications]. It is related that when 'Umar ﷺ intended going for 'umrah, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: **"O my brother! Include us in your**

supplications."(1) The *Musnad* of al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"O Allâh! Forgive the pilgrims and those in whose favour the pilgrims seek forgiveness."**(2) At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard a person saying while he was circuiting the Ka'bah: **"O Allâh! Forgive such and such person."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: **"Who is this person [for whom you are supplicating]?"** He replied: **"He is a person who requested me to supplicate in his favour when I am between the *rukn* (one corner of the Ka'bah) and the *maqâm* (the *maqâm-e-Ibrâhîm*)."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Your friend has been forgiven."**(3)

ألا قـــل لـــزوار دار الحبـــيب هنيـئا لكـم فـي الجـنان الخلـود

أفيـضوا عليـنا مـن المـاء فيـضا فـــنحن عطـــاش وأنـــتم ورود

"Listen! Say to those who visit the house of the beloved: 'Congratulations to you in the gardens of eternity. Pour some water onto us because we are thirsty and you have just reached the watering place.'"

People may have departed and we are remaining behind. They may be near while we are far away. It should not be that we are among those about whom Allâh ﷻ said: **"But Allâh was averse to their going forth. He therefore held them back, and it was said [to them]: 'Remain sitting with those who sit.'"** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 46)*

لله در ركائـــب ســـارت بهـــم تطوي القفارَ الشاسعات على الدجا

رحلوا إلى البيت الحرام وقد شجا قلـب المتـيم مـنهم مـا قـد شـجا

نـــزلوا بـــباب لا يخـــيب نـــزيله وقلـــوبهم بـــين المخافـــة والـــرجا

"How excellent are those who travelled and traversed the distant deserts in the night. They journeyed to the Sanctified House while the heart of the enamoured one was filled with anxiety. They descended at a door at which no visitor goes empty handed. Their hearts are suspended between hope and

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(1) Checked by Abu Dawoud (1498) and At-Tirmidhi (3562).

(2) Checked by Al-Baihaqi (5/261) Al-Hakem (1/441) At-Tabarany in As-Saghir (2/114) and Ibn Khuzayma (2516).

(3) Checked by At-Tabarany (12299).

fear."

The person who stays behind because of a valid excuse shares with the person who goes. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said when he returned from the expedition of Tabûk: **"There are some people in Madînah who were most certainly with you for whatever distance you covered and whichever valley you crossed. It was a valid excuse which kept them back."**(1)

يـا سـائرين إلـى البـيت العتـيق لقـد سـرتم جـسوما وسـرنا نحـن أرواحـا

إنـا أقمـنا علـى عـذر وقـد رحلـوا ومـن أقـام علـى عـذر كمـن راح

"O you travellers to the Ancient House! You travelled bodily while we travelled with our souls. We remained behind because of a valid excuse, while they journeyed. The person who remains behind because of a valid excuse is like the one who journeyed."

It may well be that a person who travelled with his heart, courage and determination surpasses the one who travelled bodily. While in 'Arafah, a righteous person saw in his dream on the night of 'Arafah, a person saying: **"Can you see this crowd at 'Arafah?"** He said: **"Yes."** He said: **"Not a single one of them performed hajj, with the exception of one person who remained behind but performed hajj with his courage. Allâh ﷻ rewarded him with the reward of those who were present."** There is no excellence in a person who goes with his body alone. Excellence is with the person whose body remains behind but he goes with his heart and even surpasses the travellers.

مـن لـي بمـثل سـيرك المـذللِ تمـشي رويـدا وتجـي فـي الأول

"Is there any equal to your humble journeying? You are walking slowly yet you reach first."

O travellers to the house of the beloved! Wait a bit for those who are left behind, and carry the messages [letters] of those who are confined [and unable to travel]. Take one gaze from me and you can then face the heat.

يـا سـائرين إلـى الحبـيب تـرفقوا فالقلـب بـين رحـالكم خلفـتُهُ

مـا لـي سـوى قلبـي وفـيك أذبـته مـا لـي سـوى دمعـي وفـيك سـكتبه

(1) Checked by Al-Bukhari (2839).

"O you travellers to the beloved! Be gentle because I left my heart between your saddlebags. I possess nothing by my heart and I have melted it for you. I have nothing but my tears and I shed them for you."

When ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzîz *raḥimahullâh* used to see anyone travelling to Madînah, he would say to him: **"Convey my *salâm* to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ."** It is said that he used to send mail to him from Syria.

هـــذه الخـــيف وهاتـــيك منـــي ... فتـــرفق أيهـــا الحـــادي بـــنا
واصـــبي الـــركب عليـــنا ســـاعةً ... نـــــندب ونبـــــيك الدمـــــنا
فلـــذا الموقـــف أعـــددنا الـــبكا ... ولـــذا الـــيوم الدمـــوعُ تقتنـــى
أتـــراكم فـــي الـــنقا والمنحنـــى ... أهـــل ســـلعِ تذكـــرونا ذكـــرنا
انقطعـــنا ووصـــلتم فاعلمـــوا ... واشـكروا المـنعم يـا أهـل مِنـى
قـــد خـــسرنا وربحـــتم فـــصلوا ... بفـــضول الـــربح مـــن قـــد غبـــنا
ســـار قلبـــي خلـــف أحمـــالكم ... غيـــر أن العـــذر عـــاق الـــبدنا
مـــا قطعـــتم واديًـــا إلا وقـــد ... جئـــته أســـعى بأقـــدام المُنـــى
آه! واشـــوقي إلـــى ذاك الحِمـــى ... شـــوقَ محـــرومٍ وقـــد ذاق العـــنا
ســـلموا عنـــي علـــى أربابـــه ... أخبـــروهم أننـــي حلـــف الـــضنا
أنـــا مـــذ غبـــتم علـــى تـــذكاركم ... أتـــرى عـــندكم مـــا عـــندنا
بينـــنا يـــومًا أثـــيلات الـــنقا ... كـــان عـــن غيـــر تـــراض بينـــنا
زمـــنا كـــان وكـــنا جيـــرة ... فأعـــاد الله ذاك الـــزمنا

"Here is [Musjid] al-Khayf and here is Minâ. Wait a bit, O camel driver! Restrain the caravan for us for a short while so that we may mourn and shed some tears. It is for this place that we prepared ourselves to cry, and it is for this day that we treasured our tears. O people who have profited! Your purity and humility have rekindled our memories. We have been left behind and you have reached. You should realize this and thank the Benefactor, O people of Minâ! We have lost and you have profited. So convey your additional profit to those of us who are absent. My heart travelled behind your luggage, but my excuse is disobeying my body [my excuse is not permitting me to travel]. I came to every valley you crossed, running with the feet of my

dreams. Oh! My yearning for that sanctuary is like the yearning of a deprived person who has tasted distress. Convey my greetings to those in-charge of this sanctuary and inform them that I am consumed by grief. I am thinking of you ever since you departed. Are you also thinking of us? There was a time when we were neighbours. May Allāh bring back that time."

The one who went to those lands and saw those places with his own eyes, and is then cut off from them, will die with sorrow over them and yearn for them.

مـا أذكـر عيـشنا الـذي قـد سـلفا	إلا وجـف القلـب وكـم قـد وجفـا
واهًـا لـزماننا الـذي كـان صـفا	وا أسـفا لـردِّه وا أسـفا
مـن يـرجع دهـرنا بـأرض الجـزع	بـين الأثـلات والـرُّبا فـي سـلعِ
قالـوا اصـبر ولـيس ذا فـي وسـعي	يـا حـزنُ أقـم وأنـت سـر يـا دمعـي
يـا ليتـنا بزمـزم الحجـر	يـا جيـرتنا قبـيل يـوم النفـر
هل يرجع صافي ما مضى من عمري	أدري مـا كـان، ليتنـي لا أدري

"Whenever I think of our life which passed, my heart becomes dry, and how constricted and dry it becomes! How sorrowful over that era which was pure. How sad! If only it could return. How sad! Who would bring back our time at the land of trembling? They said: 'Be patient.' But I cannot do that. O my grief, get up. And O my tears, start flowing. If only Zam Zam and the Black Stone were our neighbours before the day of departure. Will the pure days of my life which passed ever return? I know they will not return. If only I did not know this [that they will not return]."

WHAT TAKES THE PLACE OF HAJJ AND 'UMRAH

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates: Some poor people came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: **"The wealthy people have gone with the high ranks and everlasting bounty. They offer salâh as we offer salâh, and fast as we fast. But they have additional wealth with which they perform hajj, 'umrah, wage jihad and give in charity."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Should I teach you something whereby you can catch up with those who have surpassed you and none after you can catch up with you, none will be better than you except he who does similar to what you do? You must say *Sub-hânallâh, Al-hamdulillâh* and *Allâhu***

***Akbar* thirty three times each after every salâh."**(1)

Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ narrates: We said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! The wealthy have taken all the rewards. They perform hajj but we cannot. They wage jihad but we cannot. They do this and they do that."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Should I inform you of something which if you hold on to, you will produce something superior to what any of them produces? Say *Allâhu akbar* thirty four times, *Sub-hânallâh* thirty three times, and *Al-hamdulillâh* thirty three times after every salâh."**(2)

Wealth which a person uses for the obedience of Allâh ﷻ and spends in good causes which draw him closer to Allâh ﷻ is a means of conveying him to Allâh ﷻ. As for the person who spends it in the disobedience of Allâh ﷻ, uses it for fulfilling unlawful objectives, or it keeps him away from the obedience of Allâh ﷻ, then it is a cause of severing him from Allâh ﷻ. Abû Sulaymân ad-Dârânî said: **"This world is a veil against Allâh ﷻ for His enemies and a conveyance which conveys His friends to Him. Glory be to Allâh ﷻ who made a single thing a means of connecting with Him and severing oneself from Him."**

Allâh ﷻ praises the first category of people and criticizes the second category in the Qur'ân. He says in praise of the first group: **"Those who spend their wealth in the path of Allâh by night and by day, secretly and openly – for them is their reward with their Lord. There is neither fear on them nor shall they grieve."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 274)* **"Those who recite the Book of Allâh and establish the salâh and spend, secretly or openly, of something which We provided them – they are hopeful of a trade that incurs no loss. So that He may give in full their reward and give them more out of His grace. Surely He is forgiving, appreciative."** *(Sûrah Fâtir, 35: 29-30)* There are many other verses in this regard.

Allâh ﷻ says in criticism of the second group: **"O believers! Let not your wealth and your children make you oblivious to the remembrance of Allâh. Whoever does this, it is such people who are in loss. Spend from some of that which We provided you**

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(1) Narrated by Al-Bukhari (843).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (6/446), An-Nasa'ei in 'Amal al yawm wal Layla (150).

before death comes to one of you and then he says: 'O Sustainer! If only You would give me respite for a short while so that I may give in charity and become of the righteous.'" *(Sûrah al-Munâfiqûn, 63: 9-10)*

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"Every person who did not pay the zakâh on his wealth will ask to be returned to this world."** He then recited the above verse. Allâh ﷻ says with regard to one of the inmates of the Hell-fire who will be given his book of deeds in his left hand and he will say: **"My wealth did not avail me in any way. My authority is gone from me."** *(Sûrah al-Hâqqah, 69: 28-29)*

There are numerous Ahâdîth in praise of the person who spends his wealth in acts of obedience, and in criticism of the one who does not fulfil the rights of Allâh ﷻ with regard to his wealth. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Excellent is that wholesome and pure wealth for a righteous man."**(1) He said: **"Those who have a lot in this world will have very little on the day of Resurrection except the one who does like this, like this and this with his wealth: giving his wealth to his right, his left, and behind him. There are very few who are like this."**(2) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"This wealth is lush and sweet. The one who takes it rightfully and spends it rightfully – then what an excellent aid it is for him. If he takes it without any due right, he will be like a person who continues eating but is never satiated."**(3)

The believer who acquires wealth in the rightful way and spends it in the rightful way shall receive the reward for all this. It will be a charity in his favour for which he will be rewarded each time he spends thereof for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. In fact, whatever he eats for himself is a charity in his favour, what he feeds his children is a charity in his favour, what he feeds his wife is a charity in his favour, what he feeds his servant is a charity in his favour. The Companions ﷺ who possessed wealth were of this category.

Abû Sulaymân said: **"'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ and 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn 'Auf ﷺ were two of Allâh's treasurers on earth who spent in His obedience. Their relationship with Allâh ﷻ was with their hearts."** The leader of all those who spent their wealth for the

(1) Checked by Ahmad (4/197).

(2) Al-Bukhari (6444).

(3) Al-Bukhari (1465).

cause of Allâh ﷻ was Abû Bakr as-Siddîq ﷺ. The following verses were revealed with reference to him: **"He who fears [Allâh] the most shall be kept away from it. Who gives his wealth in order to purify his heart. He owes no favour to anyone which he has to pay back. But only seeking the pleasure of his Sustainer who is the most high. In time, he will be pleased."** *(Sûrah al-Layl, 92: 17-21)*

Ibn az-Zubayr said: Abû Quhâfah said to Abû Bakr ﷺ: **"I see you freeing weak slaves. If you really want to free slaves, why don't you free strong slaves who will support you and come to your defence?"** Abû Bakr ﷺ replied: **"O father! I only desire what I desire [i.e. I desire the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ]."** These verses were revealed with reference to him: **"He who fears [Allâh] the most shall be kept away from it. Who gives his wealth in order to purify his heart. He owes no favour to anyone which he has to pay back. But only seeking the pleasure of his Sustainer who is the most high. In time, he will be pleased."** *(Sûrah al-Layl, 92: 17-21)*

The above is related in another way from Ibn az-Zubayr by al-Ismâ'îlî: Abû Bakr ﷺ used to purchase weak slaves and free them. So Abû Quhâfah said to him: **"O my son! Why don't you purchase slaves who will come to your defence?"** He replied: **"O father! I am doing this so that I may be defended [against the Hell-fire]."** These verses were revealed with reference to him: **"He who fears [Allâh] the most shall be kept away from it..."** till the end of the sûrah.

Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrate that 'Umar ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered us to give in charity. I happened to possess some wealth at that time. I thought to myself: 'If there is any time that I can surpass Abû Bakr, it is today.' I therefore went with half of all my wealth. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: 'What did you leave for your family?' I replied: 'An equal amount of what I brought to you.' Abû Bakr had brought all that he possessed. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked him: 'O Abû Bakr! What did you leave for your family?' He replied: 'I left Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ for them.' I thought to myself: 'I can never surpass him in any way.'"**(1)

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(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3675), Ibn Abi 'Assem in As-Sunan (1240), Al-Baihaqi (4/180), Al-Hakem (1/414) and Ahmad (2/476).

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* narrate from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"No one's wealth benefited me as much as the wealth of Abû Bakr."** On hearing this, Abû Bakr ﷺ began crying, and said: **"I and my wealth are solely for you, O Messenger of Allâh."**(1) It is narrated by at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* without this additional statement at the end.

'Uthmân ibn 'Affân ﷺ was from among those who spent their wealth for the cause of Allâh ﷻ. At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* narrates from 'Abd ar-Raḥmân ibn Khabbâb who said: **"I was present when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was encouraging the people to spend for the *jaysh al-'usrah* (referring to the expedition to Tabûk). 'Uthmân ﷺ stood up and said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! I pledge 100 camels with their saddle blankets and saddlebags for the cause of Allâh ﷻ.' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ encouraged the people to spend again. 'Uthmân ﷺ stood up and said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! I pledge 200 camels with the saddle blankets and saddlebags for the cause of Allâh ﷻ.' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ encouraged the people to spend again. 'Uthmân ﷺ stood up and said: 'O Messenger of Allâh! I pledge 300 camels with their saddle blankets and saddlebags for the cause of Allâh ﷻ.' I saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ descending from the pulpit while he was saying: "'Uthmân is not accountable for anything which he does after this, 'Uthmân is not accountable for anything which he does after this.'"**(2)

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* narrate from 'Abd ar-Raḥmân ibn Samurah ﷺ: **"'Uthmân ﷺ came with 1 000 dinars to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when he was preparing for the expedition to Tabûk. He scattered these coins on his lap and I saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ turning the coins around and saying: 'No matter what 'Uthmân does after today, he will not be harmed by it.'"** He said this two times.(3)

'Abd ar-Raḥmân ibn 'Auf ﷺ was also among those who spent profusely for the cause of Allâh ﷻ. The *Musnad* of Imam Aḥmad

(1) Checked by Ahmad (2/253), Ibn Majah (94), At-Tirmidhi (3661) and Al-Baihaqi (5/134).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3700).

(3) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3701) And Ahmad (5/63).

raḥimahullâh relates that a caravan belonging to him arrived in Madînah and the entire city shook by its arrival. 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* inquired as to what had happened. She then related a Ḥadîth from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. When 'Abd ar-Raḥmân heard this Ḥadîth, he gave the entire caravan with all the saddle blankets and saddlebags in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. This caravan comprised of 700 camels.(1)

The above is also narrated by Ibn Sa'd(2) through another chain which is severed. In it he states that the caravan comprised of 500 camels. At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* narrates from Abû Salamah ibn 'Abd ar-Raḥmân ibn 'Auf ﷺ from 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to say to his wives: **"I am concerned about you after my demise. It is only those who are patient who will be able to exercise patience over you."** 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* then said to Abû Salamah: **"May Allâh ﷻ provide your father with a drink from the Salsabîl (name of a spring) of Paradise. He had seen to the needs of the wives of the Messenger ﷺ with an orchard which was sold for 40 000."**(3) At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* said: **"It is a sound rare Ḥadîth."** It is also related by al-Ḥâkim *raḥimahullâh* and he said that it is authentic. Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* narrated the first part of it.

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* and al-Ḥâkim *raḥimahullâh* narrate from Umm Bakr bint al-Miswar ibn Makhramah that 'Abd ar-Raḥmân ibn 'Auf ﷺ purchased a land from 'Uthmân for 40 000 dinars and distributed it among the poor people of the Banû Zahrah tribe, the Emigrants, and the wives of the Messenger ﷺ. Al-Miswar said: **"I went to 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* with her share from it and she said to us: 'I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: 'None but the patient ones will show kindness to you [referring to the wives of the Messenger ﷺ]. May Allâh ﷻ provide Ibn 'Auf with a drink from the Salsabîl of Paradise.'"**(4)

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* and al-Ḥâkim *raḥimahullâh* narrate from Umm Salamah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ

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(1) Checked by Ahmad (6/115).

(2) Ibn Saa'd in At-Tabakat (3/132).

(3) At-Tirmidhi in As-Sunan (3749).

(4) Checked by Ahmad (6/104) and Al-Hakem (3/310).

said to his wives: **"The person who shows kindness to you after my demise is an extremely truthful and righteous person. O Allâh! Provide 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn 'Auf with a drink from the Salsabîl of Paradise."**(1) It is also related by Ibn Sa'd. He adds: Ibrâhîm ibn Sa'd said: **"One of my family members from the progeny of 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn 'Auf related to me that 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn 'Auf sold his property from Kaydamah – which was his share from the Banû Nadîr – for 40 000 dinars and distributed this amount among the wives of the Messenger ﷺ."**(2)

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Salamah ibn 'Abd ar-Rahmân ﷺ that his father, 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn 'Auf, made a bequest of an orchard in favour of the wives of the Messenger ﷺ which was sold for 40 000.(3) Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* narrates it with the words: **"which was sold for 40 000 dinars."**(4)

Incidents of the generous Companions ﷺ who spent their wealth for the cause of Allâh ﷻ are too many to enumerate. Whenever the poor Companions ﷺ saw the wealthy ones spending their wealth in deeds which are beloved by Allâh ﷻ, such as hajj, 'umrah, jihad, freeing of slaves, charity, maintaining ties of kinship, and various other acts of obedience and sacrifice, they were grieved by the fact that they could not share these virtues with them. Allâh ﷻ makes mention of them in the Qur'ân: **"There is no sin on the weak, on the sick, nor on those who do not have anything to spend provided they are sincere to Allâh and His Messenger. There is no way of reproach against the righteous. And Allâh is forgiving, merciful. Nor [is there a way of reproach] against those who came to you so that you may provide them with conveyances and you said: 'I do not have anything upon which I could convey you.' They turned away, their eyes flowing with tears out of sorrow that they do not have that which they could spend."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 91-92)*

This verse was revealed with reference to some poor Muslims who came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when he was preparing for the expedition to Tabûk. They asked him to take them with, so he said to

(1) Checked by Ahmad (6/299) and Al-Hakem (3/311).

(2) Ibn Saa'd In At-Tabakat.

(3) At- Tirmidhi in As-Sunan (3750).

(4) Al-Hakem in Al-Mustadrak (3/312).

them: **"I do not have the means to take you with."** They went back crying in grief over the missed opportunity of joining the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ for jihad. Some *'ulamâ'* said: **"By Allâh, this is the crying of true men. They cried over the fact that they did not have animals which would carry them towards death in the battlefields where blood is shed for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, where the heads of people are chopped off with swords. As for the person who cries over losing his share of this world and its immediate pleasures, that crying is like that of women and children who cry over their immediate losses."**

سـهرُ العـيون لغيـر وجهـك باطـل وبكـاؤهن لغيـر فقـدك ضـائع

"It is futile and useless when the eyes remain awake at night for any reason other than You. If they cry for any reason other than You, it is wasted."

Crying and sorrow are commendable when they are over missed opportunities for gaining high stages [in Paradise] and everlasting comfort. A person said: **"A person will be seen crying in Paradise and will be asked about his condition. He will reply: 'I had a single soul which was killed for the cause of Allâh ﷻ. I wish I had many souls and all of them were killed for His cause.'"** Some people waged jihad for the cause of Allâh ﷻ. When they faced their enemy and fought them, each one of them saw his wife from the doe-eyed damsels of Paradise opening a door in the heavens, calling him towards her and urging him to fight. All except one of them was killed. Each time one was killed, one door in the heavens was closed and the doe-eyed damsel who was at that door would disappear. The last person missed this opportunity and the woman closed the remaining door saying: **"O you unfortunate person! What an opportunity you missed!"** He used to cry over his condition right till his death. However, this caused him to continue striving, and expressing grief and sorrow.

علـى مـثل ليلـى يقـتل المـرء نفـسه وإن كـان مـن ليلـى علـى الهجـر طاويـا

"It is for a person like Laylâ that a person kills himself, even if he has to starve himself for his separation from her."

When the Companions ﷺ heard these verses: **"then strive together (as in a race) towards all that is good."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 148)* **"Hasten towards forgiveness from your Sustainer and [towards] Paradise the extent of which is like the extent of the heavens and the earth..."** *(Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 21)* they understood that it means every one of them must strive to come out first in obtaining this honour and hasten to reach this lofty goal. When any

of them saw another doing something which he himself could not do, he feared that person surpassing him. He would thus be grieved over this missed opportunity. Their vying with each other and competing against each other in acquiring these lofty levels of the Hereafter was in line with the command of Allâh ﷻ: **"In that, should they strive those who want to strive."** *(Sûrah al-Mutaffifîn, 83: 26)* Then those who came after them turned this entire affair upside down and began competing against each other over this reprehensible world and its fleeting treasures.

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"If you see a person competing against you over this world, compete with him for the Hereafter."** Wuhayb ibn al-Ward said: **"If you are able to make it such that no one surpasses you towards Allâh ﷻ, then do it."** A pious predecessor said: **"If a person hears that another is more obedient than him to Allâh ﷻ, he ought to be grieved by it."** Another said: **"If a person hears of another who is more obedient than him to Allâh ﷻ, it should not come as a surprise if his heart shatters and he dies [because of what he heard]."**

A person said to Mâlik ibn Dînâr: **"I dreamt that a person was calling out: 'O people! Depart, depart!' I did not see anyone but Muhammad ibn Wâsi' departing.'"** On hearing this, Mâlik screamed and fell unconscious. **"Those to the fore shall be the foremost. They are the near ones. In gardens of delight."** *(Sûrah al-Wâqi'ah, 56: 10-12)*

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *rahimahullâh* went for hajj and when the people were proceeding from 'Arafah, he said: **"The person who reaches first with his camel has not really come out first. The person who is forgiven is the one who has come out first."**

Abû Bakr ﷺ was at the head of this *ummah* in hastening towards good deeds. 'Umar ﷺ said: **"Whenever we competed in doing good, Abû Bakr certainly surpassed us. He used to be at the forefront in doing good."** The one after him was 'Umar ﷺ. During the last hajj which he performed, there was an unknown person whom the people considered to be a jinn. He said this poem in mourning him:

فمن يسعَ أو يركبْ جناحي نعامة لِيدركَ ما قدمتَ بالأمس يسبق

"The one who hastens or rides the wings of an ostrich in order to make up for what he lost in the past shall surpass."

A person of high aspirations and a noble yearning soul is never pleased with base and fleeting things. His aspiration is towards everlasting pure ranks which never end. He does not retract from his

goal and his soul does not turn away from its quest. When a person spends everything for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ takes it upon Himself to give him in return. A person who was striving very hard in acts of obedience was asked: **"Why are you punishing this body?"** He replied: **"I am actually desiring its honour."**

وإذا كانـــت الـــنفوس كـــبارا تَعِـــبتْ فـــي مـــرادها الأجـــساد

"When the souls are high-minded, the bodies bear fatigue to reach their goal."

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *raḥimahullâh* said: **"I have a yearning soul. Whenever it attains something, it yearns for something superior. When it acquired this position of caliphate which is the highest position in this world, it yearned for something greater than this world, and that is the Hereafter."**

علـى قـدر أهـل العـزم تأتـي العـزائم وتأتـي علـى قـدر الكـرام المكـارمُ

"Decisions and resolutions are achieved according to the position of those endowed with decisions and resolutions. Noble feats are achieved according to the position of the noble people."

The value of a person is gauged by what he seeks. There is no one lower than the person who seeks this world because it is mean and ignoble. Lower than the world is the person who seeks it. It is contemptible, and more contemptible is the person who propositions the world. A person said: **"The hearts are constantly in motion. One heart revolves around the Throne ('Arsh of Allâh ﷻ). Another heart revolves around excrement. This entire world is an excrement. All the food and drink that is on earth returns to excrement. The bodies and clothes that are on it are reduced to soil.**

وكل الذي فوق التراب ترابُ

"Everything above the soil [is bound to be reduced to] soil."

A person said to his brothers on the day of 'Îd: **"All that you see are rags which wear out, or flesh which is eaten by worms."**

As for the person who seeks the Hereafter, he is highly valued because the Hereafter itself is highly valued and noble. The person who seeks it is more noble than it.

أثـــامنُ بالـــنفس النفيـــسة ربهـــا ولـيس لهـا فـي الخلـق كلهـم ثمـنْ
بهـا تـدرك الأخـرى فـإن أنـا بعـتُها بـشيء مـن الدنـيا فـذاك هـو الغـبن
لـئن ذهـبت نفـسي بدنـيا أصـبتها لقـد ذهـبت نفـسي وقـد ذهـب الـثمن

"I make a price for the valuable soul to its Lord. There is nothing in the entire creation which can equal its price [i.e. it is priceless]. It is through this soul that the Hereafter is acquired. But if I were to sell it for something of this world, it will amount to fraud. If I were to sell my soul for something of this world, I would have lost my soul and also the price which I received for selling it."

As for the person who seeks Allâh ﷻ, he is the greatest in the sight of Allâh ﷻ because he is seeking something which is the greatest.

لـــه همـــم لا منتهـــى لكـــبارها وهمـته الـصغرى أجـل مـن الدهـر

"He has such aspirations for whose greatness there is no end. His smallest aspiration is greater than time."

Ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* said: **"The person who inclines to the** world shall be burnt by its fire. He will be reduced to ash that is blown by the winds. The person who inclines to the Hereafter shall be burnt by its fire. He will be turned into a gold ingot which is of benefit. The person who inclines to Allâh ﷻ shall be burnt by the light of *tauhîd*. He will be turned into a priceless jewel.

A person of high aspirations strives to attain his goal and spends his energies to acquire the pleasure of his beloved. As for the person who is of despicable aspirations, his striving is wasted in following his desires, and he relies on mere pardon. Even if he were to be pardoned, he is deprived of the lofty ranks of those who enjoy close proximity to Allâh ﷻ. A person of the past said: **"Even if the sinner is pardoned, has he not missed out on the reward of the doers of good?"**

فـيا مذنـبا يـرجو مـن الله عفـوه أترضـى بـسبق المتقـين إلـى الله

"O you sinner who hopes for Allâh's pardon! Are you happy over the fact that the righteous have surpassed you in reaching Allâh?"

When the competitors competed against each other in acquiring the high positions, some of them became jealous of others on the basis of good deeds. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no jealousy except in two matters: (1) A person to whom Allâh gave this Book and he lives by it by day and night. (2) A person to whom Allâh gave wealth and he spends it in charity by day and night."**(1)

(1) Al-Bukhari (5025) and Muslim (815).

Another narration states: **"There is no jealousy except in two matters: (1) A person to whom Allâh ﷻ taught the Qur'ân and so he recites it by day and night. His neighbour hears him and says: 'If only I was also given what such and such person is given so that I could also do what he does.' (2) A person to whom Allâh ﷻ gives wealth and so he spends it for the truth. [On seeing him], a person says: 'If only I was given what such and such person is given so that I could also do what he does.'"**

At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* and others narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The similitude of this *ummah* is like that of four persons: (1) A person whom Allâh ﷻ blessed with wealth and knowledge. He practises on his knowledge and spends his wealth in rightful places. (2) A person whom Allâh ﷻ blessed with knowledge but not wealth. He says: 'If I had as much wealth as that person, I would have spent it as he spends it [in rightful places].' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'Both shall receive the same reward. (3) A person whom Allâh ﷻ blessed with wealth but not knowledge. He acts rashly with his wealth and spends it in the wrong places. (4) A person whom Allâh ﷻ did not bless with knowledge nor wealth. He says: 'If I had as much wealth as this [third] person, I would have spent it as he spends it [in the wrong places]. Both are bearing the same burden [and will be punished equally]."**

Ḥumayd ibn Zanjawayh narrates from Zayd ibn Aslam who said: **"On the day of Resurrection, a poor person and a rich person who were friends for the sake of Allâh ﷻ will be brought forward. The wealthy person will have one additional deed which he did because of his wealth. He will thus be given a rank above his friend. The poor person will ask: 'O Lord! Why did You elevate him [above me] whereas we remained in each other's company for Your sake and did good deeds for Your sake?' Allâh ﷻ will say: 'He did one additional deed because of his wealth.' The poor man will say: 'O Lord! You know that if You had given me wealth as well, I would have done the same as him.' Allâh ﷻ will say [to the angels]: 'He is correct. Raise him to the level of his friend."**

"A sick person and healthy person who were friends for the sake of Allâh ﷻ will be brought forward. The healthy person will be elevated because of his deeds. The sick person will say: 'O Lord! Why did you elevate him [above me]?' Allâh ﷻ will say: 'Because of the good deeds which he did in his healthy situation.' The sick person will say: 'O Lord! You know that if You had given me good health I would have done the same as

him.' Allâh ﷻ will say [to the angels]: 'He is correct. Raise him to the level of his friend.'"

"A free person and a slave who were friends with each other for the sake of Allâh ﷻ will be brought forward and the same conversation will take place. A person of good character and evil character will be brought forward. The person of evil character will ask: 'O Lord! Why did You elevate him above me whereas we were friends for Your sake and did good deeds for You?' Allâh ﷻ will say: 'By virtue of his good character.' The person will have no answer for this."

An intelligent person will be jealous of the person who spends his wealth for good causes and for acquiring high ranks. An ignorant person will be jealous of the person who spends his wealth to satisfy his desires and which convey him to unlawful pleasures. Allâh ﷻ speaks about Qârûn: **"He appeared before his people in all his pomp. Those who sought the life of this world began saying: 'If only we had the like of what Qârûn has been given. Surely he is endowed with great fortune.' Those who were given knowledge said: 'Woe to you! The reward given by Allâh is better for him who believes and does righteous deeds.' This [belief] strikes the heart of none but those who live with patience. We then made him and his house sink into the earth. So he had no group to help him against Allâh nor could he get help himself. In the morning, those who, the day before, had coveted his position began saying: 'O destruction! Allâh expands sustenance for whomever He wills of His servants and restricts [for whomever He wills]. Had Allâh not been kind to us, He would have sank us as well. O destruction! The unbelievers never prosper.' That abode of the Hereafter – We shall give it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the land, nor to cause corruption. The blessed end is for those who fear."** *(Sûrah al-Qasas, 28: 79-83)*

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw the sorrow and grief of his poor Companions ﷺ over their inability to spend in the cause of Allâh ﷻ as their wealthy brothers were doing to gain proximity to Allâh ﷻ and acquire His pleasure, he consoled them and directed them to do a simple act through which they could catch up those who surpassed them, none after them would catch up with them, and through which they will be the best people except those who do the same as them. The action which he directed them to do was to engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ after the compulsory salâhs. The narrations differ on the categories and numbers for this remembrance. Adopting all of them would be good and very

meritorious.

The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ states that they must say *Sub-hânallâh, Al-hamdulillâh* and *Allâhu Akbar* thirty three times each after every salâh. Abû Sâlih, the narrator, explains this by totalling all three. In other words, the person must say *Sub-hânallâh, Al-hamdulillâh* and *Allâhu Akbar* thirty three times each after every salâh, and this will total ninety nine. An objection can be raised against this with the Hadîth about a person who asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ if there was anything equal to jihad, and he said: **"From the time the *mujâhid* departs for jihad, can you fast without stopping, and engage in night worship without getting tired?"**(1)

This is also an established authentic Hadîth. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ considered nothing equal to jihad apart from continuous fasting and continuous engaging in night worship. But in this Hadîth, he made *dhikr* after the compulsory salâhs equal to it. This can be reconciled by saying that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not consider anything equal to jihad at the time of jihad, in the sense that when jihad ends, that action also ends. And the person who does that deed is equal to the *mujâhid* in reward. As for abundant and continuous *dhikr*, it is equal to jihad during the rest of the life of a believer. He continues with this *dhikr* without stopping until the end of his life. If he continues with *dhikr* at the appointed times until he passes away, this *dhikr* of his will equal jihad.

The following Hadîth also makes reference to this. Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Should I tell you what your best deeds are and the purest thereof in the sight of your Master? The highest thereof in your ranks? That which is better than spending gold and silver? That which is better for you than meeting the enemy – wherein they kill you and you kill them?"** The Companions ﷺ replied: **"Indeed."** He said: **"The remembrance of Allâh."**(2) It is narrated by Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* in his *Muwattâ* as a *mauqûf* Hadîth.

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrate from Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked as to which servants enjoy the highest stage in the sight of Allâh ﷻ on the day of Resurrection? He replied: **"Those who**

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(1) Al-Bukhari (2785).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3377) and Ahmad (5/195).

engage in the abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ." I asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Even more superior than the one who wages jihad in the cause of Allâh?"** He said: **"Even if he strikes the unbelievers and polytheists with his sword until he falls and is immersed in blood, those who engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ will enjoy a higher stage than him."**(1)

A similar subject is narrated by Mu'âdh ibn Jabal ﷺ and a group of Companions ﷺ. The remembrance of Allâh ﷻ is superior to charity in its number of dirhams and dinars, and even superior to spending in the cause of Allâh ﷻ.

Someone said to Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ that a person freed 100 slaves. He said: **"Freeing 100 slaves from the wealth of a person is a lot, but superior to that is îmân which remains attached to a person by day and night, and that your tongue remains moist with the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ."**

Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ said: **"I prefer saying *Lâ ilâha illallâhu wallâhu akbar* 100 times to giving 100 dinars in charity."**

A Hadîth states: **"The person who is unable to endure the night worship, is too miserly to spend his wealth, and is too cowardly to fight the enemy should engage in abundant utterance of the words *Sub-hânallâh wa bi hamdihi* (glory and praise be to Allâh) because it is more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than a mountain of gold or silver which a person spends in the cause of Allâh ﷻ. The remembrance of Allâh ﷻ is one of the most superior forms of charity."**(2)

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ: **"There is no charity which is superior to the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ."**(3) Some past scholars say with regard to this verse: **"and give to Allâh a goodly loan"** *(Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 18)* that **"a goodly loan"** refers to *Sub-hânallâh, wal-hamdulillâh, wa lâ ilâha illallâhu, wallâhu akbar.*

The *marâsîl* of al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"No person spent anything better in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than a statement which is not in the Qur'ân but is considered to be part of the Qur'ân. It is *Sub-hânallâh, wal-hamdulillâh, wa lâ ilâha illallâhu, wallâhu akbar.*"**

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(1) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3376) and Ahmad (3/75).

(2) At-Tabarany in Al-Awsat (7795) and checked by Al-Hindi in Al-Kanz (1804).

(3) At-Tabarany in Al-Awsat (7414).

'Abd ar-Razzâq *rahimahullâh* relates from Ma'mar from Qatâdah who said: Some poor believers said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! The wealthy have taken all the rewards. They give in charity but we cannot. They spend but we cannot."** He said: **"Tell me, if the wealth of this world was to be piled one above the other, would it reach the heavens?"** They replied: **"No, O Messenger of Allâh."** He said: **"Should I tell you of something whose roots are on earth but whose branches are in the heavens? You must say *Lâ ilâha illallâhu, wallâhu akbar, wa sub-hânallâh, wal hamdulillâh* ten times after every salâh. The roots of these words are on earth and their branches are in the heavens."**(1)

A Companion ﷺ had assumed that the only way of charity is through wealth. So the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ informed him that charity is not confined to wealth. Rather, the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and all good deeds are forms of charity. Abû Dharr ﷺ narrates that some Companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! The wealthy have taken all the rewards. They offer salâh as we do and they fast as we do. But they are able to give in charity from the additional wealth which they possess."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Has Allâh ﷻ not given you something which you can give in charity? Every *tasbîh* (saying *sub-hânallâh*) is an act of charity, every *takbîr* (saying *Allâhu akbar*) is an act of charity, every *tahmîd* (saying *al-hamdulillâh*) is an act of charity, every *tahlîl* (saying *Lâ ilâha illallâh*) is an act of charity, commanding good is an act of charity, prohibiting evil is an act of charity, even conjugal relations with one's wife is an act of charity."**(2)

The *Musnad* states that he said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! The rich give in charity while we cannot."** He said: **"There is charity in everything which you do. Removing a bone [or any other obstacle] from the path is charity. Giving directions to a person is charity. Helping a weak person with your extra strength is charity. Speaking on behalf of a person who cannot speak clearly is charity. Engaging in conjugal relations with your wife is charity."**(3)

There are numerous other Ahâdîth with this meaning. They are too many to quote here.

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(1) Checked by Abdul Razzak is his Musannaf (3188).

(2) Checked by Muslim (1006).

(3) Al-Musnad (5/154).

The person who is unable to do a good act, expresses sorrow over not being able to do it, and yearns to do it shall have a share in the reward with the person who does it. As was mentioned in the Hadîth in which a person said: **"Had I possessed wealth, I would have done as such and such person did..."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ stated in this Hadîth that both will be equal in the reward and the sin [depending on what the person wished to do]. It is said that they both are equal in the actual reward but not in the additional reward. The additional reward is reserved for the person who actually does the good deed.

It is based on this that people of high aspirations were not satisfied merely with sharing in the rewards. Rather, they sought to do deeds which were equal to what they were unable to do so that they could acquire the rewards which were equal to the rewards of those deeds, and so that the rewards may be multiplied for them as they are multiplied for the actual doers of those deeds. In so doing, they and those who did those deeds will be equal in all the rewards.

If a woman or weak person did not go for jihad during the era of the Messenger ﷺ, he or she would ask him about a deed which equals jihad. A woman was not able to accompany the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ on hajj. When he returned, she asked him about a deed which would make up for what she missed. He said: **"Perform 'umrah in Ramadân because an 'umrah performed in Ramadân is equal to a hajj, or a hajj with me."**(1)

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! We consider jihad to be the most superior of deeds. Should we [women] not wage jihad?"** He said: **"Your jihad is hajj and 'umrah."**(2)

If a person remained behind from a battle, he would try to join the *mujâhidûn* in the reward either by sending someone else in his place by providing him with his wealth, helping another *mujâhid*, or seeing to the well-being of the family of the *mujâhid* who went out. A person who does any of this is as if he went for jihad himself.

A wealthy person gave a lot of money in charity. A group of righteous people heard about this, so they assembled at a place and calculated how many dirhams that person gave in charity. They then offered optional salâh – one rak'ah for every dirham which that person gave in charity for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. This is the type of

(1) Al-Bukhari (1863).

(2) It was checked befor.

competition and vying there should be in doing good deeds and achieving high ranks.

كـــذاك الفخـــر يـــا همـــم الـــرجال تعالـــي فانظـــري كـــيف التغالـــي

"O aspirations of true men! This is how honour is achieved. Come and look how you can out do each other."

Glory be to Allâh who favoured this *ummah* and opened for it the doors of immense virtues at the hands of its Prophet, the Prophet of mercy ﷺ. There is no great act which a people do and others cannot do the same without Allâh ﷻ providing another deed which equals it or is superior to it. In this way, the entire *ummah* is equal in its ability to do it. Since jihad is the most superior of deeds and many people do not have the ability to do it, abundant and continuous *dhikr* was made equal and superior to it. Good deeds during the first ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah are superior to jihad except in the case of the person who goes with his self and wealth and does not return with either of the two.

Hajj is one of the most superior deeds and the souls yearn to carry it out. Allâh ﷻ placed that yearning for that Grand House in the hearts of people – and we know that many people are unable to perform it, especially every year – Allâh ﷻ therefore prescribed other deeds for His servants through which they can earn the reward of hajj. In so doing, those who are unable to perform the optional hajj are given something else as a replacement.

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who offers the *fajr salâh* in congregation and remains seated in his place engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ until sunrise, then offers two rak'ahs of salâh shall receive the reward of one complete hajj and 'umrah."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Complete, complete, complete [hajj and 'umrah]."**(1)

Attending the Jumu'ah salâh is equal to an optional hajj. Sa'îd ibn al-Musayyib said: **"It is more beloved to me than an optional hajj."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said that a person who goes early for the Jumu'ah salâh is like a person who sends a sacrificial animal to the Sanctified House of Allâh.(2) A weak Hadîth states: **"The Jumu'ah salâh is the hajj of the poor people."**

The *Târîkh* of Ibn 'Asâkir narrates from al-Auzâ'î *rahimahullâh* who said: **"Yûnus ibn Maysarah ibn Halbas passed by the graves**

(1) At-Tirmidhi (586).

(2) As in Hadith of Abu-Hurairah (RA) in Al-Bukhari (881).

of Bâb Tûmâ, so he said: 'Peace be on you, O dwellers of these graves. You have surpassed us and we are soon to follow you. May Allâh have mercy on you and us. May He forgive you and us. We are on the verge of reaching the place where you are.' Allâh ﷻ returned the soul to one of those who were buried there and he answered him saying: 'Glad tidings to you O people of the world when you perform hajj four times in a month.' Yûnus asked: 'May Allâh have mercy on you, where do we perform hajj like this?' He said: 'When you go for the Jumu'ah salâh. Don't you know that it is a blessed and accepted hajj?' Yûnus asked: 'What is the best deed which you sent ahead?' He replied: 'Seeking forgiveness, O people of the world!' Yûnus asked: 'What stops you from replying to my greeting (*salâm*)?' He replied: 'O people of the world! The *salâm* and good deeds have been raised from us. We can neither increase our good deeds nor decrease our evil deeds. O people of the world! Our accounts have been closed.'"

The *Sunan* of Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who purifies himself in his house then leaves for the musjid to perform a compulsory salâh shall receive a reward similar to a pilgrim in *ihrâm*. The one who goes out for the *salât ad-duhâ* (mid-morning optional salâh) shall receive a reward similar to a person performing 'umrah."**(1)

Anas ﷺ states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ advised a person to be dutiful to his mother. He said to him: **"You shall be a person performing hajj, 'umrah, and waging jihad."** That is, if he is dutiful to her.(2)

A Companion ﷺ said: **"Going for the *'îd* salâh on *'îd* al-fitr is equal to an 'umrah, and on *'îd* al-ad-hâ it is equal to a hajj."** Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Fulfilling a need of your Muslim brother is better for you than performing one hajj after another."** 'Uqbah ibn 'Abd al-Ghâfir said: **"Offering the *'ishâ salâh* with congregation is equal to a hajj, and offering the *fajr salâh* with congregation is equal to an 'umrah."** Abû Hurayrah ﷺ said to a person: **"Your going early to the musjid is more beloved to me than our going out for jihad with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ."** Related by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*.

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(1) Checked By Abu-Dawoud (558), Ahmad (5/263, 268) and Al-Baihaqi (3/63).

(2) Checked by At-Tabarany in Al-Awsat (2915) and Abu-Yaa'la (2760).

Fulfilling all obligatory duties is superior to optional ḥajj and ʿumrah. This is because the best thing with which a person can gain proximity to Allâh ﷻ is by carrying out all which He made obligatory on him. Many people find it very easy to perform optional ḥajj and give optional charity, but do not bother about fulfilling their obligatory duties like paying their debts and returning unlawful gains. Similarly, many people find it difficult to abstain from unlawful and doubtful earning but find it easy to spend such earnings for ḥajj and charity.

A pious predecessor said: **"Giving up a small coin which Allâh ﷻ dislikes is more beloved to me than performing ḥajj 500 times."** Restraining the limbs from unlawful things is superior to optional ḥajj, and the souls find more difficulty in doing this.

Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyâḍ *raḥimahullâh* said: **"There is no ḥajj, no guarding the Islamic borders and no jihad which is more difficult than restraining the tongue. If you were to become concerned about your tongue, you would fall into intense worry and concern. The criterion is not that of good deeds with one's limbs, but rather by the righteousness and piety of the hearts, and purifying them from sins."**

The journey of this world is traversed by the movement of the body, but the journey of the Hereafter is traversed by the movement of the heart.

A person said to an *ʿârif* (a person who truly recognizes Allâh ﷻ): **"I traversed a great distance to come to you."** He said: **"This matter does not revolve around covering great distances. Separate yourself from your soul with a single step and you will reach your goal."** The journeying of the hearts is more effective than the journeying of the bodies. Many a person reaches the House with his body, but his heart is cut off from the Lord of the House. Many a person is sitting on his bed in his house while his heart is connected to the highest abode [of Allâh ﷻ].

جسمي معي غير أن الروح عندكم فالجسم في غربة والروح في وطن

"My body is with me but my soul is with you. My body is in a strange place, but my soul is in its homeland."

An *ʿârif* said: **"I am astonished at the person who traverses** great distances and barren lands to reach the Kaʿbah and witness the effects of the Prophets ﷺ there. Why does he not cut his desires so that he may reach his heart and see in it the effect of: **"The heart of My believing servant is sufficient for Me."** O believer! Allâh has a house inside you. If you were to purify that house, it will shine with

the light of its Lord, it will become wide and expansive. Ash-Shiblî said:

إن بيـــــتا أنـــــت ســـــاكنه غيـــر محـــتاج إلـــى الـــسرج
ومريـــــضا أنـــــت عائـــــده قـــــد أتـــــاه الله بالفـــــرج
وجهـــــك المأمـــــول حجتـــــنا يـــوم يأتـــي الـــناس بـــالحجج

"The house which you are inhabiting does not need any light. The sick person whom you are visiting has already got relief from Allâh ﷻ. Your wishful face is our proof on the day when people come with their proofs."

The purification of this house entails emptying it of all the idols of the soul and desires which Allâh ﷻ dislikes. As long as any of these idols remain inside, Allâh ﷻ is the most independent of partners and He does not like to be constricted by idols. Sahl ibn ʻAbdillâh said: **"It is unlawful for any light to enter a heart which is inhabited by anything which Allâh ﷻ dislikes."**

أردنـــاكم صـــرفا فلمـــا مـــزجتم بعـــدتم بمقـــدار الـــتفاتكم عـــنا
وقلـنا لكـم لا تـسكنوا القلـب غيـرنا فأســكنتم الأغــيار مــا أنــتم مــنا

"We wanted you solely for ourselves. But when you mixed with others, you became distant from us as per your turning away from us. We said to you: 'Do not inhabit anyone but us in your heart.' But you inhabited others, and so you are not of us."

Brothers! If you do not go for hajj this year, return to waging jihad against the soul because it is the greatest jihad. If you are prevented from fulfilling the rites of hajj, shed whatever tears you can over this because shedding tears is essential for a person who is restricted. Do not shave the heads of your religion by committing sins. This is because sins shave off one's religion, they do not shave off one's hair. Stand up for Allâh ﷻ with the feelings of hope and fear, as one would stand in the vicinity of [Musjid al]-Khayf and the Mashʻar. If a person is far from the Sanctuary of Allâh ﷻ (the Haram), he must not distance himself from the mercy of Allâh ﷻ by committing sins. The mercy of Allâh ﷻ is close to the person who repents to Him and seeks forgiveness. If a person is unable to make the pilgrimage to the Kaʻbah or it is far from him, he should seek the Lord of the Kaʻbah because he is closer than the jugular vein to the person who supplicates to Him and has hopes in Him.

إلـيك قـصدي رب البـيت والحجـر فأنـت سـؤلي مـن حجـي ومـن عمـري
وفـيك سـعيي وتطوافـي ومزدلفـي والهدي جسمي الذي يغني عن الجزر

ومسجد الخيف خوفي من تباعدكم ومشعري ومقامي دونكم خطري

زادي رجائي لكم والشوق راحلتي والماء من عبراتي والهوى سفري

"It is You whom I seek O Lord of the House and the Black Stone. You alone do I ask from my hajj and 'umrah. It is for You that I make the *sa'î*, the *ṭawâf*. It is for You that I go to Muzdalifah. The sacrificial animal is my body which suffices me from slaughtering an animal. The Musjid al-Khayf is my fear of being distant from You. The Mash'ar and the Maqâm are my fears of being away from You. My provision is my hope in You, yearning is my conveyance, my tears are my water, and my journey is my love."

DHÛ AL-QA'DAH

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates from a person from Bâhilah who said: **"I went to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ for some work on one occasion. He asked me: 'Who are you?' I said: 'Don't you recognize me?' He asked: 'Who are you?' I said: 'I am the person from Bâhilah who had come to you in the first year.' He said: 'When you came to me that time, your body, complexion and appearance was good. What has caused you to become like this?' I replied: 'By Allâh, ever since I left you, I kept fast every day except at night.' He asked: 'Who ordered you to punish your self? Who ordered you to punish your self?' He said this three times. 'Fast in the month of patience – Ramadân.' I said: 'I have the strength so let me fast more.' He said: 'Fast for one day in a month.' I said: 'I have the strength so let me fast more.' He said: 'Fast for two days in a month.' I said: 'I have the strength so let me fast more.' He said: 'Fast for three days in a month.' He insisted and asked for more but he did not permit him to fast more than three days. I said: 'I have the strength so let me fast more.' He said: '[Fast] in the sanctified months and abstain from fasting thereafter.'"**(1)

Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrated it in a similar way with a few additions and subtractions in the wording. Some narrations have the words: **"Fast in the sanctified months and abstain from fasting thereafter."**

This Hadîth proves that one is not ordered to impose such worship on him to the extent that it harms his body. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: **"Who ordered you to punish yourself?"** He repeated this three times.

Similarly, when he saw a person walking for hajj and had exhausted himself, he said: **"Allâh ﷻ forbade me from allowing this person to punish himself. Go tell him to ride his animal."**(2)

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(1) Checked by Ahmad (5/28), Abu-Dawoud (2428) and Al-Baihaqi (4/291).

(2) Al-Bukhari (6701).

'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ ﷺ used to fast by day, spend the night in worship, recite the entire Qur'ân every night, and would not sleep with his wife. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered him to alternate between fasting and not fasting, and to complete the recitation of the Qur'ân in one week. He said to him: **"Your soul has a right over you, and your wife has a right over you. So fulfil the right of each of those who have a right over you."**

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard that one of his Companions ﷺ said: **"I will continue fasting and not stop."** Another said: **"I will spend the entire night in worship and not sleep."** Another said: **"I will not marry."** When he heard about this, he addressed the people saying: **"What is it with some people who are saying such things? I fast and I also abstain from fasting. I engage in night worship and I sleep as well. And I also marry. Whoever turns away from my Sunnah is not of me."**

The reason for this is that Allâh ﷻ created man in such a way that he is in need of certain things which maintain his body, viz. food, drink, conjugal relations and clothing. Allâh ﷻ permitted all these things to him provided they are wholesome and lawful. The soul gets strength from this and the body experiences good health, and they both [soul and body] help him to obey Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ forbade all which is harmful and injurious, and which causes the soul to become rebellious, blind, hard, heedless, avaricious and haughty. The person who obeys his soul in acquiring whatever Allâh ﷻ made unlawful to it would be transgressing the limits and wronging his self. The person who deprives it of its lawful right to the extent that it is harmed by this would be wronging his self and depriving it of its rights. If this causes it any weakness and inability from fulfilling any of the compulsory injunctions of Allâh ﷻ, the right of Allâh ﷻ, or the rights of His servants, he will be sinning. If this is a cause of inability from fulfilling any optional acts which are superior to what he is doing [i.e. superior to his self-deprivation], he would be committing excesses, cheating and causing loss to himself.

During the era of the Tâbi'ûn there was a person who used to continue fasting to the extent that he could not even stand up. He would therefore perform the compulsory ṣalâh while sitting. People reprimanded him for this to the extent that 'Amr ibn Maymûn *raḥimahullâh* said: **"If the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ had seen this person, they would have pelted him with stones."**

Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ used to keep few [optional] fasts. He used to say: **"Fasting makes me too week to recite the Qur'ân, and reciting the Qur'ân is more beloved to me."**

A person wore the *iḥrâm* from Kûfah. When he reached Makkah, he was overcome by fatigue. 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭâb ﷺ saw his unsightly appearance, so he held him by his hand and walked him around saying to the people: **"Look at what he is doing to himself when Allâh ﷻ has given him so much of freedom."**

A person who imposes optional acts upon himself to the extent that they are injurious to his body, as done by the Bâhilî person, or which cause him to deprive himself or others of an obligatory duty, as was the case with 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ ﷺ and the others who had resolved to abstain from certain lawful things during the era of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, then he is prohibited from doing this. But if a person's body can bear this and it does not prevent him from fulfilling his duties, he is not prohibited from doing it unless it prevents him from carrying out other optional acts which are superior to this one. He is instructed to do the optional act which is more superior. The conditions of people differ with regard to what actions their bodies can bear and what they cannot.

Sufyân ath-Thaurî *raḥimahullâh* used to fast for three days in a month and the effect of this fasting would be seen on him. On the other hand, there were others in his very era who used to fast throughout the month but the effect of it would not be seen on them.

Many people of the past used to impose certain actions upon their selves which caused harm to their bodies, and they used to expect reward for it from Allâh ﷻ. These were people who were genuine, serious and constantly striving, and they lived for this. However, they should not be emulated. Rather, the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ should be emulated because the best way is the way of the Messenger ﷺ. The person who obeys him is guided. The person who emulates him and follows him shall reach Allâh ﷻ.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to prohibit difficulty and ordered ease. The religion which he is sent with is an easy religion. He used to say: **"The best of your religion is the one which is easiest."**(1) He saw a person offering excessive ṣalâh so he said: **"You are a**

(1) Checked by Ahmad (3/479).

nation for whom ease is desired."

The major optional acts of the Messenger ﷺ and his Companions ﷺ were not in excessive ṣalâh and fasting. Rather it was with regard to the piety of the hearts, their purity, their freedom from evil, and the strength of their connection with Allâh ﷻ. This was done out of fear and love for Allâh ﷻ, out of respect, awe and yearning for what was with Him, and abstention from all that is fleeting.

'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"I am the most knowledgeable of you with regard to Allâh ﷻ, and my heart is the most fearful of Him."**(1) Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said to his friends: **"You offer more ṣalâhs and keep more fasts than the Companions of Muḥammad ﷺ, yet they were better than you."** They asked: **"Why is that?"** He replied: **"They were more abstentious than you in worldly matters and more desirous than you in matters of the Hereafter."**

Bakr al-Muzanî said: **"Abû Bakr ﷺ did not surpass them through excessive ṣalâh and fasting, rather it was because of something which was firmly embedded in his heart."** One of the past *'ulamâ'* said: **"The thing which was firmly embedded in his heart was love for Allâh ﷻ and wishing well for the creation of Allâh."**

After 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *raḥimahullâh* passed away, his wife, Fâṭimah bint 'Abd al-Malik, was asked about his deeds. She said: **"By Allâh, he was not one who offered ṣalâh the most nor one who kept fast the most. But I take an oath by Allâh that I never came across anyone more fearful of Allâh than 'Umar. He used to engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ while on his bed and tremble like a sparrow out of intense fear. We used to think to ourselves that tomorrow morning the people will have no caliph [because we felt that he would die with this fear of Allâh ﷻ]."**

A person of the past said: **"Those who reached lofty stages did not do so through excessive ṣalâh and fasting. Rather it was through the generosity of their souls, purity of their hearts, and their well-wishing for the *ummah*."** Another added: **"and through considering their selves to be insignificant."**

Someone mentioned to a pious predecessor the intense striving

(1) Checked by Ahmad (6/61).

of the Banî Isrâ'îl in worship, so he said: **"All that Allâh ﷻ wants from you is to have a genuine intention for what He possesses. Therefore, the person who recognizes Allâh ﷻ the best, fears Him the most, and is most desirous of what He possesses, then he is superior to those who are below him in these qualities, even if they surpass him in salâh and fasting."**

Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ said: **"How excellent the sleeping and eating of the intelligent ones are, look at how they surpass the wakefulness and fasting of the ignorant ones."**

It is because of this that beneficial knowledge which conveys a person to the recognition of Allâh ﷻ, fear of Him, love for Him, love for what He loves, aversion for what He dislikes – especially when there is an excess of ignorance – is superior to optional physical deeds.

Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"You are now in an era in which action is superior to knowledge. There will come a time when knowledge will be superior to action."** Mitraf said: **"The merit of knowledge is more beloved to me than the merit of worship. The best of your religion is piety."** Narrated by al-Hâkim and others.(1)

Many of the imams clearly state that seeking knowledge is superior to optional salâh. Similar is the case with occupying oneself with purification of the heart. It is superior to excessive fasting and salâh while the hearts are deceptive and treacherous.

The person who fasts and offers salâh excessively while his heart is deceptive and treacherous is like a person who plants a seed on an impenetrable ground which has many thorny trees. The plant which grows from that tree will not be good. Rather, the impenetrability of the ground will destroy the plant. If the ground is cleared of all the thorny trees, the tree which issues forth will be good and it will flourish.

Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh said: **"Many a person seeking forgiveness is detested while a person remaining silent is forgiven. That's because the first person was seeking forgiveness while his heart was filled with wickedness. The other was silent, but his heart was engaged in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ."** Someone said: **"Excellence is not in the one who engages in night worship.**

(1) Al-Hakem (1/92).

Excellence is in the one who remains sleeping on his bed, he then gets up having surpassed the caravan.”

The person who treads the path and programme of the Messenger ﷺ with moderation shall surpass the person who treads a different path even though he may strive on this other path.

مـــن لـــي بمـــثل ســـيرك المـــذلل تمـــشي رويـــدا وتجـــي فـــي الأول

“Is there any equal to your humble journeying? You are walking slowly yet you reach first.”

In short, when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw this Bâhilî person [mentioned at the beginning of this chapter] and noticed that his fasting had weakened him, changed his appearance, and harmed him physically, he first ordered him to confine himself to fasting in the month of patience – the month of Ramaḍân. It is the month in which Allâh ﷻ prescribed fasting to the Muslims. There are those who suffice with fasting only in this one month of the year. Fasting in this month is an atonement for sins from one Ramaḍân to the next provided the person abstains from major sins.

The Bâhilî person asked him permission to fast more and to order him to keep optional fast. He also informed him that he has the strength to do this. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“Fast one day in the month.”** He asked for more and said: **“I have the strength.”** He said: **“Fast two days in the month.”** He asked for more and said: **“I have the strength.”** He said: **“Fast three days in the month.”** He persisted the third time but he did not permit him to fast more than three days in a month.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said the same thing to ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ ﷺ. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: **“Fast one day.”** That is, in the month. **“And you shall receive the reward for the remaining month.”** He said: **“I have the strength to keep more fasts than that.”** He said: **“Fast for two days and you shall receive the reward for the remaining month.”** He said: **“I have the strength to keep more fasts than that.”** He said: **“Fast for three days and you shall receive the reward for the remaining month.”** It is gauged from this that a person receives the reward of fasting for the entire month if he fasts for three days. Similar is the case with two days of the month. The reason for this is that the reward for fasting is multiplied more than what it is for other deeds. This was explained under the Ḥadîth: **“The reward for every deed**

of man is multiplied from ten to 700 times. Allâh ﷻ said: 'Except for fasting. It is for Me and I personally give the reward for it.'"

Therefore, one does not know how many times the reward for fasting is multiplied. The stronger a person's sincerity in fasting, the more he conceals it, and the more he keeps it purified from unlawful and undesirable actions, the more will the reward be multiplied. It is thus not far-fetched for a person to fast one day in a month and yet receive the reward of fasting the entire month. Similar is the case if he fasts for two days in the month. But if he fasts for three days, then it is obvious because a good deed is multiplied by ten.

At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* and an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* narrate from Abû Dharr ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who fasts three days of every month shall be like a person who fasts throughout the year."** Allâh ﷻ then revealed the following verse in confirmation of this: 'Whoever comes with one good deed, for him is ten times the like thereof.' *(Sûrah al-An'âm, 6: 160)* One day is **multiplied by ten."**(1)

'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who fasts three days in every month – and a good deed is multiplied by ten – is as if he kept fast for the entire year."** Another narration states: **"It is sufficient for you to fast three days in every month. Every good deed of yours will be multiplied by ten. This will equal to fasting for the entire year."**(2)

Qurrah al-Muzanî narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fasting for three days of every month is equal to fasting for the entire year, and so is not fasting."**(3) In other words, his fasting falls under the multiplication of Allâh ﷻ and his not fasting falls under the exemption of Allâh ﷻ. As Abû Hurayrah ﷺ and Abû Dharr ﷺ used to say in this regard. They used to fast for three days of every month and say with regard to all the months of the month: **"We are fasting."** They used to explain this by saying that they are fasting under the multiplication of Allâh ﷻ, and not fasting under the exemption of Allâh ﷻ.

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(1) It was checked before.

(2) Al-Bukhari (1975).

(3) Al-Musnad (4/19).

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ advised a group of his Companions ﷺ to fast for three days of every month. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ, Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ and Abû Dharr ﷺ were from among them. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said with regard to fasting three days of every month: **"It is a good form of fasting."**(1)

Abû Dharr ﷺ narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: **"Fasting in the month of patience [Ramaḍân] and three days of every month is equal to fasting for the entire year. This fasting removes the shackle of the heart."** I asked: **"What is the shackle of the heart?"** He said: **"The filth of Satan."**(2)

A person narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fasting in the month of patience [Ramaḍân] and three days of every month removes much of the deception (*waḥr*) of the heart."**(3) Another narration mentions the word (*waghr*). They both mean the same thing. They are both used to mean deception and treachery. Others say that *waḥr* refers to deception, and *waghr* refers to anger.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was particular about fasting for three days of every month. Similar was the practice of Ibrâhîm ﷺ as narrated by Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ ﷺ: **"The fasting of Ibrâhîm ﷺ was for three days of every month. He received the reward of fasting the entire year although he did not fast for the entire year."**

Ḥafṣah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast in the first ten days, the day of 'Âshûrâ' and three days of every month. There are differences of opinion on the status of the chain of narrators of this Ḥadîth. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast for three days of every month. She was asked: **"Which three days?"** She replied: **"He did not bother about which three days they were."**(4) This Ḥadîth shows that he was not particular about which three days of the month he fasted.

However, there are other descriptions about the three days of

(1) At-Tabarany in "Al-Kabir" (19/16).

(2) Al-Musnad (5/154).

(3) Al-Musnad (5/363).

(4) Muslim (1160).

the month in which he fasted:

1. At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* narrates from 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* who said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast on Saturday, Sunday and Monday of one month; and Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of the next month."**(1) At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* said: **"It is a sound Ḥadîth."**

Others narrate it as a *mauqûf* Ḥadîth and not as a *marfû'* Ḥadîth. In other words, they describe it as the practice of 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ*.

2. Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh* and others narrate from Ḥafṣah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast for three days of every month: Monday and Thursday of one week, and on Monday of the **following week."**(2)

Based on this, he used to fast at the beginning of the month and did not keep them consecutively. Rather, he was particular about fasting on two Mondays and one Thursday.

3. The opposite of the previous way. An-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* narrates from Ḥafṣah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast for three days of every month: the first Monday of the month, then Thursday, and then the Thursday of the following week.

Another narration of his states: **"The first Monday of the month, and two succeeding Thursdays."** Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh* narrates a similar Ḥadîth from Umm Salamah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ*.

4. A narration of the *Musnad* states: **"Monday, Friday and Thursday."** This does not seem to be established. If it is established, it will be the fourth type.

5. Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* narrate from Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast for the first three days of every month.(3) At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* considers this to be a sound Ḥadîth. He states that some scholars do not consider it to be a *marfû'* Ḥadîth. Rather, they consider it to be *mauqûf* at Ibn Mas'ûd

(1) At-Tirmidhi (746).

(2) Abu-Dawoud in As-Sunan (2451) and checked by Al-Baihaqi (29414).

(3) Checked by Abu-Dawoud (2450) and At-Tirmidhi (742) and An-Nasa'ei (4/204).

ﷺ. This Hadîth obviously means that he used to fast for three consecutive days from the beginning of the month.

6. He used to fast on the days of *bîḍ*. An-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* narrates from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not leave out fasting on the days of *bîḍ* – neither when he was at home nor when he was on a journey.(1) At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* and an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* narrate that Abû Dharr ﷺ said that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ ordered him to fast on the days of *bîḍ*: the 13th, 14th and 15th.(2)

The *Sunan* of Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* narrate a similar Hadîth from Qatâdah ibn Malḥân from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. An-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* narrates a similar Hadîth from Jâbir al-Bajalî from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

It is related that al-Hasan *raḥimahullâh* used to fast the first five days of the month, and say: **"I do not know whether I will live till the days of *bîḍ*."**

The book *Manâqib al-Hasan* of Abû Hayyân at-Tauḥîdî relates that a man asked al-Hasan *raḥimahullâh*: **"Why is it desirable to fast on the days of *bîḍ*?"** He did not know what answer to give. A Bedouin who was sitting there said: **"Because the moon is eclipsed on these nights, and the people will be engaged in worship [of fasting] when they see such signs [of Allâh's power]."** Al-Hasan *raḥimahullâh* said: **"Here, take this explanation from a non-jurist."**

The Hadîth of the Bâhilî person [mentioned at the beginning of this chapter] states that he said to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"I have the strength so let me fast more."** He said: **"[Fast] in the sanctified months and abstain from fasting thereafter."** Another narration states: **"Then fast in the sanctified months and abstain from fasting thereafter."** Another narration states: **"Fast in the sanctified months."** This proves the merit of fasting in the four sanctified months which Allâh ﷻ mentions in the Qur'ân: **"four of which are sanctified."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 36).* The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ explained in the Hadîth of Abû Bakrah ﷺ that three of them

(1) Checked by An-Nasa'ei in As-Sunan (19814).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (5/150), At-Tirmidhi (761) and An-Nasa'ei (4/222).

are consecutive: Dhû al-Qa'dah, Dhû al-Hijjah and Muharram, and the month of Rajab.

We explained this in the chapter on Rajab. We mentioned that Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said that good deeds and rewards are greatest in these months.

We quoted in the chapter on Muharram that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The most superior fast after Ramadân is in the month of Allâh which you refer to as Muharram."**

The merits of fasting the first ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah will be explained in the chapter of Dhû al-Hijjah – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

Many pious predecessors used to fast in all the sanctified months. This is related with regard to Ibn 'Umar ﷺ, al-Hasan al-Basrî *rahimahullâh* and Abû Is-hâq as-Sabî'î *rahimahullâh*.

Sufyân ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* said: **"I prefer fasting in the sanctified months."** Khallâd as-Saffâr narrates that Abû Muslim said: **"Fasting for one day in the months of hajj – or he said, in the sanctified months – is equal to fasting an entire month. Fasting for one day in the other months is equal to fasting for ten days."**

A similar statement is attributed to an-Nakha'î but he said: **"Fasting in Muharram."** It is possible that he was referring to all the sanctified months. A Hadîth of similar meaning is narrated from Anas ﷺ, but it is a very weak Hadîth.

A Hadîth with an unknown chain from Anas ﷺ states: **"The person who fasts on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of a sanctified month shall have the worship of 900 years recorded in his favour."**(1)

Ka'b ﷺ said: **"When Allâh ﷻ chose time, He liked the sanctified months the most."** This is narrated as a *marfû'* Hadîth from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ, but it is not authentic.

Qays ibn 'Ubâd said: **"There is good on the 10th day of each of the sanctified months.** The 10th of Dhû al-Hijjah is the day of sacrifice and the day of the major hajj. The 10th of Muharram is the day of 'Âshûrâ'. On the 10th of Rajab: **"Allâh wipes out whatever He**

(1) Checked by Abu-Na'eem in Akhbar Asbahan (1/284).

wills and retains [whatever He wills]." *(Sûrah ar-Ra'd, 13: 39)* The narrator said: **"I forgot what he said about Dhû al-Qa'dah."**

It was mentioned in the chapter on Rajab that 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ related some strange occurrences in the land of the 'Âd. There were pillars of copper on which was a copper tree. When it was the sanctified months, water would drip from it. The people used that water to fill their ponds, give to their animals, and irrigate their crops. When the sanctified months expire, the water would stop dripping.

Dhû al-Qa'dah is unanimously considered to be from among the sanctified months. It is the first of the consecutive months. But there is difference of opinion as to whether it is the first of all the sanctified months or not. This was explained in the chapter on Rajab. It is also part of the hajj months regarding which Allâh ﷻ said: **"The months of hajj are well known."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 197).*

It is said that the sanctity which is accorded to Dhû al-Qa'dah was since *jâhilîyyah* so that people could travel for hajj. It is named Dhû al-Qa'dah (from the verb *qa'ada* – which means to sit) because people used to abstain [sit back] from fighting in this month. The sanctity accorded to Muharram is so that people could return from hajj to their lands. The sanctity accorded to Dhû al-Hijjah is because of the hajj which takes place in this month. The sanctity accorded to Rajab is for the purpose of 'umrah for people living nearby.

One of the special attributes of Dhû al-Qa'dah is that all the 'umrahs which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ performed were in this month, apart from the 'umrah which he performed with his hajj. Even for this 'umrah, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ donned the *ihrâm* in Dhû al-Qa'dah and performed it in Dhû al-Hijjah with his hajj.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ went for 'umrah on four occasions: (1) The 'umrah al-Hudaybiyah which he did not complete. He removed the *ihrâm* and returned. (2) The 'umrah al-Qadâ' which he performed the following year [after Hudaybiyah]. (3) The 'umrah al-Ji'irrânah in the year of the conquest of Makkah when he distributed the booty of Hunayn. It is said that this was at the end of Shawwâl. But it is popularly believed to be in Dhû al-Qa'dah, and this is what the majority of scholars say. (4) The 'umrah during the Farewell Pilgrimage, as proven from authentic sources and accepted by the majority of the *'ulamâ'*.

Some of the pious predecessors such as Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ, ‘Â’ishah *radiyallâhu ‘anhâ*, and ‘Atâ’ *rahimahullâh* are of the opinion that performing ‘umrah in Dhû al-Qa‘dah and Shawwâl is superior to performing it in Ramadân. This is because the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made ‘umrah in Dhû al-Qa‘dah and in the months of hajj when it is obligatory on a person to take a sacrificial animal if he performs hajj in that year. The sacrificial animal is one additional rite. In so doing, the person will be combining the rites of ‘umrah with the rites of the sacrificial animal.

This month enjoys another merit, viz. it is said that it is the thirty days which Allâh ﷻ had promised Mûsâ ﷺ. Layth narrates on the authority of Mujâhid *rahimahullâh* with regard to the verse: **“We promised Mûsâ thirty nights”** *(Sûrah al-A‘râf, 7: 142)* that he said: **“It is Dhû al-Qa‘dah.”** And **“We completed it with another ten”**, he said: **“It is the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah.”**

O you who do not abstain from committing the unlawful – who neither desist in the sanctified months nor in other months! O you who are lagging behind in obedience but are at the forefront in sinning! O you whose each day of his life is worse than the one before it! When are you going to wake up from this sleep? When are you going to repent from these crimes? O you who is warned of death by his grey hair, but still persists in sins! Is the admonition of your grey hair together with the admonitions of the Qur’ân and Islam not sufficient for you? Death is better for you than living in this condition. May peace be on you.

يـــا غاديـــا إلـــى غفلـــة ورائحـــا إلـــى متـــى تستحـــسن القـــبائحا

وكـــم إلـــى كـــم لا تخـــاف مـــوقفا يـــستنطق الله بـــه الجـــوارحا

واعجـــبا مـــنك وأنـــت مبـــصر كـــيف تجنـــبت الطـــريق الواضـــحا

وكـــيف ترضـــى أن تكـــون خاســـرا يـــوم يفـــوز مـــن يكـــون رابحـــا

“O you who are moving to and fro in heedlessness. Till when are you going to consider evils to be good? When are you going to fear the time when you will stand before Allâh ﷻ and He will cause your limbs to speak? I am most astonished at you! You can see, so how did you keep away from the clear path? How can you be satisfied with bearing losses on the day when the profitable person will be the winner!?”

DHÛ AL-HIJJAH

THE MERIT OF THE FIRST TEN DAYS OF DHÛ AL-HIJJAH

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are no days in which good deeds are more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than in these days."** Referring to these ten days. The Companions asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Not even jihad in the cause of Allâh?"** He replied **"Not even jihad in the cause of Allâh. Except the person who leaves with his self and his wealth and does not return with any of it [i.e. he spends all his wealth in jihad and he himself dies a martyr]."**(1)

The merit of the first ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah is discussed in two sections: (1) The merit of good deeds during these days – as in the above Hadîth. (2) The merit of the days themselves.

Section one: The merit of good deeds during these days

The above Hadîth shows that good deeds during these days are more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than the other days of the world without any exception. If they are the most beloved in His sight, they are the most superior according to Him. This Hadîth is also narrated with the words: **"There are no days in which good deeds are more superior than in these ten days."**

The above Hadîth is related with a doubt between the words **"more beloved"** and **"more superior"**. If good deeds during these ten days are more superior and more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than all the other days of the year, deeds which are not superior during these days will become superior over deeds of other days even if they are originally superior. It is for this reason that the Companions ﷺ asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Not even jihad in the cause of Allâh ﷻ?"** He replied: **"Not even jihad."** He then excluded one type of jihad which is the most superior form of jihad. He was asked: **"Which jihad is the most superior?"** He replied: **"The person whose animal is hamstrung and his blood is shed [i.e. he is**

(1) Al-Bukhari (969).

martyred]. Such a person is the most superior in the sight of Allâh ﷻ."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard a person making this supplication: **"O Allâh! Give me the most superior of what You give to Your righteous servants."** So he said to him: **"[If this is what you want], your animal will be hamstrung and you will be martyred."** So this specific type of jihad is superior to other good deeds in these ten days.

As for the other types of jihad, the good deeds which are done during these ten days are superior and more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than them. So is the case with other good deeds. This shows that a non-superior deed done during a superior time is attached to a superior deed at other times, and it surpasses it because its reward is multiplied. This additional reward is mentioned in the Ḥadîth of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ: **"Good deeds during these days are multiplied by 700 times."** This Ḥadîth is weak.

There are several Aḥâdîth which mention different numbers by which the deeds are multiplied. At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* narrate from an-Nuhâs ibn Qahm from Qatâdah from Ibn al-Musayyib from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are no days which are more beloved to Allâh ﷻ wherein He should be worshipped than the ten days of Dhû al-Ḥijjah. Fasting on each of these days equals fasting for a full year. Engaging in night worship on each of these nights equals engaging in worship on the night of Power (*laylatul Qadr*)."** An-Nuhâs ibn Qahm is considered to be a weak narrator.

At-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh* states from al-Bukhârî *raḥimahullâh* that the Ḥadîth narrated from Qatâdah from Sa'îd [ibn al-Musayyib] is a *mursal* Ḥadîth.

Thuwayr ibn Abî Fâkhitah – who is a weak narrator – narrates from Mujâhid from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ who said: **"There is no day which is greater in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than Friday – except for the ten days – because a deed during these ten days is equal to doing deeds for the entire year."**

Abû 'Amr an-Naysâbûrî narrates in the book *al-Ḥikâyât* from Ḥumayd who said: I heard Ibn Sîrîn and Qatâdah saying: **"Fasting on each of the ten days equals fasting for an entire year."** Greater numbers of multiplication of rewards are related in this

regard. Hârûn ibn Mûsâ an-Nahwî said: I heard al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* narrating from Anas ibn Mâlik ﷺ who said: **"It used to be said with regard to the ten days that each day equals 1 000 days, and the day of 'Arafah [9th Dhû al-Hijjah] equals 10 000 days."** Al-Hâkim *rahimahullâh* said: **"The chains of these narrations do not mention the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ."**

Less than a year is also mentioned in the multiplication of rewards. Humayd ibn Zanjawayh said: Yahyâ ibn 'Abdillâh al-Harrânî related to us, Abû Bakr ibn Abî Maryam related to us from Râshid ibn Sa'd that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fasting on each of the ten days is equal to fasting an entire month."**(1) This is a *mursal* Hadîth with a weak chain. 'Abd ar-Razzâq narrates from Ja'far, from Hishâm, from al-Hasan who said: **"Fasting on one day from these ten days is equal to fasting for two months."** 'Abd al-Karîm relates from Mujâhid: **"Deeds during these ten days are multiplied."**

There are other Ahâdîth in this regard, but they are fabricated. We therefore did not quote them. The Hadîth of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ which mentions the multiplication of all good deeds without exception in the ten days is one of the fabricated Ahâdîth.

There are Ahâdîth which mention fasting specifically on these days, engaging in night worship, and excessive remembrance during them. Some of them are worthy of mention while others are not because of their unauthentic nature.

The Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ was quoted previously. Similarly, the narrations of Râshid ibn Sa'd, al-Hasan, Ibn Sîrîn and Qatâdah with regard to fasting during these days were quoted above.

Hafsah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not leave out fasting on the day of 'Âshûrâ' [10th of Muharram], the ten days [of Dhû al-Hijjah], and three days of every month.(2) There are differences on the status of the chain of narrators. Some wives of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ reported that he did not leave out fasting on the 9th of Dhû al-Hijjah.(3)

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(1) Narrated by Al-Hindi in "Al-Kanz".

(2) It was checked before.

(3) An-Nasa'ei (4/220).

'Abdullâh ibn 'Umar ﷺ was from among those who used to fast these ten days. The statements of al-Hasan, Ibn Sîrîn and Qatâdah with regard to the merit of fasting on these days was mentioned previously. This is the view of the majority of the *'ulamâ'*, or many of them.

'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"I never saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ fasting the ten days."** Another narration states: **"in the ten days."**

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* differs in his reply to this Hadîth. On one occasion he said that there is a Hadîth which is contrary to this, and he referred to the Hadîth of Hafsah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*. He made reference to the fact that there are differences in the chain of narrators in the Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*. Al-A'mash attributed it to, and Mansûr narrated it from Ibrâhîm as a *mursal* Hadîth. Other *'ulamâ'* also say that when there is a difference between 'Â'ishâh *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* and Hafsah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* with regard to an affirmation and negation, the statement of affirmation will be adopted. This is because the person who is affirming possesses some knowledge which the one who is negating does not possess.

On another occasion Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* says that 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* meant that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not fast the full ten days. In other words, Hafsah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* meant that he used to fast most of the days [and not all the days]. It would therefore be appropriate for one to fast some of the days and not fast on others.

This reconciliation will be correct with regard to the narration with states: **"I never saw him fasting the ten days."** As for the narration which states: **"I never saw him fasting in the ten days"**, then this reconciliation will be far-fetched or difficult.

Ibn Sîrîn *rahimahullâh* disliked anyone saying: **"He fasted the ten days"** because it gives the impression that the day of sacrifice [10th of Dhû al-Hijjah] is included in these ten days. One should rather say: **"He fasted the nine days."** However, when fasting is ascribed to the ten days, it refers to those days in which it is permitted to fast. The Hadîth was quoted previously which states that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to fast the ten days.

If a person takes a vow to fast the ten days, he will have to fast

for the nine days and he does not have to make up for the one fast nor pay any atonement for it. This is because the **"ten days"** conventionally (*'urf*) refer to the first nine days. It is possible that there may be differences of opinion with regard to keeping *qaḍâ'* (making up for the missed fast) or paying atonement. This is because Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* says that if a person takes a vow to fast the month of Shawwâl, does not fast on the day of *'îd* al-fiṭr and fasts for the rest of the month, then it is necessary for him to keep *qaḍâ'* and pay the atonement.

Al-Qâḍî Abû Ya'lâ says this will apply if he makes the intention of fasting on all the days of Shawwâl. But if merely says that he is going to fast the month of Shawwâl, he does not owe anything. This is because the day of *'îd* al-fiṭr is excluded by the Sharî'ah. This is one of the principles of jurisprudence: can a general ruling be made specific by the Sharî'ah or not? The differences on this issue are well known.

As for engaging in night worship during these ten nights, this is desirable. A Ḥadîth in this regard was quoted previously. There are certain Aḥâdîth which mention engaging in night worship specifically on the two *'îd* nights. These are not authentic. There are traditions which mention that supplications are accepted on these two nights. Imam ash-Shâfi'î *raḥimahullâh* and other *'ulamâ'* consider this to be desirable.

Sa'îd ibn Jubayr – who narrated this Ḥadîth from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ - used to strive profusely when these ten days commenced. He used to say: **"Do not put off your lights during these ten nights, Allâh ﷻ loves worship in them."**

As for the desirability of abundance of *dhikr* during these days, this is inferred from the verse: **"and they may mention the name of Allâh on the appointed days"** *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 28)* The appointed days referred to in this verse are these ten days according to the majority of *'ulamâ'*. This will be explained later – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are no days which are greater and more beloved to Allâh ﷻ in which good deeds are done than in these ten days. So engage in abundant *tahlîl* (saying *lâ ilâha illallâh*), *takbîr* (saying *Allâhu akbar*) and *taḥmîd* (saying *al-ḥamdulillâh*) in**

them."[1]

Someone could make the following objection: If deeds in the ten days are superior to deeds in other days – even if that deed is superior to a deed which is done in the ten days because of the essential merit of the ten days – then this means that the non-superior deed during these ten days will become superior to the extent that it will also be superior to jihad, which is the most superior of all deeds – as inferred from numerous texts. This is also the opinion of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and other *'ulamâ'*. This would also mean that hajj is superior to jihad because hajj is specifically performed during these ten days. It is the most superior deed which is done in these days. How, then, can jihad be superior to hajj?

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that a man asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Which deeds are the most superior?"** He replied: **"Belief in Allâh and His Messenger."** He asked: **"Then which?"** He replied: **"Jihad in the cause of Allâh."** He asked: **"Then which?"** He replied: **"A blessed hajj."**[2]

The reply to the above is that optional jihad is superior to optional hajj according to all the *'ulamâ'*. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* clearly states this. This is also the opinion of 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ. There are *marfû'* Ahâdîth in this regard, but there is some reservation with regard to their chains. The above Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ is clear in this regard.

This Hadîth and the Hadîth of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ could be reconciled in two ways:

(1) The Hadîth of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ clearly states that the jihad of the person who does not return with either his wealth or his life is superior to any deed in these ten days. It is thus possible to say that hajj is superior to jihad except for the jihad in which the person does not return with his wealth or life. And this is what the Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ refers to. In such a case, the two Ahâdîth will be reconciled.

(2) Something can become attached to a non-superior deed and thus make it superior to a superior deed, as was explained

(1) Al-Musnad (7512).

(2) It was checked before..

previously. In such a case, something has become attached to ḥajj which is making it superior to jihad. It could also happen that it does not become attached to ḥajj, then in such a case, jihad will be superior. If ḥajj is compulsory on a person, it will be superior to optional jihad. This is based on the principle that anything which is *farḍ-e-'ayn* is superior to anything which is *farḍ-e-kifâyah* according to all the *'ulamâ'*.

This is related specifically with regard to ḥajj and jihad by 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ ﷺ. It is related as a *marfû'* Ḥadîth through several chains but there is some reservation in them.

The following statement which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ attributes to Allâh ﷻ makes reference to this: **"My servant does not gain proximity to Me with anything equal to what I made compulsory on him."** [In other words, the compulsory deeds are the best means of gaining proximity to Allâh ﷻ].

If a pilgrim is not accountable for jihad, e.g. a woman, than his ḥajj is superior to his going out for jihad. 'Â'ishah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! We consider jihad to be the most superior deed. Should we [women] not go out for jihad?"** He said: **"The most superior jihad is a blessed ḥajj."**(1) Another narration states: **"The jihad of you women is ḥajj."**(2) Another narration states: **"What an excellent jihad ḥajj is!"**

In like manner, if all the ten days are occupied in ḥajj, and the person fulfils it in the best manner by fulfilling the obligatory injunctions, abstaining from the unlawful, being kind to the people by greeting and feeding them, engaging in abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, raising the voice with the *talbiyah* (saying *labbayk, labbayk*), and herding his sacrificial animal, then his ḥajj performed in this manner could well be superior to jihad.

If the ḥajj is performed in a small portion of these ten days and the person does not perform it in a manner that could be termed as blessed, then jihad will be superior to it. There are statements of 'Umar ﷺ, Ibn 'Umar ﷺ, Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arî ﷺ and Mujâhid *raḥimahullâh* which allude to the superiority of ḥajj over jihad and all other deeds. These statements have to be applied to a blessed ḥajj

(1) Al-Bukhari (1520).

(2) Al-Bukhari (2875).

whose blessedness is perfect, and which is fulfilled during the ten days. And Allâh ﷻ knows best.

Someone could ask the following question with regard to this Hadîth: **"There are no any days in which good deeds are more beloved to Allâh ﷻ than in these days."** Does this mean that every good deed which is done in any of these ten days is superior to all other good deeds which are done in other days even if they are done for a long period of time?

It seems – and Allâh ﷻ knows best – that this means good deeds in these ten days are superior to good deeds in other ten days. So every good deed done in these ten days is superior to a good deed in other ten days, no matter in which month they are. The superiority of the deed will be for each of these days over each of the other days of the year.

It is said that good deeds in these days are superior to jihad if those good deeds encompass all the ten days. In such a case, they will be superior to jihad in those number of days during other days of the year. If the good deed encompasses some of the ten days [and not all of them], then it is superior to jihad in a like number of days in other days of the year. The proof for this is that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ considered continuous fasting and night worship to be equal to jihad no matter when it is done. So if that continuous deed is done during the ten days, it will be superior to jihad in a like number of days because of the merit and superiority of these ten days.

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that a man came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and said: **"Show me a deed which equals jihad."** He said: **"I do not find such a deed."** He then said: **"When the *mujâhid* departs [for jihad], can you go to your place of worship and remain engaged in worship without stopping, and fast without stopping?"** The man said: **"Who can do such a thing?"** This is narrated from al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh*. Muslim *rahimahullâh* quotes a similar narration but adds: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: 'The similitude of a *mujâhid* in the cause of Allâh ﷻ is like a person who fasts and engages in night worship – who is devoted to Allâh ﷻ - without stopping his salâh and fasting until the *mujâhid* returns."**(1) Another Hadîth of al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* states: **"The similitude of a *mujâhid* in the cause of Allâh ﷻ - and**

(1) Al-Bukhari (2785) and Muslim (1878).

Allâh knows best who wages jihad in His cause – is like that of a fasting person and a person engaged in night worship."(1) An-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* narrates: **"He is like a fasting person, a person offering ṣalâh with humility, who bows and prostrates [before Allâh ﷻ]."**(2)

The following Ḥadîth shows that this refers to its superiority over jihad for a like number of days. Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are no days which are superior in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the ten days of Dhû al-Ḥijjah."** A man asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Are these ten days better or a like number of days in jihad are better?"** He replied: **"They are better than a like number of days in jihad."**(3) We thus see that he confined the superiority of these ten days only for a like number of days in jihad, and not for an indefinite number of days.

As for the previous narrations which state that each of these ten days are equal to a year, two months or 1 000 days – these are all Aḥâdîth stating merits and virtues, they are not strong Aḥâdîth. Furthermore, most of the merits are with regard to fasting, and the reward for fasting is specifically multiplied. Fasting is for Allâh ﷻ and He personally undertakes to reward the fasting person.

Someone may make the objection that this is not peculiar to fasting but includes all deeds, because the Ḥadîth speaks about the superiority of every deed during these ten days over a similar deed performed during other days of the year. Therefore, it is only the superiority of the person who wages jihad during these ten days which is established over the one who wages jihad at other times of the year.

The other objection which could be made is that if every deed during these ten days is superior to every other ten days, this would mean that fasting during these ten days will be superior to fasting during ten days of Ramaḍân, and engaging in night worship during these ten nights will be superior to engaging in night worship during ten nights of Ramaḍân.

The reply to this is as follows: There is no doubt whatsoever that

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(1) Al-Bukhari (2787).

(2) An-Nasa'ei in As-Sunan (6/18).

(3) Ibn Hibban in his Ṣaḥiḥ (1006).

fasting in Ramaḍân is superior to fasting during these ten days. This is because a compulsory fast is undoubtedly superior to an optional fast. The Ḥadîth would therefore mean that the compulsory deeds which are done during these ten days are superior to the compulsory deeds which are done during other ten days of the year. Thus, the reward for the compulsory ṣalâhs during these ten days will be more than the reward for the compulsory ṣalâhs of the ten days of Ramaḍân. Whatever optional deeds are done during these ten days will be superior to the optional deeds done at any other time.

'Umar ﷺ and 'Alî ﷺ differed on the issue of keeping the missed fasts of Ramaḍân during the ten days of Dhû al-Ḥijjah. 'Umar ﷺ considered it to be desirable because of the merit of these days. Keeping the missed fasts of Ramaḍân during these ten days will therefore be superior to keeping them at other times. This shows the increased reward for compulsory deeds during these ten days over optional deeds. But 'Alî ﷺ used to prohibit this. Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* has two statements in this regard. The opinion of 'Alî ﷺ is explained thus: if a person keeps missed fasts during these ten days, he will lose out on the virtue of optional fasts during this period. Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* and others provide the same explanation.

It is said that the person keeping missed fasts during this period will also receive the reward of optional fasts. This is based on the opinion of those who say that if a person vows to fast one month and then fasts the month of Ramaḍân, his vow will be fulfilled and his obligation completed. Other explanations are also given in this regard.

As for the superiority of engaging in night worship during these ten nights over night worship during the nights of Ramaḍân, this will be explained later on – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

Section two: The merit of the ten days of Dhû al-Ḥijjah over the ten days of other months

The Ḥadîth of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ was quoted previously: **"There are no days which are greater and more beloved to Allâh ﷻ in which good deeds are done than in these ten days."**

The *Ṣaḥîḥ* of Ibn Ḥibbân *raḥimahullâh* states: Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There are no days which are more superior in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the ten days of Dhû**

al-Hijjah." It is narrated through another chain with this addition: **"Nor are any nights superior to these nights."** A man asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Are these ten days better or a like number of days in jihad are better?"** He replied: **"They are better than a like number of days in jihad, except a person who completely soils his face. And there is no day which is superior to the day of 'Arafah."** Hâfiz Abû Mûsâ al-Madînî narrated this Hadîth from Abû Nu'aym with the same chain as that of Ibn Hibbân.

Al-Bazzâr and others also narrate from Jâbir ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The most superior days of the world are the ten days [of Dhû al-Hijjah]."** The Companions ﷺ asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Not even a like number of days in the cause of Allâh?"** He replied: **"Not even a like number of days in the cause of Allâh ﷻ except the person who soils his face with dust."**

The statement of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ was quoted previously: **"There is no day which is greater in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than Friday, except for the ten days."** This shows that the ten days are superior to Friday which is the most superior day of the week.

Suhayl ibn Abî Sâlih narrates from his father who narrates from Ka'b ﷺ who said: **"Allâh ﷻ selected time and the most beloved time in His sight is the sanctified month. The most beloved of the sanctified months in His sight is Dhû al-Hijjah. The most beloved days of Dhû al-Hijjah in His sight are the first ten days."** Some scholars narrate this from Suhayl, from his father, from Abû Hurayrah ﷺ as a *marfû'* Hadîth. But this is not authentic.

Masrûq *rahimahullâh* says with regard to the verse: **"By the ten nights."** *(Sûrah al-Fajr, 89: 2)* they are the most superior days of the year. Narrated by 'Abd ar-Razzâq and others.(1)

Moreover, these ten days contain the day of 'Arafah. It is related that it is the most superior day of the world, as mentioned in the previously quoted Hadîth of Jâbir ﷺ. The day of sacrifice (*yaum an-nahr*) is also in these ten days. 'Abdullâh ibn Qurt narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The greatest day in the sight of Allâh ﷻ is the day of sacrifice, then the day of *qarr*."** (the day of *qarr* is the day of 'Arafah). Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*,(2) Abû

(1) Abdul-Razzak checked it in his Musannaf (8210).

(2) Ahmad checked it (4/350), Al-Hakem (4/221) and Ibn khuzaymah (866).

Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh* and others.

All the above demonstrate that the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah are superior to all other days without any exception. This is with regard to the days themselves.

As for the nights, there are some latter day scholars who say that the nights of the ten nights of Ramadân are superior to these ten nights because they contain the night of Power (*laylatul Qadr*). But this is very far-fetched.

If the Hadîth of Abû Hurayrah ﷺ **"Night worship on each of these nights is equal to night worship on the night of Power"** is authentic, it clearly shows the superiority of these ten nights over the ten nights of Ramadân. This is because the ten nights of Ramadân enjoy merit only because of one night among them. As for these ten nights, night worship in all of them is equal, as per this Hadîth. But the Hadîth of Jâbir ﷺ which Abû Mûsâ narrated clearly mentions the superiority of its nights just as the superiority of its days.

When days are mentioned in a general sense, the nights are included with them. The opposite also applies. Allâh ﷻ took an oath on these ten nights: **"By the oath of the daybreak. By the ten nights."** *(Sûrah al-Fajr, 89: 1-2)* This shows the merit of the nights as well. However, it is not proven that these ten nights or any one of them is equal to the night of Power.

Some of our [Hambalî] scholars claim that the night of Friday is superior to the night of Power. But this is not proven from Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh.* Based on the opinion of these scholars, it will not be far-fetched to claim the superiority of these ten nights over the night of Power.

The correct view is what some latter day *'ulamâ'* said: These ten nights collectively are superior to the ten nights of Ramadân collectively, even though the ten nights of Ramadân have a night which is not surpassed by any other night. And Allâh ﷻ knows best.

The previously quoted statement of Ka'b ﷺ shows that Dhû al-Hijjah is the most superior of the four sanctified months. Sa'îd ibn Jubayr who narrates this Hadîth from Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ is also of the same opinion. He says: **"There is no month which is more sanctified than Dhû al-Hijjah."**

Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Ramadân is the chief of the months, and Dhû al-Hijjah is**

the most sanctified of all."[1] The chain of this Ḥadîth is weak.

Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said in his sermon on the day of sacrifice during the Farewell Pilgrimage: **"Listen! The most sanctified day is this day, the most sanctified month is this month, and the most sanctified city is this city of yours."**[2] This is also narrated by Jâbir, Wâbiṣah ibn Ma'bad, Nabîṭ ibn Sharîṭ and others from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. All this proves that Dhû al-Ḥijjah is the most superior of the sanctified months. Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* is of the opinion that Muḥarram is the most sanctified. We will explain this under the chapter on Muḥarram – if Allâh ﷻ wills. As for the person who says that Rajab is the most sanctified, his opinion is rejected.

Dhû al-Ḥijjah enjoys other merits apart from those mentioned above. Among them is the fact that Allâh ﷻ took an oath in the name of this month in general and specifically on some of its days. Allâh ﷻ says: **"By the oath of the daybreak. By the ten nights."** *(Sûrah al-Fajr, 89: 1-2)* As for the **"daybreak"**, this could mean the morning, the break of dawn, the *fajr ṣalâh* or the entire day. The commentators differ in this regard.

Some say that it refers to a specific daybreak. As to which daybreak it is, these are the different opinions: the daybreak of the 1st of the ten days of Dhû al-Ḥijjah, the last of its ten days – i.e. the 10th of Dhû al-Ḥijjah – which is the day of sacrifice. No matter which opinion is considered, the ten days contain the daybreak on which Allâh ﷻ took an oath.

As for the **"ten nights"**, these refer to the ten nights of Dhû al-Ḥijjah. This is the authentic view of the majority of the past commentators and others. It is also the authentic view of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ. This is narrated from him through several chains. There is one statement of his which says that these refer to the ten nights of Ramaḍân,[3] but this chain is weak.

There is a Ḥadîth narrated by Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* and an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* from Zayd ibn al-Ḥabbâb who said: 'Ayâsh ibn 'Uqbah narrated to us, Khayr ibn Nu'aym narrated to us from

(1) Al-Bazzar checked it in his Musnad (663).

(2) Ahmad checked it (3/80).

(3) See Tafsir Ibn Kathir (4/505).

Abû az-Zubayr, from Jâbir that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The ten nights refer to the ten of al-ad-hâ, the odd day (*al-watr*) refers to the day of 'Arafah, and the even day (*ash-shaf'*) refers to the day of sacrifice."**(1) It has a sound chain of narrators.

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ also explained the words *al-shaf'* and *al-watr* as above, as per the narration of 'Ikramah and others. 'Ikramah, ad-Dahhâk and others also provide the same explanation. There are numerous opinions with regard to the meaning of these two words. The majority of these opinions state that the ten days or some of them comprise of *al-shafa'* and *al-watr*, or one of them.

Some say that it refers to the salâhs – some of them contain an even number of rak'ahs while others contain an odd number of rak'ahs. Imam Ahmad(2) *rahimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî(3) *rahimahullâh* narrate this from 'Imrân ibn Husayn ﷺ from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

Some say that it refers to the creations of Allâh ﷻ - some are an odd number while others are an even number, and the ten days [of Dhû al-Hijjah] are included in this. Others say: the even number refers to the entire creation, while the odd number refers to Allâh ﷻ, and that the ten days are included in the creation.

Included in the merits of these ten days is that they are part of the forty days which Allâh ﷻ had promised to Mûsâ ﷺ. Allâh ﷻ says: **"We promised Mûsâ thirty nights and We completed it with another ten. Thus, the set time of his Lord was fulfilled in forty nights."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 142)*

Are the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah the last ten days of those forty days in the sense that these ten days completed the period of forty days, or it is the first of the forty days, in which case it will be part of the thirty days which were completed with another ten? There is difference of opinion among the commentators in this regard.

'Abd ar-Razzâq narrates from Ma'mar, from Yazîd ibn Abî Ziyâd from Mujâhid who said: **"There is no deed of the year which is superior to the deed which is done in the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah, and in the ten days which Allâh ﷻ completed for Mûsâ**

(1) Ahmad checked it (3/327).

(2) In Al-Musnad (4/437).

(3) In As-Sunan (3353).

ﷺ."(1)

Among the merits of these ten days is that they form the end of the known months – the months of hajj regarding which Allâh ﷻ says: **"The months of hajj are well known."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 197)* The months of hajj are Shawwâl, Dhû al-Qa'dah and ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah. This is related from 'Umar ﷺ, Ibn 'Umar ﷺ, 'Alî ﷺ, Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ, Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ, Ibn az-Zubayr ﷺ and others. It is also the opinion of the majority of the Tâbi'ûn, and the *madh-hab* of Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh*, Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Imam Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh*, Imam Abû Yûsuf *rahimahullâh*, Abû Thaur *rahimahullâh* and others. However, Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* and a group of scholars removed the day of sacrifice [10th Dhû al-Hijjah] from these while the others include it because it is the day of the major hajj, and it is on this day that most of the rites of hajj are carried out.

Some scholars state that the entire month of Dhû al-Hijjah is included in the months of hajj. This is the opinion of Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh*, and the former opinion of Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh*. This opinion is also attributed to Ibn 'Umar ﷺ and a group of past scholars. There is a Hadîth in this regard narrated by at-Tabarânî but it is not authentic. This is a lengthy issue and it is not the subject of this book.

Among the merits of these ten days is that they form part of the appointed days in which Allâh ﷻ prescribed His remembrance over the animals which He provided to them. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Proclaim to mankind the hajj. They will come to you on foot and riding upon lean camels – coming from every distant place. So that they may reach [and experience] the places of their benefit and they may mention the name of Allâh on the appointed days over whatever sacrificial animals He may have given them."** *(Sûrah al-Hajj, 22: 27-28)*

The majority of the *'ulamâ'* state that these appointed days are the ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah. Ibn 'Umar ﷺ, Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ, al-Hasan *rahimahullâh*, 'Atâ' *rahimahullâh*, Mujâhid *rahimahullâh*, 'Ikramah *rahimahullâh* Qatâdah *rahimahullâh* and an-Nakha'î *rahimahullâh* are included among these *'ulamâ'*. It is also the opinion of Imam Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh*, Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* and popularly

(1) Abdul-Razzak checked it in his Musannaf (8119).

held opinion of Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh*.

Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arî ﷺ was of the opinion that the appointed days are the nine days of Dhû al-Ḥijjah and not the day of sacrifice [10th]. He said: **"Supplication is not rejected during these days."** Narrated by Ja'far al-Faryâbî and others.

Some scholars say that these appointed days refer to the days of sacrifice (10th, 11th, 12th and 13th of Dhû al-Ḥijjah). This is the opinion of Imam Mâlik *raḥimahullâh* and Imam Abû Yûsuf *raḥimahullâh*. They say that the **"remembrance of Allâh ﷻ"** refers to taking His name at the time of slaughtering the sacrificial animal. It is also the opinion of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ. Al-Marwazî *raḥimahullâh* says that Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* liked this view, but his previous view is more well-known.

Remembering Allâh ﷻ over the animal is not confined to the time when the animal is being slaughtered. Allâh ﷻ says: **"In this way have We subjugated them for you so that you may recite the greatness of Allâh for His having shown you the way."** *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 27)* **"For every nation have We appointed a sacrifice so that they may remember the name of Allâh over the slaughter of the cattle which He gave them."** *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 34)* **"Eat, then, of them and feed the poor who is in a bad condition. They should then put to an end their state of dirtiness, fulfil their vows, and circuit this ancient House."** *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 28-29)* Allâh ﷻ prescribes all this after His remembrance during the appointed days and after putting an end to their **"state of dirtiness"**. This refers to the dirtiness, dustiness and fatigue in the course of the ḥajj. The circuiting of the Ka'bah takes place on the day of sacrifice and the days following it, and not before it. Allâh ﷻ stipulates this after His remembrance during the appointed days with the word **"then"**. This shows that the appointed days refer to the days before the day of sacrifice, which is the 10th of Dhû al-Ḥijjah.

As for the verse: **"and they may mention the name of Allâh on the appointed days over whatever sacrificial animals He may have given them."** *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 28)*, it is said that this refers to remembering Allâh ﷻ at the time of slaughtering the animal. This is accomplished by remembering Him on the day of sacrifice [10th], which is the best of the days of sacrifice. The more correct opinion is that it refers to remembering Him in gratitude over the bounty of subjugating the animals for His servants. Allâh ﷻ showered

numerous bounties on His servants through these animals. He enumerates some of these bounties in the Qur'ân. The pilgrims enjoy special bounties over other people because they travel on these animals to the Sanctified Musjid to fulfil their rites. Allâh ﷻ says: **"and riding upon lean camels – coming from every distant place."** *(Sûrah al-Hajj, 22: 27)* Allâh ﷻ says: **"They bear your loads to cities which you would not have reached except with great difficulty."** *(Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 7)* They eat their meat, drink their milk, and derive benefit from their wool, fur and hair.

The ten days of Dhû al-Hijjah have a special affinity with the pilgrim because it is the time when he herds his sacrificial animal with which the merit of hajj is completed. He then eats its meat on the last of these ten days, the 10th of Dhû al-Hijjah. The most superior herding of this animal is from the *mîqât* (the boundary of the Haram). A slight injury is made on the surface of the right side of the hump of the animal [to show that it is for hajj], and something is suspended from its neck [also to show that it is for hajj] at the time of donning the *ihram*, and this is accompanied by the *talbiyah* (*labbayk*) which entails the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ during these appointed days.

A Hadîth states: **"The most superior hajj is *al-'ajj* and *ath-thajj*."**(1) Another Hadîth states: **"Raise the voices with *takbîr* and shed the blood of the camels."**(2)

The abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ during the ten days is thus in gratitude over this special bounty of the sacrificial animals – which are connected to both the religious life of the pilgrim and his worldly life. The most superior deeds are those in which there is abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ - this is especially so with regard to hajj. Allâh ﷻ ordered His abundant remembrance during the days of hajj: **"Then when you return from 'Arafât for the *tawâf*, remember Allâh at the Mash'arul Harâm. And remember Him as He has taught you, and surely you were ignorant before this. Then return for the *tawâf* from where all the people return, and ask forgiveness of Allâh, surely Allâh is forgiving, merciful."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 198-199)* This remembrance takes place on the 10th of Dhû al-Hijjah.

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(1) At-Tirmidhi (827).

(2) The word *al-'ajj* refers to raising the voice with *takbîr* and *talbiyah*. The word *ath-thajj* refers to shedding the blood of the sacrificial animals.

Allâh ﷻ then says: **"Once you have completed your rites of hajj, remember Allâh as you used to remember your forefathers. In fact, remember [Him] more than that."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 200)* This is on the day of sacrifice which is also the end of the ten days. Allâh ﷻ then orders His remembrance after the tenth, on the appointed days – and these are the days of *tashrîq* (11th, 12th and 13th).

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The circuiting of the House,** running between Safâ and Marwah, and pelting the stones have all been prescribed to establish the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ.(1)

Mu'âdh ibn Anas ﷺ narrates that a man asked: **"O Messenger of Allâh! Which jihad entails the greatest reward?"** He said: **"The one in which Allâh ﷻ is remembered the most."** The man then asked about salâh, zakâh, hajj and charity. And for each one the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The one in which Allâh ﷻ is remembered the most."** [On hearing this], Abû Bakr ﷺ said: **"O Abû Hafs! Those who engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ have taken away all good!"** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Indeed."**(2)

The above is also narrated by Ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ *rahimahullâh* through other chains of narrations. Some of them state: **"Which pilgrim is the best?"** He said: **"The one who engages in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ the most."** Others state: **"Which pilgrim shall receive the greatest reward?"** He said: **"The one who engages in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ the most."** The remaining actions are also mentioned as in the previous Hadîth. All this is in relation to the pilgrim.

Those who do not go for the hajj also join the pilgrim in these ten days in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and in preparing the sacrificial animal. The sacrificial animal is prepared just as the pilgrim herds his animal for hajj. They also join the pilgrim in some aspects of his *ihrâm* in the sense that when the ten days commence and a person intends sacrificing an animal, he abstains from removing unwanted hair and clipping his nails. Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* mentions this with regard to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. This Hadîth is narrated by Muslim *rahimahullâh*.(3) Imam

(1) Abu-Dawoud (1888) and At-Tirmidhi (903).

(2) Ahmad checked it (3/438).

(3) Muslim checked it (1977).

ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh*, Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and the jurists in general adopt this Hadîth. Some scholars lay down the condition that the person must have purchased his animal before the ten days commence. But the majority do not lay down this prerequisite.

Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh*, Imam Abû Hanîfah ﷺ and many other jurists say that none of these things [removing hair and clipping nails] are reprehensible. They provide the following Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* as proof: **"I used to twine the ropes for the sacrificial animal of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, and he did not prohibit upon himself anything which Allâh ﷻ permitted to him."**(1)

Many scholars provide an answer to this by saying that the two Ahâdîth can be reconciled as follows: The Hadîth of Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* will apply to the person who wants to sacrifice his animal in his city, while the Hadîth of 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* will apply to the person who sends his animal with others and remains in his country.

It was the practice of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ to shave his head after slaughtering his animal on the day of sacrifice. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* stipulates this as well.

The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to announcing in the cities on the night of 'Arafah. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* did not do this nor did he stop anyone who did it because it is reported to be a practice of Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ and other Companions ﷺ. As for joining them in remembrance (*dhikr*) during the appointed days, all people are commanded to engage in abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ especially in these ten days. The Hadîth of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ was quoted previously: **"Engage in abundant *tahlîl*, *takbîr* and *tahmîd* during these days."** The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to loud *takbîr* in the market places during these days. One group disapproves of this. But Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* consider it desirable. The difference is that Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* considers it desirable at the time when a person sees the sacrificial animals, while Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* considers it desirable without any restriction.

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrates that Ibn 'Umar ﷺ and Abû

(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (1696).

Hurayrah ﷺ used to go out to the market place during the ten days and say the *takbîr*, and people used to join them. 'Affân narrates: Salâm Abû al-Mundhir related to us from Humayd al-A'raj, from Mujâhid who said: **"Abû Hurayrah ﷺ and Ibn 'Umar ﷺ used to come into the market during the ten days and say the *takbîr*, and people used to join them. They used to come to the market solely for this purpose."**

Ja'far al-Faryâbî relates in *Kitâb al-'Îdayn*: Is-hâq ibn Râhwayh related to us, Jarîr informed us from Yazîd ibn Abî az-Ziyâd who said: I saw Sa'îd ibn Jubayr, Mujâhid, 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn Abî Laylâ – or two of these three persons – and some jurists whom we met, saying during the ten days: *Allâhu akbar, Allâhu akbar, Allâhu akbar, Lâ ilâha illallâhu wallâhu akbar, Allâhu akbar wa lillâhil hamd.*

Since Allâh ﷻ placed this yearning to see the Ka'bah in the heart of all the believers – and every single person cannot go to see it every year – He made hajj compulsory once in a lifetime for the person who is able to, and He made this period of ten days collective between those who go and those who do not. So the person who cannot go for hajj in a particular year is able to do certain actions while still at home. These actions are superior to jihad which is superior to hajj.

لياليِ العشر أوقات الإجابة فبادر رغبة تلحق ثوابه
ألا لا وقت للعمّال فيه ثوابُ الخير أقربُ للإصابة
من أوقات الليالي العشر حقًّا فشمر وأطلبن فيها الإنابة

"The ten nights are times of acceptance. So hasten with yearning and you will acquire its reward. Listen, there is no better time for those who do good deeds than the ten nights. It is the quickest way of acquiring the rewards for good. So strive and seek repentance therein."

Beware of sins because they deprive one of forgiveness during the seasons of mercy. Al-Marwazî narrates in *Kitâb al-Wara'* from 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr from a man who was either a Companion ﷺ or a Tâbi'î who said: A person came to him in his dream in one of the ten nights of Dhû al-Hijjah and said: **"Every Muslim is forgiven five times a day during these days except those who play chess."** If playing chess is an obstacle from forgiveness, what can be said about the person who persists in committing sins which are unanimously considered to be major sins?!

طاعة الله خير ما لزم العبد فكن طائعا ولا تعصينه

مـــا هـــلاك الـــنفوس إلا المعاصـــي فاجتـــنب مـــا نهـــاك لا تقـــربنه
إن شـــيئا هـــلاكُ نفـــسك فـــيه ينبغـــي أن تـــصون نفـــسك عـــنه

“The obedience of Allâh ﷻ is the best thing which a person can earn. You should therefore be obedient to Allâh and never disobey Him. It is only sins which destroy people. So abstain from whatever you have been prohibited from, and never approach it. If anything entails your destruction, it is your duty to safeguard yourself against it.”

Sins cause one to be repulsed and distanced, just as acts of obedience are causes of proximity and love.

أيـضمن لـي فتـى تـرك المعاصـي وأرهـــنه الكفالـــة بـــالخلاص
أطـــاع الله قـــوم فاســـتراحوا ولـــم يتجـــرعوا غـــصص المعاصـــي

“If a youngster can guarantee me that he will abstain from sins, I can guarantee him salvation. The people who obeyed Allâh ﷻ enjoyed comfort and they did not have to get choked by sins.”

Your brothers have tied the *ihrâm* during these days, headed towards the Sanctified Musjid, and filled the air with the *talbiyah*, singing the greatness and oneness of Allâh ﷻ, praising Him and expressing His grandeur. They have travelled while we are sitting here. They are close while we are far away. If we can get a share with them, we will be fortunate.

أتـــراكم فـــي الـــنقا والمنحنـــى أهـــل ســـلعٍ تذكـــرونا ذكـــرنا
انقطعـــنا ووصـــلتم فاعلمـــوا واشـــكروا المـــنعم يـــا أهـــل مِنـــى
قـــد خـــسرنا وربحـــتم فـــصلوا بفـــضول الـــربح مـــن قـــد غبـــنا
ســـار قلبـــي خلـــف أحمـــالكم غيـــر أن العـــذر عـــاق الـــبدنا
مـــا قطعـــتم واديًـــا إلا وقـــد جئـــته أســـعى بأقـــدام المُنـــى
أنـــا مـــذ غبـــتم علـــى تـــذكاركم أتـــرى عـــندكم مـــا عـــندنا

“O people who have profited! Your purity and humility have rekindled our memories. We have been left behind and you have reached. You should realize this and thank the Benefactor, O people of Minâ! We have lost and you have profited. So convey your additional profit to those of us who are absent. My heart travelled behind your luggage, but my excuse is disobeying my

body. I came to every valley you crossed, running with the feet of my dreams. I am thinking of you ever since you left us. Do you think you can also think of us just as we are thinking of you?"

The one who remains behind because of a valid excuse shares the reward with the one who goes ahead. In fact, a person who goes with his heart may well surpass those who go with their bodies. While in 'Arafah, a righteous person saw a person saying in his dream on the night of 'Arafah: **"Can you see this crowd at 'Arafah?"** He said: **"Yes."** He said: **"Not a single one of them performed hajj with the exception of one person who remained behind but performed hajj with his courage. Allâh ﷻ rewarded him with the reward of those who were present."**

يـا سـائرين إلـى البـيت العتـيق لقـد سـرتم جـسوما وسـرنا نحـن أرواحـا
إنـا أقمـنا علـى عـذر وقـد رحلـوا ومـن أقـام علـى عـذر كمـن راح

"O you travellers to the Ancient House! You travelled bodily while we travelled with our souls. We remained behind because of a valid excuse, while they journeyed. The person who remains behind because of a valid excuse is like the one who journeyed."

Collect your booty, collect your booty by making the best of this opportunity during these great days. There is no alternative to this and it is priceless. Hasten, hasten with good deeds. Hasten, hasten before your time expires, before the person who exceeded the bounds regrets his actions, before he asks to return to this world so that he may do good deeds but his request is not accepted, before death comes between your hopes and the fulfilment of your hopes, before a person becomes mortgaged in his grave for whatever deeds he sent forward.

لـــيس للمـــيت فـــي قبـــره فطـــر ولا أضـــحى ولا عـــشر
نـــاء عـــن الأهـــل علـــى قـــربه كـــذاك مـــن مـــسكنه القبـــر

"The deceased has no 'id al-fiṭr, 'id al-aḍ-ḥâ and the ten days [of Dhû al-Hijjah] in his grave. He is aloof from his family despite being close to them. Similar is the case of the one whose abode is the grave."

O you whose grey hairs have started to appear after reaching forty years of his life! O you on whom ten years have passed since that time and is now fifty years old! O you who are on the battlefield

of death between sixty and seventy years! What is there apart from the certainty of death that can come to you? O you whose sins are in odd and even numbers! Are you not ashamed of the angels who are recording your deeds? Or are you among those who reject the day of Judgement? O you whose heart is as dark as the pitch dark night! Has the time not come for your heart to obtain some illumination or to soften? Present yourself for the fragrances of your Master during these ten days. Surely Allâh ﷻ sends out fragrances to whomever He wills. The one who receives them enjoys good fortune for ever and ever.

جـــــنحت شـــــمس حياتـــــي وتـــــــــدلت للغـــــــــروب
وتولـــــــى لـــــــيل رأســـــــي وبـــــــدا فجـــــــر المـــــــشيب
رب خلـــــصني فقـــــد لججـــــت فـــــــي بحـــــــر الذنـــــــوب
وأنلنـــــي العفـــــو يـــــا أقـــــرب مـــــــن كـــــــل قـــــــريب

"The sun of my life has inclined and is on the verge of setting. The night of my head has turned away, and the dawn of grey hairs has appeared. O my Lord! Rescue me because I am drowning in the ocean of sins. Bestow me with pardon, O You who are closer than the closest!"

THE MERIT OF THE DAY OF 'ARAFAH AND THE DAY OF SACRIFICE

A Jew said to 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ: **"O Leader of the Believers! There is a verse in your Book which, had it been revealed to us Jews, we would have celebrated that day as a day of 'îd."** He asked him: **"Which verse are you referring to?"** He said: **"Today I have perfected for you your religion, and completed upon you My favour, and I have chosen for you Islam as your religion."** *(Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 3)* 'Umar ﷺ said to him: **"I know fully well the day on which it was revealed and the place at which it was revealed. It was revealed on a Friday when the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was standing at 'Arafah."**(1)

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrated the above with similar words and said therein: **"It was revealed on a day of 'îd: a Friday and the**

(1) Al-Bukhari (45) and Muslim (3017).

day of 'Arafah."(1)

'Îd is an occasion of joy and happiness. The joy and happiness of the Muslims is with their Master because they were able to complete their obedience to Him, and received the reward of their deeds by virtue of their full confidence in His promise of His favour and forgiveness of them. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Say: By the grace of Allâh and His beneficence – in this, then, they should rejoice. This is better than all that they amass."** *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 58)*

An *'ârif* (one who truly recognizes Allâh ﷻ) said: **"Anyone who expresses joy without Allâh ﷻ does so through heedlessness of Allâh ﷻ. A heedless person is thus overjoyed by his amusement and desires. As for an intelligent person, he experiences joy with his Master."** Samnûn said the following poem containing the same theme:

وكان فؤادي خاليا قبل حبكم ... وكان بذكر الخلق يلهو ويمرح
فلما دعا قلبي هواك أجابه ... فلستُ أراه عن فنائك يبرح
رميت ببعيد منك إن كنت كاذبا ... وإن كنتُ في الدنيا بغيرك أفرح
وإن كان شيء في البلاد بأسرها ... إذا غبت عن عيني لعيني يملح
فإن شئت واصلني وإن شئت لا تصل ... فلست أرى قلبي لغيرك يصلح

"My heart was empty before it fell in love with You. It used to take amusement and joy from the remembrance of the creation. When Your love summoned my heart, it responded to it. Now I cannot see it leaving Your courtyard. May I be cast far away from You if I am lying, and if I experience joy in this world without You. If You wish, You may connect me to Yourself. If not, do not connect me. I cannot see my heart worthy of anyone apart from You."

When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came to Madînah, the residents had two days of play. He said: **"Allâh ﷻ has changed them for two better days: the day of fitr and the day of ad-hâ."**(2) Allâh ﷻ thus changed these two days of play and amusement with two days of remembrance, gratitude, forgiveness and pardon.

The believers have three days of *'îd* in this world: one *'îd* which

(1) At-Tirmidhi (3044).

(2) An-Nasa'ei checked it (3/179).

comes repeatedly every week, and two days of *'îd* which come separately in the year, and do not come repeatedly in the same year.

As for the *'îd* which comes repeatedly every week, it is Friday and the *'îd* of the week. It is based on the completion of the compulsory salâhs. Allâh ﷻ made compulsory on the believers five salâhs in every twenty four hours. The days of this world revolve around seven days. When seven days come to an end and the Muslims complete their salâh in it, Allâh ﷻ promulgated the Friday salâh on the day they complete this round.

It is the day on which the creation was completed, the day on which Âdam ﷺ was created, the day on which he was admitted and removed from Paradise, the day on which this world will come to an end and the Resurrection will take place, and the day on which people gather to listen to the remembrance, the admonition, and the Jumu'ah salâh. This day is appointed as an *'îd* for them. It is for this reason that it is prohibited to reserve this day for fasting.

Attending the Jumu'ah prayer has a semblance with hajj. It is said that it is the hajj of the poor. Sa'îd ibn al-Musayyib said: **"Attending the Jumu'ah prayer is more beloved to me than an** optional hajj. Going early for the Jumu'ah prayer stands in place of herding one's sacrificial animal, depending on how early a person goes. The one who goes first is as though he herded a camel, then a cow, then a sheep, then a fowl and then an egg.(1) Attending the Jumu'ah prayer ensures the atonement of sins till the next Jumu'ah prayer provided major sins are not committed in the intervening period. This is just as a blessed hajj atones for the sins of that year until the next hajj. It is said: **"If Friday is free of sins, the rest of the day will be free of sins."** It is said: **"Allâh ﷻ forgives every Muslim on a Friday."**

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The sun has neither risen nor set on a day superior to Friday."**(2) He said with regard to Friday: **"It is more superior in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the day of fitr and al-adh-hâ."**(3) Friday is the *'îd* of the week and is related to the fulfilment of the compulsory salâhs. Salâh is from among the greatest pillars of Islam and its fundamentals after the *shahâdatayn*

(1) It was checked before.

(2) At-Tirmidhi (3339).

(3) Ahmad checked it in his Musnad (15120).

(testifying the oneness of Allâh ﷻ and messenger-ship of Muhammad ﷺ).

As for the two 'îds, they do not recur in the course of the year. Each one comes just once in the year. The *'îd* al-fitr comes after fasting in Ramadân. It follows the completion of the fast of Ramadân. Fasting is the third pillar of Islam. When the Muslims complete the compulsory month of fasting, and earn forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ and emancipation from the Hell-fire, the person who was eligible for the Hell-fire because of his sins is freed from it. Allâh ﷻ prescribed a day of *'îd* upon the completion of the fast so that the Muslims may assemble to give thanks to Allâh ﷻ, engage in His remembrance, and extol His greatness for His having guided them. He prescribed the 'îd, salâh and charity for them. It is a day of prize-giving in which those who kept fast receive the reward for it, and return from their *'îd* with forgiveness.

The second *'îd* is the greater and more superior of the two. It follows the completion of the hajj which is the fourth pillar of Islam. When the Muslims complete their hajj, they are forgiven. The hajj is completed with the day of 'Arafah and standing on the plains of 'Arafah. This is the greatest pillar of hajj. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The hajj is 'Arafah."**(1) The day of 'Arafah is the day of emancipation from the Hell-fire. It is on this day that Allâh ﷻ frees from the Hell-fire all those who were at 'Arafah and also the Muslims in the different lands. It is for this reason that the day which follows it is appointed as an *'îd* for all the Muslims throughout the world – those who were present for the hajj and those who were not. This, so that they may share the emancipation and forgiveness of the day of 'Arafah.

All the Muslims of the world do not perform the hajj every year. This is a mercy and an alleviation from Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ made it a compulsory duty of one's life and not every year. It is *fard-e-kifâyah* every year, as opposed to fasting which is compulsory every year on every Muslim. Once the day of 'Arafah is completed and Allâh ﷻ frees His servants from the Hell-fire, all the Muslims join in the *'îd* thereafter. Allâh ﷻ prescribed on all the Muslims to gain proximity to Him through the sacrificial animals and shedding their blood.

Those who go for hajj pelt the *jamarât* and then commence

(1) At-Tirmidhi (890) and An-Nasa'ei (5/256).

coming out of their *ihrâm*. They wash off their dust and grime, fulfil their vows, slaughter their sacrificial animals and circuit the Ka'bah. As for the people in the rest of the lands, they assemble for the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, extolling His greatness and offering salâh for Him. Mukhannaf ibn Sulaym who is considered to be from among the Companions ﷺ said: **"Going out for the salâh on the day of fitr is equal to an 'umrah. Going out for the salâh on the day of adhâ is equal to a hajj."** Upon the completion of the salâh, the people return and start offering their sacrificial animals by slaughtering them. This is out of gratitude for these bounties. The salâh and the sacrifice which are collectively found on *'îd* al-ad-hâ are superior to the salâh and charity on *'îd* al-fitr. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ is ordered to show his thanks for al-Kauthar which he received by offering salâh for his Lord and slaughtering an animal. **"Say: My salâh and my sacrifice, my living and my dying, are all for Allâh alone, who is the Lord of the worlds."** *(Sûrah al-An'âm, 6: 162)*

It is for this reason that we are ordered to recite this verse at the time of slaughtering the sacrificial animals. This slaughtering is the Sunnah of Ibrâhîm ﷺ and Muhammad ﷺ. Allâh ﷻ prescribed this to Ibrâhîm ﷺ when he was prepared to sacrifice his son. He was provided with a huge animal [from Paradise] which he sacrificed. The Hadîth of Zayd ibn Arqam ﷺ states: The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: **"What are these sacrificial animals for?"** He said: **"This is the Sunnah of your father Ibrâhîm."** He was asked: **"What is there in it for us?"** He said: **"One reward for every hair [on the animal's body]."** He was asked: **"What about wool?"** He said: **"One reward for every fibre of wool."**(1) Narrated by Ibn Mâjah and others. These are the *'îd* days of the Muslims in this world. All of these days come after the completion of an act of obedience to their Master, and upon their receiving the reward which He promised them.

Some people passed by a monk in a monastery and asked him: **"When do the people in this monastery celebrate 'îd?"** He said: **"The day when its people are forgiven."**

لـــيس العـــيد لمـــن لـــبس الجديـــد إنمـــا العـــيد لمـــن طاعـــته تـــزيد

"'Îd is not for the person who wears new clothes. *'îd* is for the person whose obedience [to Allâh ﷻ] increases."

(1) Ibn Majah checked it (3127).

Another poet said:

ليس العيد لمن جمَله اللباس والمركوب إنما العيد لمن غفرت له الذنوب

"'Îd is not for the person who is adorned with clothes and a conveyance. *'Îd* is for the person whose sins are forgiven."

On the night of 'îd, garments of emancipation and forgiveness are distributed to the servants. *'îd* is for the person who gets any of these garments, if not, he is repulsed and far from Allâh ﷻ.

An *'ârif* (a person who truly recognizes Allâh ﷻ) was mourning on the night of *'îd* with these lines:

بحرمة غربتي كم ذا الصدود ألا تعطف عليَّ ألا تجود

سرور العيد قد عمَّ النواحي وحزني في ازدياد لا يبيد

فإن كنتُ اقترفت خلال سوء فعذري في الهوى أن لا أعود

"By the inviolability of my banishment, how much longer do I have to bear Your turning away from me? Will You not show Your kindness to me? Will You not be generous to me? The joy of *'îd* has spread everywhere, but my grief is increasing without relenting. If I have committed evils, I offer this excuse that I will not go back to following my desires."

Another poet said:

للناس عشر وعيد وأنا فقير وحيد

يا غايتي ومناي قد لذ لي ما تريد

"The people have these ten days and *'îd* while I am poor and alone. O my object and hope! Whatever You will for me is enjoyable to me."

Ash-Shiblî said:

ليس عيد المحب قصد المصلى وانتظار الأمير والسلطان

إنما العيد أن تكون لدى الله كريما مقربا في أمان

"The *'îd* of the lover [of Allâh ﷻ] does not entail going to the *musallâ* (place where the *'îd* salâh is performed) and waiting for the leader and king. The *'îd* for him is that he must be honoured by, be close to, and in peace with Allâh ﷻ."

He said:

إذا مـــا كـــنت لـــي عـــيدا فمـــا أصـــنع بالعـــيد
جـــرى حـــبك فـــي قلبـــي كجـــري المـــاء فـــي العـــود

"If You are my 'îd, what need do I have for this 'îd? Love for You is flowing in my heart as water flows through wood."

قالـوا غـدا العـيد مـاذا أنـت لابـسه قلـت خلعـة سـاق حـبه جـرعا
فقـر وصـبر همـا ثـوبان تحـتهما قلـب يـرى إلفـه الأعـياد والجمعـا
أحـرى الملابـس أن تلقـى الحبيب بـه يـوم التـزاور فـي الـثوب الـذي خلعـا
الدهـر لـي مـأثم إن غـبت يـا أملـي والعـيد كـنت لـي مـرأى ومـستمعا

"They said: 'Tomorrow is 'îd. What are you going to wear?' I replied: 'These same old garments which his beloved gave him. Poverty and patience are two garments between which is a heart which sees its Master on the day of *'îd* and Fridays. The best clothes with which you should meet your beloved on the day when you visit him are the clothes which you discard. My entire life would have been spent in sin if I do not achieve my objective. The days of *'îd* are days of seeing and listening [days of reflection] for me."

As for the days of *'îd* for the believers in Paradise, these will be when they visit their Lord. They will visit Him and He will honour them in a unique manner. He will appear before them and they will see Him. He would not have given them anything more beloved to them than this. This is the additional reward which He refers to: **"Those who have done good, for them is goodness [itself] and [something] additional."** *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 26)* A lover does not have an *'îd* apart from being close to his beloved.

إن يـــوما جامعـــا شـــملي بهـــم ذاك عـــيدي لـــيس لـــي عـــيد ســـواه

"The day of reunion with them, that is the day of my 'îd. I have no other day of 'îd."

Each day which was an *'îd* for the Muslims in this world shall be a day of *'îd* for them in Paradise. They will assemble to visit their Lord and He will appear before them.

Friday is known as *yaum al-mazîd* (the day of more) in Paradise. As for the days of fiṭr and aḍ-ḥâ, the people of Paradise will assemble on these days to visit each other. It is said that the women will also join the men just as they used to attend the two *'îd* ṣalâhs with the

men, but not the Friday prayer. This is for the general people of Paradise. As for the elite, every day will be an *ʿîd* for them. They will visit their Lord twice daily – in the morning and evening. Every day of the world was a day of *ʿîd* for the elite. Therefore, all their days in the Hereafter are also days of ʿîd.

Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* said: **"Each day in which Allâh ﷻ is not** disobeyed is a day of ʿîd. Each day which a believer spends in the obedience of his Master, His remembrance, and His gratitude is a day of ʿîd.

Islam is based on five pillars: the *shahâdatayn*, ṣalâh, zakâh, fasting in Ramaḍân, and ḥajj. The *ʿîd* days of the general Muslims in this world is at the time of completing the round of ṣalâh, fasting, and ḥajj. They assemble at the completion of each of these acts of worship in a general assembly.

As for zakâh, there is no specific time for it whereby a day of *ʿîd* could be set aside for it. Rather, each person who owns zakâtable wealth will have to pay the zakâh at the end of his own financial year.

As for the *shahâdatayn*, their completion is realized when they are fully embedded in a person and he fulfils the rights of this testimony. The special servants strive for this all the time. It is for this reason that all their times are days of *ʿîd* for them in this world and in the Hereafter. Ash-Shiblî *raḥimahullâh* said:

عـيدي مقـيم وعـيد الـناس منـصرف والقلـبُ منـي عـن اللـذات منحـرف

ولـي قـرينان مـا لـي مـنهما خلـفٌ طـول الحنـين وعـين دمعهـا يكـف

"My *ʿîd* remains all the time while the *ʿîd* of people departs. My heart turns away from enjoyments. I have two friends whom I can never replace: a long yearning, and an eye whose tears do not stop flowing."

Since the *ʿîd* of sacrifice (ʿîd al-aḍ-ḥâ) is the bigger and more superior of the two ʿîds, and in which the sanctity of the place and time is combined for those who are on ḥajj, they have other days of *ʿîd* before it and after it. Before it is the day of ʿArafah, and after it are the days of *tashrîq* (11th, 12th and 13th of Dhû al-Ḥijjah). All these days are days of *ʿîd* for those on ḥajj. ʿUqbah ibn ʿÂmir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The day of ʿArafah, the day of sacrifice, and the days of *tashrîq* are the days of our [Muslims']**

***'îd* and they are days of eating and drinking."**[1]

It is for this reason that fasting on the day of 'Arafah is not promulgated for those on ḥajj. This is the first of their days of *'îd* and the greatest of their gatherings. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did not fast on this day when he was at 'Arafah and the people saw him thus.[2] It is related that he prohibited fasting on the day of 'Arafah while at 'Arafah. Sufyân ibn 'Uyaynah was asked about the prohibition of fasting on the day of 'Arafah while at 'Arafah. He said: **"This is because they are the visitors and guests of Allâh ﷻ. It is not appropriate for a generous person to keep his guests hungry."** This reason is found in the two 'îds and the days of *tashrîq* as well. All people are the guests of Allâh ﷻ on these days, especially the day of sacrifice because the people eat the meat of their sacrificial animals – those who are on ḥajj and those who are not.

The three days of *tashrîq* are also from among the days of 'îd. It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent a person to Makkah to announce that these are days of eating, drinking and remembering Allâh ﷻ, so no one should fast.

At times, two 'îds could take place on a single day. For example, the day of 'Arafah or the day of sacrifice falls on a Friday. Such a day will thus increase in sanctity and merit. This happened for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ during his ḥajj on the day of 'Arafah which was on a Friday. This verse was revealed with regard to this day: **"Today I have perfected for you your religion, and completed upon you My favour, and I have chosen for you Islam as your religion."** *(Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 3)*

The perfection of Islam on that day was through several ways:

1. The Muslims had not performed the ḥajj after the compulsion of ḥajj before that year. This is the opinion of the majority of the *'ulamâ'* or many of them. Thus, by the completion of this deed, the pillars of Islam were completed.

2. Allâh ﷻ returned the ḥajj to the foundations laid down by Ibrâhîm ﷺ, and expelled polytheism and the polytheists. None of the polytheists were permitted to join the Muslims on that occasion. Ash-

(1) At-Tirmidhi checked it (773) and An-Nasa'ei (5/252).

(2) As in Hadith of Maymounah (ra) in Al-Bukhari (1989).

Sha'bî said: **"This verse was revealed to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ while he was standing at 'Arafah at the spot of Ibrâhîm عليه السلام. Polytheism was subdued, the minaret of *jâhilîyyah* was destroyed, and no one circuited the Ka'bah naked."** Qatâdah and others also said this. Abû Bakr ibn 'Ayâsh said: **"No injunction of permission or prohibition was revealed after this verse."**

As for the completion of the favour, this was acquired through forgiveness. No favour can be complete without this. Allâh ﷻ says to His Prophet ﷺ: **"So that Allâh may forgive you for whatever of your sins have passed and whatever are yet to come. And that He completes His favour upon you and guides you to a straight path."** *(Sûrah al-Fath, 48: 2)* Allâh ﷻ says in the verse concerning ablution: **"but wants to purify you and to complete His favour upon you."** *(Sûrah al-Mâ'idah, 5: 6)* It is from here that Muhammad ibn Ka'b al-Qurazî *rahimahullâh* says that ablution atones for sins, as clearly mentioned in the Sunnah.

This is also testified by the incident in which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard a person making this supplication: **"O Allâh! I ask You for a perfect bounty."** So he said to him: **"The perfect bounty is salvation from the Hell-fire and admission into Paradise."**(1) This verse testifies in favour of the narration which states that the day of 'Arafah is a day of forgiveness and salvation from the Hell-fire.

The merits of the day of 'Arafah

1. It is the day when Islam was perfected and the favour of Allâh ﷻ was completed, as explained previously.

2. It is a day of *'îd* for the Muslims as stated by 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb رضي الله عنه and Ibn 'Abbâs رضي الله عنهما. Ibn 'Abbâs رضي الله عنهما said: **"It was revealed on a day of two 'îds, a Friday and the day of 'Arafah.**

It is related that 'Umar رضي الله عنه said: **"All praise is due to Allâh ﷻ that both days are days of *'îd* for us."** Narrated by Ibn Jarîr at-Tabarî in his *Tafsîr*. The previously quoted Hadîth of 'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir رضي الله عنه affirms this. However, it is a day of *'îd* specifically for those who are present at 'Arafah. Fasting on this day is prescribed for the rest of the people [those not performing hajj] according to the majority of the *'ulamâ'*, although some scholars differ on this issue.

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(1) At-Tirmidhi (3527).

3. It is said that it is the odd day on which Allâh ﷻ took an oath in the Qur'ân, and that the even day is the day of sacrifice. This is related from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in a Hadîth narrated by Jâbir ﷺ and quoted by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* in his *Tafsîr*.

It is said that it is the *shâhid* on which Allâh ﷻ took an oath in the Qur'ân. **"By the attending day and by the attended day."** *(Sûrah al-Burûj, 85: 3)* Abû Hurayrah ﷺ relates a *marfû'* and *mauqûf* Hadîth: **"The attending day is the day of 'Arafah, and the attended day is Friday."** Narrated by at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*. It is also related as a statement of 'Alî ﷺ. At-Tabarânî narrates a *marfû'* Hadîth from Abû Mâlik al-Ash'arî: **"The attending day is Friday, and the attended day is the day of 'Arafah."** Based on this, if the day of 'Arafah falls on a Friday, it will be both an attending day and an attended day.

4. It is related that it is the most superior of all days. Ibn Hibbân narrates in his *Sahîh* from Jâbir ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The most superior of days is the day of 'Arafah."** Some *'ulamâ'* are also of the same opinion. Some of them say that the day of sacrifice is more superior because of the Hadîth of 'Abdullâh ibn Qurt in which the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The greatest day in the sight of Allâh ﷻ is the day of sacrifice, and then the day of *qarr*."** (the day of *qarr* is the day of 'Arafah) Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, Abû Dâ'ûd *rahimahullâh*, an-Nasa'î *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Hibbân *rahimahullâh*. But the latter's words are: **"The most superior day..."**

5. Anas ibn Mâlik said that people used to say: **"The day of 'Arafah is 10 000 times more superior."** We explained this when discussing the merits of the ten days. 'Atâ' *rahimahullâh* said: **"The person who fasts on the day of 'Arafah shall receive the reward of fasting for 2 000 days."**

6. It is the day of the major hajj according to a group of past scholars including Ibn 'Umar ﷺ. But others differ and say that the day of the major hajj is the day of sacrifice. This is narrated from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.

7. Fasting on this day is an atonement for sins of two years. We will quote a Hadîth in this regard later on – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

8. It is the day of forgiveness of sins, pardon, salvation from the

Hell-fire, and the day when Allâh ﷻ boasts about the people who are present at 'Arafât. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no day in which Allâh ﷻ frees more slaves from the Hell-fire than the day of 'Arafah. Allâh ﷻ descends and boasts about them to the angels saying: 'What do these people want?'"**(1)

'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ boasts before the angels on the night of 'Arafah about the people of 'Arafah. He says: 'Look at My servants, they have come to me dishevelled and dusty.'"** Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ boasts about the people of 'Arafât saying: 'Look at My servants who are in a dishevelled and dusty condition.'"** Narrated by Ibn Hibbân in his *Sahîh*.(2)

Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no day which is superior in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the day of 'Arafah. Allâh ﷻ descends to the lowest heaven and boasts about the people of earth to the inhabitants of the heavens. He says: 'Look at My servants who are dishevelled, dusty and sunburnt. They have come from every distant land. They hope for My mercy despite not seeing My punishment.' Such a large number of people freed from the Hell-fire are not seen on any day as on the day of 'Arafah."**(3)

Ibn Mandah narrates the above in *Kitâb at-Tauhîd* (4) as follows: **"When it is the day of 'Arafah, Allâh ﷻ descends to the lowest heaven and boasts to the angels. He says: 'Look at My servants who have come to Me dishevelled and dusty from every distant land. I make you bear witness to the fact that I have forgiven them.' The angels say: 'O Lord! There is a certain person who is oppressive.' He says: 'I have forgiven all of them.' There is no day in which so many people are freed from the Hell-fire as on the day of 'Arafah."**

We narrated the above through another chain with certain

(1) Muslim (1348).

(2) Ibn Hibban (1007).

(3) Ibn Hibban (1006).

(4) (1/147) and checked by Al-Baghawy in Sharh As-sunnah (7/159).

additions: **"O My servants! I make you bear witness that I have forgiven the good doer among you and pardoned the sinner among you."** We narrated it from Ismâ'îl ibn Râfi' – there is reservation with regard to this narration – from Anas ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ descends to the lowest heaven on the night of 'Arafah and then boasts about you to the angels. He says: 'These are My servants who came to Me dishevelled and dusty from every distant land. They are hoping for My mercy and forgiveness. If there sins were equal to the number of sand grains, I would forgive them. O My servants! You may proceed – you and those in whose favour you intercede are all forgiven.'"**

Al-Bazzâr narrated it in his *Musnad* with a similar theme from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. Al-Bazzâr said with regard to this narration: **"We do not know of a better chain than this."**

At-Tabarânî and others narrated a shorter version from 'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. We narrated it from al-Walîd ibn Muslim who said: **"Abû Bakr ibn Abî** Maryam informed me from his teachers that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ comes close to the lowest heaven on the night of 'Arafah, He turns towards His angels and says: 'Listen! There is a prize for every delegation. This is My delegation which has come in a dishevelled and dusty state. Give them whatever they ask for, and compensate them for whatever they spent.' When it is the time of sunset, He turns to them and says: 'Listen! I have given to the sinner among you what I gave to the good doer among you. And I gave the good doer whatever he asked. You may proceed in the name of Allâh.'"**

Ibrâhîm ibn al-Hakam ibn Abân said: My father narrated to me, Farqad narrated to us saying: **"The doors of the heavens are opened three times every night, seven times on Friday night, and nine times on the night of 'Arafah."** We narrated from Nufay' Abû Dâ'ûd from Ibn 'Umar ﷺ: **"When it is the evening of the day of 'Arafah, every single person who has even an atom's weight of îmân is forgiven."** He was asked: **"Is this specifically for the person who does good or for people in general?"** He said: **"For the people in general."**

Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh* narrates in his *Muwattâ'* from the *marâsîl* of Talhah ibn 'Ubaydillâh ibn Kurayz that the Messenger of

Allâh ﷻ said: **"Satan is never seen smaller, more defeated, more humiliated and more angry than on the day of 'Arafah. The only reason for this is because he sees the descent of mercy, and Allâh's pardoning major sins. Yes, he was shown something worse [in his sight] on the day of the battle of Badr."** He was asked: **"What was he shown on the day of Badr?"** He said: **"He saw Jibra'îl ﷺ restraining the angels."**(1)

Abû 'Uthmân as-Sâbûnî narrates from a man who was imprisoned in the Roman lands and escaped from one of its forts. He said: **"[When I escaped], I would travel by night and hide during the day. One night I was walking in a mountainous place among trees. Suddenly I heard some movement which terrified me. When I looked, I saw a person on a camel. I became even more terrified because there are no camels in the Roman lands. I said to my self: 'Glory be to Allâh! A person riding a camel in the Roman lands!? This is most strange.' When he reached me, I said: 'O servant of Allâh! Who are you?' He replied: 'Do not ask.' I said: 'I see something strange, so tell me.' He replied: 'Do not ask.' I insisted, so he said: 'I am Satan and I am coming from 'Arafât. I happened to be there when their Lord appeared before them, when mercy and forgiveness descended upon them, and it was given to them. I was overcome by worry, grief and affliction. I am now moving towards Constantinople where I can gain solace from hearing their polytheism and ascribing of a son to Allâh.' I said: 'I seek refuge in Allâh from you.' When I said these words, I did not see anyone."**

This incident is ratified by the Hadîth of 'Abbâs ibn Mirdâs which is narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* with regard to the supplication of the Messenger ﷺ for his *ummah* on the night of 'Arafah and then at Muzdalifah. His supplication was accepted and he began laughing. He said: **"When Satan learnt that Allâh ﷻ forgave my *ummah* and accepted my supplication, he began pouring soil on his head, and calling out for destruction. I laughed at the terror of this wicked creation."**(2)

'Alî ibn al-Muwaffaq narrates that on one of the occasions when

(1) Checked by Malek in Al-Mowatta' in "Al-Hajj book, Jaame` Al-Hajj chapter number (245).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (4/14) and Ibn Majah (3013).

he went for hajj, he was standing at ‘Arafât and saw the large multitude of people. So he said: **“O Allâh! If You do not accept any one person from here, I give him my hajj.”** He saw Allâh ﷻ in his dream saying to him: **“O Ibn al-Muwaffaq! Do you think you can be more generous than Me? I forgave all those who were present and a like number of people. I gave each one of them the permission to intercede on behalf of his immediate family, progeny and broader family. I am worthy of piety and I am the one who forgives.”**

Similar incidents have been narrated from other scholars. The one who desires salvation from the Hell-fire and forgiveness of his sins on the day of ‘Arafah should adhere to the causes through which salvation and forgiveness are hoped for.

The causes of salvation and forgiveness on the day of ‘Arafah

1. Fasting on that day. Abû Qatâdah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“With regard to fasting on the day of ‘Arafah, I have the hope that it will atone for the sins of the past year and the following year.”**(1)

2. Safeguarding one’s limbs from the unlawful on that day. Ibn ‘Abbâs ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **“The day of ‘Arafah: the one who restrains his ears, eyes and tongue on this day is forgiven.”**(2)

3. Excessive repetition of the *shahâdah* (testifying that none is worthy of worship except Allâh ﷻ and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ) with sincerity and devotion. This is the basis and foundation of Islam which Allâh ﷻ completed on that day. ‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Amr ﷺ said: **“The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made the following supplication the most on the day of ‘Arafah:**

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، بِيَدِهِ الْخَيْرُ، وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ.

“There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. He is one

(1) Checked by Muslim (1162).

(2) Checked by Ahmad (1/329).

and He has no partner. His is the kingdom, and to Him belongs all praise. All good is in His control, and He has power over everything."(1)

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates the above as follows: **"The best supplication is the one which is made on the day of 'Arafah. The best which I and the Prophets before me said was:**

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ ، وَهُوَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ.

"There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. He is one and He has no partner. His is the kingdom, and to Him belongs all praise. He has power over everything."(2)

The above is also narrated by at-Tabarânî from 'Alî ﷺ and Ibn 'Umar ﷺ.

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates from az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awâm ﷺ who said: I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ reciting this verse at 'Arafah: **"Allâh bears witness that there is no worship for anyone other than Him – and the angels and people of knowledge [bear witness] as well."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 18)* And he [the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was saying]: **"And I also bear witness, O Lord of the worlds!"**(3)

'Ubâdah ibn as-Sâmit ﷺ narrates: I saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ on the day of 'Arafah and he was reciting this verse the most: **"Allâh bears witness that there is no worship for anyone other than Him – and the angels and people of knowledge [bear witness] as well."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 18)* He then said: **"O my Lord! I also bear witness."**

Conviction in the oneness of Allâh ﷻ assures salvation from the Hell-fire because it is equivalent to freeing slaves, and freeing slaves assures salvation from the Hell-fire. This is established in a Hadîth which states that the person who says the *shahâdah* 100 times, it is equivalent to freeing ten slaves.(4) It is also established that the person who says it ten times is as if he freed four slaves from the

(1) Checked by Ahmad (2/210).

(2) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (3585).

(3) Checked by Ahmad (1/166).

(4) Al-Bukhari (6403).

progeny of Ismâ'îl ﷺ.

Anas ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"He who says the following in the morning or in the evening, Allâh ﷻ shall free one quarter of him from the Hell-fire. He who says it two times, Allâh ﷻ shall free half of him from the Hell-fire. He who says it three times, Allâh ﷻ shall free three quarters of him from the Hell-fire. He who says it four times, Allâh ﷻ shall free him [totally] from the Hell-fire."** [The *dhikr* is]:

أَللهُمَّ إِنِّيْ أَصْبَحْتُ أُشْهِدُكَ وَأُشْهِدُ حَمَلَةَ عَرْشِكَ وَمَلَائِكَتَكَ وَجَمِيْعَ خَلْقِكَ أَنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُكَ وَرَسُوْلُكَ.

"O Allâh! I have woken up. I make You witness, and I make the bearers of Your Throne, Your angels and all Your creation witnesses that You are Allâh. There is none worthy of worship except You. Muhammad is Your servant and Your Messenger."

The *marâsîl* of az-Zuhrî *rahimahullâh* states: **"The one who says 10 000 times in a day: 'There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. He is one and He has no partner', Allâh ﷻ shall free him from the Hell-fire."** It is similar to if he killed someone and pays the blood money of 10 000, it will be accepted from him.

4. He must free a slave if possible. If he frees a believing slave, Allâh ﷻ shall free each part of his body from the Hell-fire for each part of the slave's body. Hakîm ibn Hizâm ﷺ used to stand at 'Arafât with 100 marked camels and 100 slaves. He would then free the slaves. People would fall down crying and supplicating, saying: **"O our Lord! Here is Your servant who freed his slaves. We are Your slaves, so free us."** A similar incident occurred with [Hârûn] ar-Rashîd. Abû Qilâbah used to free a slave woman on the day of *'îd* al-fitr with the hope that he would be freed from the Hell-fire in reward for this.

5. Excessive supplication for forgiveness and emancipation from the Hell-fire because there is hope that the supplication will be accepted on this day. Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates from 'Alî ﷺ who said: **"Allâh ﷻ most certainly frees people from the Hell-fire on every single day. But there is no day in which He frees as many as He does on the day of 'Arafah. You should therefore make this supplication in abundance: 'O Allâh! Free me from the Hell-fire. Give me lawful sustenance in abundance. Divert the wicked jinn**

and humans away from me.' This is the supplication which I generally make on this day."

Sins which prevent forgiveness and salvation

A person should also be wary of committing sins which prevent forgiveness and salvation. Some of them are:

1. Conceitedness. Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is no day in which more males and females are freed than on the day of 'Arafah. Allâh ﷻ does not forgive the conceited person on this day."** Narrated by al-Bazzâr, at-Tabarânî and others. A conceited person is one who considers himself to be great, and is proud of himself. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Allâh does not like any haughty boastful person."** *(Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 23)* The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ does not look [with mercy] at the person who drags his garment out of pride."**

2. Persistence in committing major sins. Ja'far as-Sirâj narrates from Yûnus ibn 'Abd al-A'lâ who said that he went on hajj one year. The *amîr* (leader) of hajj saw in his dream that Allâh ﷻ forgave all those who came for hajj except for a person who committed an act of homosexuality with a young boy. The *amîr* was ordered to announce this to the people.

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ and others narrate that a man saw in his dream that Allâh ﷻ forgave all those who came for hajj except a man from Balkh. He went out in search for this man until he found him and asked him about his life. He said that he was a habitual alcoholic. He came home one night while he was intoxicated. His mother who was lighting the oven scolded him. So he carried her and cast her into the oven until she burnt to death.

O you who desires salvation from the Hell-fire but prevents himself from mercy by persisting in committing major sins and crimes! By Allâh! You have not admonished yourself, and no one except you is standing in your way. You are ruining yourself with sins. When you are deprived of forgiveness, you ask: How is it that this has happened? Say: This is from your own self.

فنفسك لم ولا تلم المطايا ومت كمدا فليس لك اعتذار

"Blame your self and not the animals [which are conveying you]. Die in your grief because you have no excuse."

If you desire salvation, purchase your self from Allâh ﷻ: **"Allâh**

has purchased from the Muslims their lives and their wealth for the price that for them is Paradise." *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 111)* The person who is high-minded considers it insignificant to spend whatever would enable his salvation from the Hell-fire.

A person of the past purchased his self three or four times from Allâh ﷻ. On each occasion he gave silver in charity equal to his weight. 'Âmir ibn 'Abdillâh ibn az-Zubayr purchased his self six times from Allâh ﷻ to the value of his blood money and gave it in charity. Habîb al-'Ajamî purchased his self from Allâh ﷻ for 40 000 dirhams which he gave in charity. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ used to glorify Allâh ﷻ 12 000 times every day equivalent to the value of his blood money, and free himself through this.

بـــدم المحـــبِّ يـــباع وصـــلهم فمـــن الـــذي يبـــتاع فـــي الـــثمن

"Connection with them is sold with the blood of the lover. Who is the one who is going to pay this price?"

The person who truly recognizes [the value of] what he is seeking, everything which he spends for it will be insignificant in his eyes. Woe to you! We are ready to free your soul through remorse. And We are prepared to accept your repentance and grief as the price. It is in this season that difficulties are made easy. The one who restrains his ears, eyes and tongue is forgiven. Extend your hand of apology to Him and stand at His door in submission and humility. Raise the story of your remorse embedded on the surface of your cheek with the ink of overflowing tears, and say: **"O our Lord! We wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and show mercy to us, we shall certainly be among the losers."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 23)*

Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh said: **"The slave is terrified by differences with his master. He does not leave his door under any condition because he knows that his honour lies in the shade of his master."** He said this poem:

قـــرة عينـــي لا بـــد لـــي مـــنك وإن أوحـــش بينـــي وبيـــنك الـــزللُ

قـــرة عينـــي أنـــا الغـــريق فخـــذ كـــف غـــريق علـــيك يـــتكل

"O the delight of my eyes! I am dependent on you even if a mistake has caused us to become distant from each other. O the delight of my eyes! I am drowning. So grab the hand of the drowning person who is relying on you."

The truthful experienced different conditions while at 'Arafah.

Some of them used to be overcome by fear or modesty. Mutarrif ibn ‘Abdillâh ibn ash-Shakhîr and Bakr al-Muzanî were standing at ‘Arafah, and one of them said: **“O Allâh! Do not reject all those who are present here because of me.”** The other said: **“What a wonderful and hopeful place this would have been for these people had I not been present among them!”** Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* stood at ‘Arafah while the people were supplicating and he was crying like a bereft person. He was crying so profusely that it prevented him from supplicating to Allâh ﷻ. When the sun was about to set, he raised his head towards the heavens and said: **“O, is there anyone worse than you [he was addressing himself], even if you are pardoned?”**

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said to Shu‘ayb ibn Harb while they were on hajj: **“If you think that there is anyone worse than you and me from among those who are present here at ‘Arafah, then you have thought something very evil.”**

An *‘ârif* (one who truly recognizes Allâh ﷻ) made this supplication at ‘Arafah: **“O Allâh! If You do not accept my hajj, my fatigue and tiredness, then do not deprive me of the reward for the calamity which afflicts me for Your not accepting Me.”**

A person who was very fearful of Allâh ﷻ stood at ‘Arafah until the sun was about to set. He then called out: **“Give me immunity, give me immunity. The time to depart has approached. If only I knew what was done to fulfil the needs of the poor.”**

وإن مـــن خـــوفكم والـــرجا أرى المـوت والعـيش فـيكم عـيانا
فمـــنوا علـــى تائـــب خائـــف أتـــاكم يـــنادي الأمـــان الأمـــان

“In my fear of and hope in You, I see life and death in Your hands, right before my eyes. So bestow Your favour on this repentant and fearing person who has come calling out to you: ‘Give me immunity, give me immunity.’”

When a prisoner seeks immunity from the generous King, He gives it to him.

الأمـــان الأمـــان وزري ثقـــيل وذنوبـــي إذا عـــددن تطـــول
أوبقتنـــي وأوثقتنـــي ذنوبـــي فتـرى لـي إلـى الخـلاص سـبيل؟

“Give me immunity, give me immunity! My burden is heavy, and my sins – if they were to be enumerated – will prolong. My sins destroyed and shackled me. Do you see any way of escape

for me?"

An *'ârif* who feared Allâh ﷻ a lot was standing at 'Arafah and his bashfulness prevented him from supplicating. Someone asked him: **"Why are you not supplicating?"** He said: **"I am terrified."** The person said to him: **"Today is a day of pardon from sins."** He extended his hands and fell down dead.

حـدا بهـا الحـادي إلـى نعمـان فاسـتذكرت عهـدا لهـا بالـبان

فسالت الـروح مـن الأجفـان تـوقا إلـى الـزمان الفانـي

"The camel driver urged her [my camel] towards Na'mān[1]. I then recalled the promise which I made to her when I was in the valley. The soul flowed from the eyelids, yearning for the fleeting time."

قـد لـج بـي الغـرام حتـى قالـوا قـد جـن بهـم، وهكـذا البلـبال

المـوت إذا رضـيته سلـسال فـي مـثل هـواك تـرخص الآجـال

"I was overcome by love to the extent that people said that he is gone mad. This is what anxiety is all about. If you are pleased with death, it is refreshing. Love for someone like you causes life to be cheap."

A person who was fearful of Allâh ﷻ stood at 'Arafât and said: **"O my Allâh! People are gaining proximity to You with their sacrificial animals while I am seeking Your proximity through my soul."** He then fell down dead.

للـناس حـج ولـي حـج إلـى سـكنى تُهدى الأضاحي وأهدي مهجتي ودمي

"People are making pilgrimage while I am making pilgrimage to my abode. People are offering their sacrificial animals while I am offering my life and blood."

The true lovers are not satisfied with the mere flowing of blood from their sacrificial animals. They offer their souls to Him.

أرى موسـم الأعـياد أنـس الأجانـب وما العيد عندي غير قربُ الحبائب

إذا قـربوا بـدنا فقربانـي الهـوى فـإن قـبلوا قلبـي وإلا فقالبـي

ومـا بـدم الأنعـام أقـضي حقـوقهم ولكـن بمـا بـين الحـشا والتـرائب

(1) Name of a valley beyond 'Arafah.

"I see the season of *'îd* bringing strangers together. But to me, *'îd* is a means of getting close to the beloved. If they offer sacrificial animals, I offer my love. If they accept my heart, well and good. If not, then at least my body. I do not fulfil their rights with the blood of animals, but with what lies between the bowels and chest [i.e. the heart]."

Abû 'Ubaydah al-Khawwâs used to be so overtaken by yearning and anxiety that he used to strike his chest while walking on the road. He would say: **"O my yearning for the One who sees me but whom I cannot see."** When he became old, he would hold his beard and say: **"O my Lord! I am gone old, so free me."** He was seen on the day of 'Arafah completely overtaken by love, and saying:

سبحان من لو سجدنا بالعيون له ... على حمى الشوك والمحمي من الإبر
لم نبلغ العشر من معشار نعمته ... ولا العشير ولا عشرا من العشر
هو الرفيع فلا الأبصارُ تدركه ... سبحانه من مليك نافذ القدر
سبحان من هو أنسي إذ خلوت به ... في جوف ليلي وفي الظلماء والسحر
أنت الحبيب وأنت الحب يا أملي ... من لي سواك ومن أرجوه يا ذخري

"Glory be to that Being whom, if we were to prostrate to on a sanctuary of thorns and needles, we will not even reach one tenth of a tenth of His bounties, not even a tenth of that, nor a tenth of another tenth. He is the lofty Being whom the eyes cannot fathom. Glory be to the King whose power is all-pervading. Glory to the Being who is my close friend when I am in solitude with Him in the middle of the night, in the darkness, and at the time of pre-dawn. You are my beloved, You are my love, You are my hope. Whom do I have apart from You? Whom can I have hope in, O my treasure?"

There were those of the *'ârifîn* at 'Arafât who used to hold on firmly to hope. Ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh* said: **"I went to Sufyân ath-Thaurî on the night of 'Arafah. He was sitting on his knees and his eyes were tearing. He turned towards me and I asked him: 'Whose condition is the worst today?' He said: 'The person who thinks that Allâh ﷻ will not forgive him.'"**

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* was looking at the sighing and crying of the people on the night of 'Arafah, so he said: **"If these people went to a person and asked him for a dâniq (one sixth of a dirham), will he refuse them?"** The people said: **"No."** He said: **"I take an**

oath by Allâh, that it is easier for Allâh ﷻ to forgive than for this person to give that one dâniq."

وإنـــي لأدعـــو الله أســـأل عفـــوه وأعلـــم أن الله يعفـــو ويغفـــر
لـئن أعظـم الـناس الذنـوب فإنهـا وإن عظمـت فـي رحمـة الله تـصغر

"I supplicate to Allâh ﷻ asking Him for His pardon. I know that Allâh ﷻ pardons and forgives. People may consider their sins to be great and they may be great, but they are small in the face of Allâh's mercy."

Soon will your brothers be standing at 'Arafât. Congratulations to the person who is blessed with this opportunity. They sigh before Allâh ﷻ with burning hearts and flowing tears. Many a fearful person is overcome by fear and anxiety. Many a lover is burnt by yearning. Many a hopeful person hopes in the promise of Allâh ﷻ. Many a repentant person repented sincerely to Him. Many a fleeing person sought refuge at the door of Allâh ﷻ and knocked on that door. Many a person who was destined to the Hell-fire is rescued and freed by Allâh ﷻ. Many a prisoner is freed. After all this, the most Merciful of those who show mercy appears before them, and boasts to the inhabitants of the heavens about them. He comes closer and asks: **"What do they want?"** Now that they have reached here, all deprivation has been severed from them. The Merciful gave them whatever they asked for. He alone is the Being who can give and refuse, who can join and sever.

مـا أصـنع؟ هكـذا جـرى المقـدور الجبـر لغيـري وأنـا المكـسور
أسـير ذنـب مقـيد مهجـور هـل يمكـن أن يغيـر المقـدور

"What can I do? This is how destiny operates. Others have the power while I am broken. I am the prisoner of my sins, I am confined, and I am kept in isolation. Is it possible to change destiny?"

The person who missed the opportunity of standing at 'Arafât this year must stand up to fulfil the rights of Allâh ﷻ which He taught him. The person who was unable to spend the night at Muzdalifah must devote his night to the obedience of Allâh ﷻ and gain proximity to Him. The one who was unable to stand in the precincts of Musjid al-Khayf should stand up to fulfil the rights of Allâh ﷻ with fear and hope. The one who was unable to slaughter his animal at Mina must slaughter his desires here and he would have reached Mina by doing this. The person who did not reach the

Kaʿbah because it is far from him should seek the Lord of the Kaʿbah. He is closer than the jugular vein to the person who calls unto Him and has hopes in Him.

The fragrances of amiability have blown from the gardens of sanctity on every heart which responded to whatever it was summoned. O the courage of the *ʿârifîn*! Do not be satisfied with anything apart from Allâh ﷻ. O the resolve of the ascetics for all the devotions of those treading the path! Assemble solely for the love of your Master, combine hope and fear for Him, and take delight from His remembrance.

O the secrets of the lovers! Circuit (make *ṭawâf*) and bow to the Kaʿbah of love. Rush and hasten between the purity of Ṣafâ and the valour of Marwah. Stop and submit yourself at the ʿArafât of cognition. Then proceed to the proximity of Muzdalifah. Then return to Mina to realize your hopes. Then when you offer your sacrificial animal, offer your soul and do not hold back. The path has been cleared today. Those who are seeking confirmation are few, but those who are supplicating are many.

لـئن لـم أحـج البـيت إذ شـط ربعـه حججت إلى من لا يغيب عن الذكر
فأحـرمت مـن وقتـي بخلـع شـمائلي أطـوف وأسـعى فـي اللطائـف والبـر
صـفاي صـفائي عـن صـفاتي ومروتـي مـروءة قلـب عـن سـوى حـبه قفـر
وفـي عـرفات الأنـس بـالله موقفـي ومزدلفـي الزلفـى لديـه إلـى الحـشر
وبـت المنـى منـي مبيتـي فـي منـي ورمي جماري جمرُ شوقي في صدري
وإشـعارُ هديـي ذبـح نفـسي بقهـرها وحلقـي بمحـق الكائـنات عـن الـسر
ومـن رام نفـرا بعـد نـسك فإننـي مقـيم علـى نـسكي حياتـي بـلا نفـر

"If I did not go for ḥajj and the time has now passed, I made ḥajj to the One who is never absent from my remembrance. I immediately wore my *iḥrâm* by wearing by good qualities. I circuited and hastened (made *ṭawâf* and *saʿî*) in acts of goodness and obedience. My Ṣafâ is purifying myself from evil qualities, and my Marwah entails the honour of my heart to be devoid of everything but His love. The ʿArafât of amiability with Allâh ﷻ is the place where I stand. My Muzdalifah entails gaining proximity to Him towards the Resurrection. My night at Mina entails spending the night in fulfilment of my hopes. My pelting the *jamarât* entails my burning yearning in my chest. Marking my

animal entails slaughtering my soul by force, and cutting my throat by destroying all the secrets of the world. There may be a person who wants to flee [and return home] after completing the rites of ḥajj, but I am going to remain steadfast on my rites throughout my life and I am not going to flee."

THE DAYS OF TASHRÎQ

Nabîshah al-Hudhalî narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The days of Mina are the days of eating, drinking and remembering Allâh ﷻ."**(1) This Ḥadîth is narrated by the different Ḥadîth scholars through several chains. Some of them state that during the days of Mina, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent out a person to announce: **"Do not fast on these days because they are the days of eating, drinking and remembering Allâh ﷻ."** A narration of an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh* states: **"they are the days of eating, drinking and ṣalâh."**(2) A weak narration of ad-Dâraquṭnî *raḥimahullâh* states: **"they are the days of eating, drinking and conjugal relations."**(3) A narration of Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* states: **"The one who is fasting must break his fast because these are days of eating and drinking."**(4) Another narration states: **"These are not the days of fasting."**

The days of Mina are the few numbered days regarding which Allâh ﷻ said: **"Remember Allâh in the few days numbered."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 203)* These are the three days after the day of sacrifice. They are known as the days of *tashrîq*. This is the view of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ and the majority of *'ulamâ'*. Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ and 'Aṭâ' *raḥimahullâh* were of the view that they are four days: the day of sacrifice and three days thereafter. 'Aṭâ' *raḥimahullâh* refers to all four as the days of *tashrîq*. But the first view is more correct.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The days of Mina are three. 'whoever hurries away in two days, there is no sin on him. And whoever stays on, there is no sin on him as well...'"**(5) *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 203)* This is narrated by at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh*, an-

(1) Checked by Muslim (1141).

(2) Checked by An-Nasa'ei (5/252).

(3) Checked by Ad-Darakotny in As-Sunan (2/187).

(4) In Al-Musnad (5/224).

(5) Checked by At-Tirmidhi (980) and An-Nasa'ei (5/256).

Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh*, Abû Dâ'ûd *raḥimahullâh* and Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* from 'Abd ar-Raḥmân ibn Ya'mar from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. This clearly shows that these are the days of *tashrîq*.

The most superior of these is the first day which is known as the day of *qarr* because the people have to remain in Mina and they cannot leave it.

'Abdullâh ibn Qurṭ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The greatest day in the sight of Allâh ﷻ is the day of sacrifice, and then the day of *qarr*."** According to Sa'îd ibn al-Musayyib, the day of the major ḥajj [i.e. the day of 'Arafah] is the day of *qarr*. This is a rare opinion.

The next day in superiority is the first day of departure, which is actually the middle of the three days. Then it is the second day of departure which is actually the last of the three days. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Remember Allâh in the few days numbered. But whoever hurries away in two days, there is no sin on him. And whoever stays on, there is no sin on him as well."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 203)*

Many of the past scholars say: this means that both, the person who hastens and the person who delays [by staying one more day] are forgiven and the sins which were on them before the ḥajj are wiped out. If a person performs the ḥajj without committing any obscenity and immorality, he shall come out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him. It is for this reason that Allâh ﷻ says thereafter: **"for him who fears."** Fear and piety of Allâh ﷻ are thus prerequisites for the wiping off of sins. This verse will thus be making a reference to the clear statement of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when he said: **"The one who performs ḥajj without committing any obscenity and immorality shall come out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him."**

Allâh ﷻ ordered His remembrance in these few days, as stated by the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"These are the days of eating, drinking and remembering Allâh ﷻ."** The remembrance of Allâh ﷻ during these days takes several forms:

1. Remembering Allâh ﷻ after the compulsory ṣalâhs by saying the *takbîr* (Allâhu akbar) – Allâh is the greatest. This is prescribed until the last of the days of *tashrîq* according to all the *'ulamâ'*. This is also the view of 'Umar ؓ, 'Alî ؓ and Ibn 'Abbâs ؓ. There is a weak

Hadîth in this regard as well.

2. Remembering Allâh ﷻ by saying *Bismillâh Allâhu akbar* at the time of slaughtering the sacrificial animal. The time of slaughtering the sacrificial animal continues until the last of the days of *tashrîq* according to some *'ulamâ'*. It is the view of Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* and one view of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*. There is a Hadîth in this regard: **"All the days of Mina are the days of sacrifice."**(1) There is some reservation with regard to the chain of narrators of this Hadîth.

The majority of the Companions ﷺ are of the view that the slaughtering of animals is confined to two days of the days of *tashrîq* with the day of sacrifice. This is the popular view of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh*, and the view of Imam Mâlik *rahimahullâh*, Imam Abû Hanîfah *rahimahullâh* and the majority of *'ulamâ'*.

3. Remembering Allâh ﷻ at the time of eating and drinking. We are ordered to commence eating and drinking in the name of Allâh ﷻ and end with the praise of Allâh ﷻ. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ is most pleased with a person who eats a morsel of food and praises Him for it, who has a sip to drink and praises Him for it."**

It is related that the person who commences eating with the name of Allâh ﷻ and ends by praising Him has paid Him the price for this eating and will not be asked to thank Him later on.

4. Remembering Allâh ﷻ by saying *Allâhu akbar* when pelting the *jamarât* during the days of *tashrîq*. This is confined to those who are performing hajj.

5. Remembering Allâh ﷻ at all times. It is desirable to increase His remembrance during the days of *tashrîq*. 'Umar ﷺ used to say the *takbîr* while he was in his tent in Mina. When the people used to hear him, they would emulate him and the whole of Mina would reverberate with the *takbîr*.

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Once you have completed your rites of hajj, remember Allâh as you used to remember your forefathers. In fact, remember (Him) more than that. Then there is one person who says: 'O our Sustainer! Give us in the world.' For him, in the Hereafter, there is no share. And one from among them says: 'O**

(1) Checked by Ahmad (4/82).

our Sustainer! Give us good in the world and good in the Hereafter, and save us from the punishment of the Hell-fire." *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 200-201)*

Based on the above verses, many scholars of the past consider excessive supplication to be desirable during the days of *tashrîq*. 'Ikramah *raḥimahullâh* said: **"It is considered desirable to say the following during the days of *tashrîq*: 'O Allâh! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and save us from the punishment of the Hell-fire.'"**

'Aṭâ' *raḥimahullâh* said: **"Every person who proceeds to his family [after performing ḥajj] ought to say: 'O Allâh! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and save us from the punishment of the Hell-fire.'"** Narrated by 'Abd ibn Ḥumayd in his *Tafsîr*. This supplication is one of the most comprehensive supplications for goodness. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to make this supplication in abundance. It is related that this was the supplication which he made the most. When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ made any other supplication, he used to add this supplication as well because it combines the good of this world and of the Hereafter.

Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* said: **"The good of this world refers to knowledge and worship. The good of the Hereafter refers to Paradise."** Sufyân *raḥimahullâh* said: **"The good of this world refers to knowledge, sustenance and perfume. The good of the Hereafter refers to Paradise."**

Supplication is one of the most superior forms of remembering Allâh ﷻ. Ziyâd al-Jaṣṣâṣ narrates from Abû Kinânah al-Qurashî that he heard Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arî saying in his sermon on the day of sacrifice: **"After the day of sacrifice are three days which Allâh ﷻ referred to as few numbered days. Supplication is not rejected in these days. So present your needs to Allâh ﷻ."**

There is a reason for the order to remember Allâh ﷻ at the end of the rites of ḥajj, viz. all acts of worship can come to an end and a person may complete them, but the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ never comes to an end and a person can never complete it. It continues in favour of the believers in this world and in the Hereafter.

Allâh ﷻ ordered His remembrance after completing ṣalâh. He says: **"Once you have completed your salâh, remember Allâh standing, sitting and lying down."** *(Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 103)* Allâh ﷻ

says with regard to the Jumu'ah salâh: **"Then when the salâh is ended, disperse into the land and seek the bounty of Allâh. And remember Allâh abundantly."** *(Sûrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 10)* Allâh ﷻ says: **"So when you have finished, devote yourself for Allâh's worship. And it is to your Lord that you should attach your heart."** *(Sûrah ash-Sharh/Inshirâh, 94: 7-8)* Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"When you have completed your compulsory duties, devote** yourself to Allâh's worship. With regard to the words: **"And it is to your Lord that you should attach your heart"**, he said: **"Attach yourself to begging from Allâh ﷻ while you are sitting [i.e. not engaged in battle]."** Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Allâh ﷻ orders him to occupy himself in supplication and worship after returning from battle."**

All deeds come to an end, but there is no end to the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ. Deeds come to an end with the end of the world, and nothing of them remains in the Hereafter. But remembrance of Allâh ﷻ is something which does not end. A believer lives on the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, dies on it, and is resurrected on it.

أحسبتم أن الليالي غيرت عقد الهوى لا كان من يتغير
يفنى الزمان وليس ننسى عهدكم وعلى محبتكم أموت وأحشر

"Do you think that the nights changed the pact of love? May the person who changes pacts be destroyed. Time can pass away but we will not forget your covenant. It is with your love that I will die and be resurrected."

Dhû an-Nûn *rahimahullâh* said: **"This world is only enjoyable through His remembrance, the Hereafter is only enjoyable through His pardon, and Paradise is only enjoyable by seeing Allâh ﷻ."**

بذكر الله تستراح القلوب ودُنيانا بِذِكْرَاه تطيب
إذا ذكر المحبوبُ عند حبيبه ترنح نشوانٌ وحنَّ طروب

"It is through the remembrance of Allâh that the hearts gain comfort, and our world becomes wholesome through His remembrance. When the beloved is mentioned in the presence of the lover, he goes into a frenzy and yearns with joy."

During the days of *tashrîq* the believers experience a combination of physical comfort from eating and drinking, and a

spiritual comfort with the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and showing gratitude to Him. In this way, Allâh's favour is complete on them. Each time they express gratitude over a favour, this gratitude in itself is another favour. They therefore need to express gratitude again. In this way, there is no end to expressing gratitude.

إذا كـــان شـــكري نعمـــةَ الله نعمـــةً علـي لـه فـي مـثلها يجـب الـشكر
فكـــيف بلـــوغ الـــشكر إلا بفـــضله وإن طالـــت الأيـــام واتـــصل العمـــر

"If my gratitude to Allâh ﷻ for a bounty which He bestowed to me is a bounty in itself, it is obligatory on me to express similar gratitude to Him again. None can truly thank Him except through His grace, even if many days pass and life is continuous."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"They are days of eating, drinking and remembering Allâh ﷻ."** In this there is reference to the fact that the eating and drinking are used as aids for the remembrance and obedience of Allâh ﷻ. The perfection of showing thanks for a bounty is to use that bounty in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ.

Allâh ﷻ orders in the Qur'ân that we should eat the pure things which He provided and express our gratitude to Him. The person who seeks help through the bounties of Allâh ﷻ for committing sins has actually rejected the bounties of Allâh ﷻ and changed them into ungratefulness. Those bounties are therefore worthy of being snatched away. A poet says:

إذا كـــنت فـــي نعمـــة فارعهـــا فـــإن المعاصـــي تـــزيل الـــنعم
وداوم علـــيها بـــشكر الإلـــه فـــشكر الإلـــه يـــزيل الـــنقم

"If you are enjoying a bounty, guard it because sins remove bounties. Remain constant in expressing gratitude to Allâh because showing gratitude to Him removes hardships."

In this context, this is especially so with regard to the meat of the sacrificial animals during these days of *tashrîq*. These animals are obedient to Allâh ﷻ and do not disobey Him. They glorify Him and are devoted to Him. Allâh ﷻ says: **"There is not a single thing which does not proclaim His praises."** *(Sûrah al-Isrâ', 17: 44)* They also prostrate to Him as mentioned in Sûrah an-Nahl and Sûrah al-Hajj. It may well be that they engage in more remembrance of Allâh ﷻ than some humans.

A Hadîth states: **"Many an animal is better than its rider, and engages in more remembrance of Allâh ﷻ than him."**(1) Allâh ﷻ states in the Qur'ân that many among man and jinn are like animals, in fact, worse than them.

Allâh ﷻ permitted the slaughtering of these obedient animals which are engaged in His remembrance to His believing servants so that they may gain physical strength from eating them, and complete their enjoyment from eating meat. Meat is the best and tastiest of all foods. This, notwithstanding the fact that the bodies can survive without meat by eating vegetables and other things. However, their strength, intelligence and enjoyment are only perfected when they eat meat. Allâh ﷻ thus permitted the believers to kill these animals and eat of their meat. In so doing, the strength and intellect of His servants will be completed. This will help them to gain beneficial knowledge and do good deeds by which man is distinguished over the animals. Moreover, it will help him in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ so that he may surpass the animals in this regard. After enjoying all this, it is the bounden duty of man to give thanks for all these bounties and to use them for the obedience of Allâh ﷻ and His remembrance. Allâh ﷻ gave man superiority over many of His creations and subjugated these animals for him. He says: **"eat of them and feed the one who is content and the one who is not content. In this way have We subjugated these animals for you so that you may give thanks."** *(Sûrah al-Hajj, 22: 36)*

As for the person who kills these obedient animals which engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ and then gets strength from eating them in order to disobey Allâh ﷻ and forgets to remember Him, he has actually turned the matter upside down, and rejected the bounty of Allâh ﷻ. When animals are better and more obedient than a person, may he be destroyed.

نهـــارك يـــا مغـــرور ســـهو وغفلـــة ولـــيلك نـــوم والـــردى لـــك لازم

وتـــتعب فـــيما ســـوف تكـــره غـــبه كـــذلك فـــي الدنـــيا تعـــيش الـــبهائم

"O you who are deceived! Your day is spent is futility and heedlessness. Your night is spent in sleep and you are bound to destruction. You are tiring yourself over something whose end you will dislike. This is how animals live in this world."

(1) Al-Musnad (3/439).

We have been prohibited from fasting on the days of *tashrîq* because they are the days of *'îd* for the Muslims together with the day of sacrifice. One would therefore abstain from fasting at Mina and at other places according to the majority of *'ulamâ'*. 'Aṭâ' *raḥimahullâh* is of the opinion that the prohibition is confined to those who are at Mina alone, and that the prohibition is with regard to optional fasting irrespective of whether it coincides with one's habit or not.

As for fasting on these days in order to keep a missed fast or a vowed fast, or to fast at Mina for the person who does not have a sacrificial animal, then there is difference of opinion among the *'ulamâ'*. The majority of them say that there is no difference in ruling with regard to any of these days. However, Imam Mâlik *raḥimahullâh* says that a vowed fast is permissible on the third day.

There is a good reason for the prohibition of fasting on these days and the order to eat and drink. Allâh ﷻ knows of the difficulties of travelling, fatigue of being in a state of *iḥrâm*, and striving of the souls for the completion of the rites which all have to be endured by those who come for ḥajj. He therefore prescribed resting for them after all this by ordering them to remain in Mina on the day of sacrifice and three days thereafter. He ordered them to eat the meat of their sacrificial animals during these days because they are the guests of Allâh ﷻ. This is Allâh's kindness, affection and mercy to them. The people of the rest of the world were also included in this order because they joined them in acquiring forgiveness, getting tired for the sake of Allâh ﷻ and striving during the ten days of Dhû al-Ḥijjah by fasting, engaging in His remembrance, and striving in different acts of worship. They also joined them in acquiring forgiveness by shedding the blood of their sacrificial animals. They therefore joined them in their days of *'îd* as well. So the entire population got together in resting by eating and drinking during these days, just as they had got together in striving in acts of worship during these ten days. So all the Muslims became the guests of Allâh ﷻ during these days, eating of His sustenance and thanking Him for His bounties.

They were prohibited from fasting during these days because it is not becoming of a generous Being to starve His guests. It is as though the Muslims were told during these days: **"You have completed the work which you were doing. Now there is nothing but rest for you. This is the rest which I am providing you from**

that fatigue which you experienced." This is just as how Allâh ﷻ provided a rest for those who were fasting in Ramaḍân by ordering them to eat on the day of *'îd* al-fiṭr.

From this we can gauge the condition of a believer in this world. The entire stay in this world contains days of travelling like the days of ḥajj. It is a period of *iḥrâm* (i.e. abstention) from all which Allâh ﷻ prohibited. The person who exercises patience during the course of his journey while in his *iḥrâm* and abstains from unlawful desires, then when the journey of his life ends and he reaches the end [as when he reaches Mina], he would have fulfilled his promises and covenants. All his days will become like the days of Mina – days of eating, drinking and remembering Allâh ﷻ. He will be the guest of Allâh ﷻ in close proximity to Him for ever and ever. It is for this reason that the people of Paradise will be told: **"Eat and drink with relish in recompense for what you used to do."** *(Sûrah at-Tûr, 52: 19)* **"Eat and drink to your heart's content as a reward for what you sent ahead in days gone by."** *(Sûrah al-Hâqqah, 69: 24)* It is said that this verse was revealed with regard to those who used to fast in this world.

وقد صُمْتُ عن لذات دهري كلها ويوم لقاكم ذاك فطر صيامي

"I abstained from desires throughout my life. The day when I meet You [O Allâh] shall be the day when I meet You."

A pious predecessor said: **"Fast in this world and let death be your day of eating."**

A poet said:

فصم يومك الأدنى لعلك في غد تفوز بعيد الفطر والناس صوَّمُ

"Fast at present [in this world] so that tomorrow you will be blessed with *'îd* al-fiṭr while people will be fasting [i.e. starving on account of the terrors of the Hereafter]."

The person who fasts [abstains] from his desires today will partake of them tomorrow after his death. The person who hastens to enjoy the pleasures which are prohibited to him will be punished by being deprived from his share of Paradise. The proof of this is that the person who drinks alcohol in this world will not drink it in the Hereafter, and the one who wears silk in this world will not wear it in the Hereafter.

أنت في دار شتات فتأهب لشتاتك

واجعـــــل الدنـــــيا كـــــيوم صـــــمته عـــــن شـــــهواتك

ولـــــيكن فطـــــرك عـــــند اللـــــه فـــــي يـــــوم وفاتـــــك

"You are living in a world that is going to be dispersed. So prepare for your own dispersal. Make this world like a day in which you abstain [keep fast] from pleasures. Make the opening of your fast before Allâh ﷻ on the day when you pass away."

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Allâh calls to the abode of peace and He shows to whomever He wills the straight path."** *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 25)*

Paradise is the accommodation which Allâh ﷻ prepared for the believers. In it are bounties which no eye beheld, no ear heard of, and which never crossed the imagination of any human. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was commissioned to call towards it by embracing îmân, Islam and goodness. The one who accepted him shall enter Paradise and partake of that accommodation. As for the one who did not accept him, he shall be deprived.

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that Jâbir ﷺ said: **"The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came to us one day and said: I saw a dream in which Jibra'îl was standing at my head side and Mîkâ'îl at my feet. One said to the other: 'Strike a parable for him.' He said: 'Listen, may your ears hear this. Understand, may your heart understand this. Your similitude and that of your *ummah* is like a person who bought a property and built a house on it. He then prepared a meal and sent a person to invite the people to the meal. There were those who accepted the invitation of the messenger while others did not. Allâh is the owner, the property is Islam, the house is Paradise, and you, O Muhammad, are the messenger. The one who accepts you enters Islam, and the one who enters Islam shall enter Paradise. The one who enters Paradise shall eat of what is there."**

Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrated the above with the words: **"His similitude is like that of a person who built a house and prepared a feast there. He then sent a person to invite the people. The one who accepted the call of this person entered the house and ate of the meal. The one who did not accept him did not enter the house nor did he eat of the meal. The house is Paradise and the caller is Muhammad ﷺ."**

It is stated in an Isrâ'îlî narration that Allâh ﷻ says: **"O man!**

You have not been fair to Me. I remember you but you forget Me. I call you towards Me but you flee and go to someone else. I remove calamities from you but you remain devoted to sins. O man! What excuse are you going to offer tomorrow when you come to Me? Glad tidings to the one who accepted the call of his Master: 'O our people! Accept the caller towards Allâh...' *(Sûrah al-Ahqâf, 46: 31)*

يـا نفـس ويحـك قـد أتـاك هـداك أجيبـي فداعـي الحـق قـد نـاداك

كـم قـد دعـيت إلـى الرشـاد فتعرضـي وأجـبت داعـي الغـي حـين دعـاك

"O my soul! Woe to you, your guidance has come to you. Respond because the caller towards truth is summoning you. You have been called towards rectitude so much but you are turning away. Yet when the caller towards deviation summons you, you respond to his call."

Everything in this world reminds one of the Hereafter. The seasons, festivities and joys of this world remind us of the seasons, festivities and joys of the Hereafter. 'Abd al-Wâhid ibn Zayd prepared a meal for his friends. 'Utbah, a youngster, was standing at the service of these guests while he himself was fasting. 'Abd al-Wâhid began stealing glances at him while tears were flowing from 'Utbah. Later on he asked him the reason for his crying. He replied: **"I was thinking of the dining tables of Paradise and the youngsters who will be standing at the beck and call of those eating there."** On hearing this, 'Abd al-Wâhid fell unconscious.

The *'ârifîn* may be in this world physically, but their hearts are in the Hereafter.

جـسمي معـي غيـر أن الـروح عـندكم فالجسم في غـربة والـروح في وطـن

"My body is with me but my soul is with you. My body is in a strange place, but my soul is in its homeland."

The days of *'îd* of the people come to an end, but the days of *'îd* of the *'ârifîn* are eternal. Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Every day in which you do not disobey Allâh is a day of *'îd* for you."** A person went to an *'ârif* and greeted him. He then said: **"I want to talk to you."** He said: **"It is my day of *'îd* today."** So the person left him and went away. He came to him another day and he said the same thing to him. He came to him another day and he said the same thing to him. So the person said: **"How many days of *'îd* do you have?!"** He said: **"O you idle person! Don't you know that each**

day in which we do not disobey Allâh ﷻ is a day of *'îd* for us?" All the hours of the *'ârifîn* are times of joy and happiness because of private conversation with their Master and being engaged in His remembrance. They are thus days of *'îd* for them. Ash-Shiblî *rahimahullâh* used to say:

إذا مـــا كـــنت لـــي عـــيدا فمـــا أصـــنع بالعـــيد

جـــرى حـــبك فـــي قلبـــي كجـــري المـــاء فـــي العـــود

"If You are my 'îd, what need do I have for this 'îd? Love for You is flowing in my heart as water flows through wood."

He also said:

عـيدي مقـيم وعـيد الـناس منـصرف والقلـبُ منـي عـن اللـذات منحـرف

ولـي قـرينان مـا لـي مـنهما خلـفٌ طـول الحنـين وعـين دمعهـا يكـف

"My *'îd* remains all the time while the *'îd* of people departs. My heart turns away from enjoyments. I have two friends whom I can never replace: a long yearning, and an eye whose tears do not stop flowing."

THE END OF THE YEAR

Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Do not desire death because the terror of the meeting is severe. It is fortunate indeed for a person to have a long life while Allâh ﷻ enables him to turn to Him."**(1) There are several reasons for a person desiring death:

1. A person desires death because of a worldly calamity which afflicted him. In such a case, he is prohibited from desiring death.

Anas ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"No one should desire death because of a calamity which afflicted him. If he has no alternative, he should rather say: 'O Allâh! Keep me alive if living is better for me. Cause me to die if dying is better for me.'"**(2)

The reason why it is reprehensible to desire death in such a situation is that the afflicted person is desiring death to gain freedom

(1) Checked by Ahmad (3/332).

(2) Checked by Al-Bukhari (5671) and Muslim (2680).

from that affliction. He does not know where he is heading to after death. He may well head towards an affliction worse than the present one. He would thus be jumping out of the frying pan into the fire. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"It is only the person who is forgiven who can relax."**(1)

Such a person should therefore not desire death unless he stipulates that it must be better for him in the sight of Allâh ﷻ. Similar is the case with everything else regarding which a person does not know what good lies in it, e.g. affluence and poverty. He is thus ordered to seek goodness from Allâh ﷻ (*istikhârah*) in matters which he wants to do but does not know whether there is goodness in them or not. He should ask Allâh ﷻ with certainty and firmness those things which he knows are certainly to his advantage, e.g. seeking forgiveness, asking Him for mercy, pardon, well-being, piety, guidance, etc.

2. Desiring death due to fear of tribulation because of Islam. It is permissible in such a case. There were Companions ﷺ and the senior imams of Islam who desired death and supplicated for it when they feared tribulation because of Islam. A Hadîth states: **"When You will tribulation for a people, take my life away without putting me through that tribulation."**(2)

3. Desiring death at a time when the causes of martyrdom are present. The person desires death at such a time to attain that martyrdom. It is permissible in such a case.

There are numerous and well-known incidents when the Companions ﷺ asked for martyrdom and offered themselves for it. Similar is the case of Mu'âdh ﷺ asking for the plague for himself and his family when it took place in Syria.

4. Desiring death by the person who has full confidence in his deeds. He desires death in order to meet Allâh ﷻ. This is also permissible. Many people of the past did this. Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ said: **"The most desirable death is the one out of yearning to meet my Lord."** Abû 'Anbah al-Khaulânî said: **"There were those before you who preferred meeting Allâh ﷻ to honey."** An *'ârif* said: **"My desire to meet Allâh ﷻ is causing my days and nights to become**

(1) Checked by Ahmad (6/69).

(2) At-Tirmidhi checked it (3233, 3235).

very lengthy." A person said: **"My desire to meet You has prolonged. So hasten my arrival to You."** A person said: **"I do not desire death unless I think of meeting Allâh ﷻ. At such a time, I desire death as much as a very thirsty person desires extremely cold water on an intensely hot day."**

A poet said:

أشـــتاق إلـــيك يـــا قـــريبا نائـــي شـــوقَ ظـــام إلـــى زلال المـــاء

"O You who are so close yet so far! I yearn for you as a thirsty person yearns for sweet water."

The permissibility of desiring death in such an instance is proven from the following verses:

"Say: If the abode of the Hereafter by Allâh is for you alone to the exclusion of others, then hope for death if you are saying the truth." *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 94)* **"Say: O you who are Jews! If you claim that you are the friends of Allâh to the exclusion of all other people, then wish for your death if you are truthful."** *(Sûrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 6)*

This shows that the friends of Allâh ﷻ do not dislike death but hope for it. Allâh ﷻ then informs them saying: **"They will never wish for their own death because of the deeds which their hands have sent forth."** *(Sûrah al-Jumu'ah, 62: 7)* This shows that death is disliked by the person who has sins for which he will have to give an account. A person of the past said: **"None but a person in doubt dislikes death."** 'Ammâr ibn Yâsir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"I ask You for the joy of looking at Your countenance and the desire to meet You, without being afflicted by any calamity nor being overcome by any tribulation which leads one astray."**(1)

The yearning to meet Allâh ﷻ comes with love for death. In most cases, the love for death comes at the time when one fears a destructive calamity in the world or a tribulation which leads one astray from Islam. If it is devoid of these reasons, the desire for death will be out of a yearning to meet Allâh ﷻ. And He is being asked in this Hadîth.

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

(1) An-Nasa'ei checked it (3/5504).

"None should desire death except the one who has confidence in his deeds." The person who is obedient to Allâh ﷻ experiences affinity with Him and therefore loves to meet Allâh ﷻ, and He loves to meet him. As for the sinner, he feels isolation from his Master because of the isolation of sins. He therefore dislikes meeting Allâh ﷻ while there is no alternative to meeting Him. Dhû an-Nûn *rahimahullâh* said: **"Every obedient person experiences affinity, while every sinner experiences isolation."**

A poet says:

أمستوحش أنت مما جنيت فأحسن إذا شئت واستأنِس

"Are you feeling isolation because of your crimes? If you want, you can do good and then experience affinity and companionship."

The advice of Abû Bakr as-Siddîq to 'Umar

Abû Bakr as-Siddîq ﷺ said to 'Umar ﷺ in his advice to him when he was on his death bed: **"If you adhere to my advice, there is no unseen thing which will be more beloved to you than death. And this is something which you will have to face. If you do not adhere to my advice, there is no unseen thing which will be more detestable to you than death, and you will never be able to escape it."**

Abû Hâzim said: **"Abstain from any deed which causes you to dislike death. If you do that, you will not worry when you die."** A sinner flees from death because he dislikes meeting Allâh ﷻ. Where can the person who is in the grasp of the Being who is seeking him flee to?

أين المفر والإله الطالب والمجرم المغلوب ليس الغالب

"Where can you flee to when Allâh is seeking you? The sinner is always overpowered, he can never overpower."

Abû Hâzim was asked: **"How will our approach to Allâh ﷻ be?"** He said: **"The obedient will go to Him as an absent person goes to his family who is yearning to meet him. As for the disobedient, he will go like a slave who fled and now has to present himself before his angry master."** Someone saw a pious person in his dream, so he asked him: **"How did Allâh ﷻ treat you?"** He replied: **"He treated me well. There is no one as generous as Him when an obedient person comes to Him."** The

entire stay in the world is a month of fasting for the pious. Their day of *'îd* shall be the day when they meet their Lord. A poet says:

وقد صُمْتُ عن لذات دهري كلها ويوم لقاكم ذاك فطر صيامي

"I abstained [kept fast] from desires throughout my life. The day when I meet You [O Allâh] shall be the day when I open my fast."

5. Desiring death for reasons other than those mentioned above. The *'ulamâ'* differ with regard to their undesirability and desirability. Some past scholars permit them while others do not. Some of our [Hambalî] scholars relate two different statements of Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* in this regard but they are not authentic. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* clearly states the undesirability of desiring death because of a worldly reason, and its permissibility when fearing tribulation in Islam. It is possible that some of the scholars included this in the first category before this. Those who consider it reprehensible do so on the basis of the general prohibition of desiring death. As stated in the previously-quoted Hadîth of Jâbir ﷺ. There are other Ahâdîth of similar meaning which will be quoted later – if Allâh ﷻ wills.

Reasons for the prohibition of desiring death

The prohibition of desiring death from the Hadîth of Jâbir ﷺ is provided on the basis of two reasons:

First reason

The terror that is experienced at the time of death is severe. This refers to the different terrifying scenes which are portrayed at the time of death – scenes which a person never saw in this world. For example, seeing the angels, his good and evil deeds, and Paradise and the Hell-fire. All this, together with the severe pangs of death which he experiences.

A Hadîth states: **"When the deceased is carried, and he was a righteous person, he says: 'Take me quickly, take me quickly.' If he was not a righteous person, he says: 'O destruction! Where are you taking me?' Every creation except humans hear this. If they were to hear this, they would fall unconscious."**(1)

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"If man were to know that there**

(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (1314).

is comfort and joy for him in death, it would have been difficult for death to come to him because he knows of its severity and terrifying nature. How, then, will it be when he does not know whether there is eternal comfort or eternal punishment for him?"

An-Nakha'î *raḥimahullâh* began crying when he was in the throes of death. He said: **"I am waiting for the angel of death, not knowing whether he is going to give me the good news of Paradise or the bad news of the Hell-fire."** So when a person desires death, it is as though he wants affliction to come to him quickly, whereas we have been commanded to ask for well-being.

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ heard someone asking for death so he said to him: **"Do not hope for death because you are certainly going to die. Rather, ask Allâh ﷻ for well-being."**

Ibrâhîm ibn Ad-ham *raḥimahullâh* said: **"Death is a drink which none but a person who is fearful and obedient to Allâh ﷻ can swallow."** Abû al-'Atâhiyah said:

ألا للمـــوت كـــأس أي كـــأس وأنـــت لكأســـه لا بـــد حاســـي

إلـــى كـــم والممـــات إلـــى قـــريب تذكـــر بالممـــات وأنـــت ناســـي

"Listen! Death has a cup, and what a cup it is! And you have no alternative but to drink from that cup. For how long are you going to procrastinate whereas death to a close person is reminding you of your own death. Yet you are forgetful of it!?"

Al-Ḥasan ibn 'Alî ﷺ became terrified at the time of his death and said: **"I am about to face something which I never faced before."** Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrî *raḥimahullâh* began crying at the time of his death and said: **"[My soul] is priceless and weak, and the matter ahead is terrifying and daunting. To Allâh we belong and to Him is our return."** Ḥabîb al-'Ajamî *raḥimahullâh* was crying at the time of his death and saying: **"I am about to undertake a journey which I never undertook before. I am about to tread a path which I never trod before. I am going to visit my Master whom I never saw. I am going to witness terrifying scenes which I never saw before."** All these are the terrifying scenes which cut the hearts of the fearful ones. 'Umar ﷺ said at the time of his death: **"If I possessed all the treasures of the earth I would have given them in ransom to save my self from the terror that awaits me."**

Included in these terrifying scenes is the tribulation of the grave

which is exposed to the deceased when he descends into his grave. The deceased are put through tests when they are questioned in the grave. These tests and tribulations are similar or close to the tribulation of Dajjâl. They are exposed to their places in Paradise and Hell, they experience constriction or expansion of their graves, and also the terror and punishment of the graves if Allâh ﷻ does not pardon them.

Abû al-'Atâhiyah was crying over his self and saying:

لأبكين على نفسي وحق ليه يا عين لا تبخلي عني بعبرتيه

يا هول مُطَّلعي، يا ضيق مضطجعي يا نأي منتجعي، يا بعد شُقَّتيه

"I will cry over my self and it is my duty to do that. O eye! Do not be miserly in shedding tears. O the terror of what I am about to experience! O how constricted my bed is! O how far my refuge is! O how distant my destination is!"

Someone saw a pious man in his dream after he passed away, so he asked him about his position. He replied:

وليس يعلم ما في القبر داخله إلا الإله وساكن الأجداث

"None knows what lies in the grave except Allâh ﷻ and the one who inhabits the grave."

Sufyân used to say:

إن امرءا يصفو له عيشه لغافل عما تجن القبور

نحن بنو الأرض وسكانها منها خلقنا وإليها نصير

"A person whose life is pure is most certainly unaware of what lies in the graves. We are the children of the earth and its inhabitants. We have been created from it and we are to return to it."

Second reason

The longer the life of a true believer, the better it is for him. It would be his good fortune if he has a long life while Allâh ﷻ blesses him with the ability to turn to Him, repent over his past sins, and to strive in doing good deeds. So if he desires death, he will be desiring the severance of good deeds, and this is inappropriate.

Ibrâhîm al-Harbî narrated from Ibn Lahî'ah from Ibn al-Hâd from Ibn al-Muttalib from his father that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ

said: **"Good fortune, absolute good fortune is in having a lengthy life which is spent in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ."**(1) A similar theme is conveyed in several other Ahâdîth. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"None of you should desire death. If he is a doer of good, perhaps he will increase in goodness. If he is a sinner, perhaps he will censure himself [and repent]."**(2)

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"None of you should desire death and none of you should supplicate for it before its arrival. When any person dies, his deeds come to an end. The longer the life of a true believer, the better it is for him."**(3)

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"None of you should desire death and none of you should supplicate for it before its arrival unless he has full confidence in his deeds. When any person dies, his deeds come to an end. The longer the life of a true believer, the better it is for him."**

Umm al-Fadl *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard al-'Abbâs ﷺ complaining and desiring death. So he said: **"Do not desire death because if you are a good doer, you will add to your goodness. If you are a sinner and you are given reprieve, perhaps you will censure yourself and this will be better for you."**(4)

Abû Umâmah ﷺ narrates: **"We were sitting with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ when he reminded us and caused our hearts to soften. Sa'd ibn Abî Waqqâs began crying excessively and said: 'O I wish I could die.' The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: 'O Sa'd! If you are created for Paradise, then the longer your life and the more good you do, it will be better for you.'"**(5)

There are many other Ahâdîth of similar meaning. They all prohibit desiring death under all conditions. The longer the life of a

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(1) Al-'Ajloony in Kashf- Al-Khafaa` (1/547) and Az-Zubaidy in Al-Ithaf (9/584).

(2) Al-Bukhari checked it (5673).

(3) It was checked by Muslim (2682).

(4) It was checked by Ahmad (6/339), Al-Baihaqi in Al-Kubra (3/377) and Ad-Darimy (375).

(5) Checked by Ahmad (5/267) and and At-Tabarany (8/258).

true believer, the better it is for him because he is increasing his goodness. Some say that desiring death out of yearning to meet Allâh ﷻ is included in this. But there is some reservation in this regard because the Messenger of Allâh desired it in that condition. The Sufis differ with regard to who is best: (1) the person who desires death out of yearning to meet Allâh ﷻ, (2) the person who desires life out of desire to spend it in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ, or (3) the person who leaves the matter in the hands of Allâh ﷻ, is happy with whatever Allâh ﷻ chooses for him, and does not want to make a choice of his own.

The Companions ﷺ prove the superiority of death over life from this verse: **"That which is with Allâh is far better for the virtuous."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 198)* However, the authentic Ahâdîth prove that the longer the life of a believer, the more good he receives from Allâh ﷻ. It is not inappropriate for him to desire the severance of this, unless he fears tribulation in his religious affairs. If he fears tribulation in his religions affairs, there is fear that he will lose out on the good which Allâh ﷻ has for him and that it will be changed to evil. We seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from this. In such a case, death is better than life.

Maymûn ibn Mihrân said: **"There is no good in life except for a repentant person or one who is doing good in order to reach higher positions in the Hereafter."** In other words, the repentant person wipes out the evils which he committed in the past, and the good doer strives in raising his status. Apart from these two, all others are in loss. Allâh ﷻ says: **"By the oath of time, man is certainly in loss. Except those who believe and do good deeds, and enjoin each other with the true religion, and enjoin each other with patience."** *(Sûrah al-'Asr, 103: 1-3)*

Allâh ﷻ takes an oath that every person is in loss except the one who possesses these four qualities: îmân, good deeds, enjoining truth and enjoining patience for the sake of the truth. This sûrah is a scale for deeds by which a believer can weigh himself and gauge his profits and losses. It is for this reason that Imam ash-Shâfi'î *rahimahullâh* said: **"If people were to reflect over this sûrah, it will suffice them."**

A person of the past saw the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in his dream so he said to him: **"Advise me."** He said: **"The one whose two days are the same has cheated himself. The one whose today is worse than his yesterday is cursed. The one who does not seek ways to**

increase in good deeds is in loss. And death is better for the person who is in loss."

A person said: **"The truthful used to be ashamed when their today was the same as their yesterday."** In other words, they were never satisfied unless each day was better than the previous day in doing good deeds. They were ashamed of losing out on this and considered it to be a loss. A poet says:

أليس من الخسران أن ليالـيًا تـرم بـلا نفـع وتحـسب مـن عمـري

"Is it not a loss when the nights pass without any profit, yet they are deducted from my life?"

A true believer who adheres to the prerequisites of îmân most certainly increases in goodness with a prolonged life. If a person is like this, then life is better for him than death. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to make this supplication: **"O Allâh! Make life a means of increase for me in every good, and make death a relief for me from every evil."**(1) Narrated by Muslim *rahimahullâh.*

At-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was asked: **"Which person is the best?"** He said: **"The one who has a long life and does good deeds."** He was asked: **"Which person is the worst?"** He said: **"The one who has a long life and does evil deeds."**(2)

Three people from the Banû 'Udhrah came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and embraced Islam. They were living with Talhah ﷺ and the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ sent a military detachment. One of these three joined this detachment and was martyred [in the battle which followed]. He then sent another military detachment and another of these three joined them, and was also martyred. The third person passed away on his bed [without participating in any battle]. Talhah ﷺ said: **"I saw them in Paradise and noticed that the one who passed away on his bed was ahead of the other two, the one who was martyred second was behind him, and the one who was martyred first was last. I went to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and related my dream to him."** He said: **"What do you find so**

(1) It was checked by Muslim (2720).

(2) It was checked by At-Tirmidhi (2330), Ahmad (1/19902) and Ad-Darimy (2742).

surprising about that? There is no one more superior in the sight of Allâh ﷻ than the person who is given a long life in Islam which he spends in the glorification of Allâh ﷻ, extolling His greatness, and expressing His oneness."

Another narration states: **"Did this one not live for one year more than the other?"** The Companions ﷺ said: **"Indeed."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ asked: **"Did he not get one more Ramadân and keep its fasts?"** The Companions ﷺ said: **"Indeed."** He asked: **"Did he not make such and such number of prostrations in that one year?"** The Companions ﷺ replied: **"Indeed."** He said: **"The distance between the two is further than the distance between the heavens and the earth."**

Someone said to a person of the past: **"Death will be so nice."** He replied: **"Do not say that. A single moment in which you seek forgiveness from Allâh ﷻ is better for you than eternal death."** Someone asked an old man: **"Do you like death?"** He replied: **"No."** He asked him: **"Why?"** He replied: **"Youth and its evil is gone. Old age and its goodness has arrived. When I stand up, I say: 'All praise is due to Allâh.' When I sit down, I say: 'All praise is due to Allâh.' I would love this to remain with me."**

Someone said to an old man: **"What is there left that you love life so much?"** He replied: **"The ability to cry over my sins."**

It is for this reason that the pious predecessors used to express sorrow at the time of their death – that their good deeds are ending with their death. Mu'âdh ﷺ began crying at the time of his death and said: **"I am crying over the fact that I will miss the thirst of the afternoon [due to fasting], engaging in worship in the winter nights, and frequenting the *'ulamâ'* in order to attend the assemblies of *dhikr*."** 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn al-Aswad began crying at the time of his death and said: **"O how sorrowful, how I am going to miss fasting and salâh!"** He continued reciting the Qur'ân until he passed away.

Yazîd ar-Ruqâshî cried at the time of his death and said: **"I am crying because I am going to miss engaging in night worship and fasting during the day."** He then cried and said: **"O Yazîd! Who is going to offer salâh for you after you pass away? Who is going to fast for you? Who is going to gain proximity for you through good deeds? Who is going to repent for you over your past sins?"**

One of them became terrified at the time of his death and said: **"I am crying because the fasting people will be fasting for Allâh ﷻ but I will not be able to join them. People will be offering salâh but I will not be able to join them. People will engage in the remembrance of Allâh ﷻ but I will not be able to join them. This is what is causing me to cry."**

تحمل أصحابي ولم يجدوا وجدي وللناس أشجان ولي شجن وحدي
أحبكم ما دمت حيًّا فإن أمت فوا أسفي ممن يحبكم بعدي

"My companions are being carried away, but they do not experience my emotion. People have their worries, and I have my worry by my self. I love you as long as I am alive. But once I die, then O my sorrow over those who love you after I go away."

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates: **"Every person expresses remorse when he dies. If he was a doer of good, he regrets not having done more. If he was a sinner, he regrets not having censured himself [and repented]."** If a doer of good regrets not doing more, what can be said of the condition of the sinner? A person of the past saw someone in a dream saying to him: **"Say:**

يا خدُّ إنك توسد لينا وسدت بعد الموت صم الجندل
فاعمل لنفسك في حياتك صالح فلتندمن غدا إذا لم تفعل

"O my cheek! You have a soft pillow today. After your death you will have stones beneath you. You should therefore do good while you are alive for your own benefit. If you do not do this, you will regret it tomorrow."

Another person saw someone in a dream saying:

إن كنت لا ترتاب أنك ميت ولست لبعد الموت ما أنت تعمل
فعمرك ما يغني وأنت مفرط واسمك في الموتى معد محصل

"If you have not doubt that you are going to die, and you are not doing any deed for after your death, your entire life will not avail you if you continue committing excesses. Your name is already recorded among the dead."

A person saw a deceased person in his dream. He said to him: **"We [deceased people] have nothing more than regret. While you have nothing more that heedlessness."**

The following was written on a grave:

نـدمت علـى مـا كـان منـي ندامـة ... ومـن يتـبع مـا تـشتهي الـنفس يـندم
ألـم تعلمـوا أن الحـساب أمـامكم ... وأن وراكـم طالـبا لـيس يـسأم
فخافـوا لكـيما تأمـنوا بعـد مـوتكم ... سـتلقون ربـا عـادلا لـيس يظلـم
فلـيس لمغـرور بدنـياه راحـة ... سـيندم إن زلـت بـه الـنعل فاعلمـوا

"I really regretted all that I did. The person who follows his desires is bound to regret. Don't you know that the accounting [of deeds] is before you? And that there is a person [angel of death] who is seeking you and who never gets weary? Fear [Allâh] so that you may be safe after your death. You shall meet your Lord who is just, who does not wrong anyone. The person who is deceived by his world shall experience no comfort. He will regret when his feet slip [and he falls]. Remember this well."

The deceased express remorse over not being able to engage in one more *tasbîh* (glorification of Allâh ﷻ) or one extra rak'ah of salâh. There are those who ask to be returned to the world for this purpose but they are unable to return. They are prevented from doing good deeds and all pledges are locked to them.

Someone saw a deceased person in his dream who said: **"We are in a serious situation. We now have knowledge but we cannot do anything. You can do something but you do not have knowledge. By Allâh, we prefer just one or two *tasbîhs* or one or two rak'ahs to the entire world and whatever it contains."** A pious predecessor said: **"Every day in which a believer lives is a bounty for him."** A person said: **"The remaining life of a person is priceless."** In other words, he can use it to wipe off his past sins through repentance, and strive to reach high stages through good deeds. As for the one who commits excesses during his remaining life, he is in loss. If he increases in his sins, that is an absolute loss. Deeds are gauged by the end. The person who does good in the remaining part of his life shall have his past forgiven. The person who commits sins in the remaining part of his life, shall be taken to task for what remains and for what has passed.

يـا بائـع عمـره مطـيعا أملـه ... فـي معـصية الله كفعـل الجهلـة
إن سـاومك الجهـل بباقـيه فقـل ... باقـي عمـر المـؤمن لا قـيمة لـه

"O you who are selling your life by obeying your desires in the disobedience of Allâh ﷻ like an ignorant person! If an

ignorant person makes a price with you for the remainder of your life, say: 'The remaining part of a believer's life is priceless.'"

All the enjoyment of the life which has passed – no matter how long it may have been – has gone, and its consequences remain. When death comes, it is as though all those pleasures never existed. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Well then look! If We were to let them enjoy [this life] for years on end, and then there comes to them that which they were promised, of what benefit to them will be all that they enjoyed?"** *(Sûrah ash-Shu'arâ', 26: 205-207)*

A pious predecessor recited this verse and began crying. He said: **"When death arrives, all the pleasures and comforts which he is enjoying will not avail him."** A similar theme is discussed in a poem by Abû al-'Atâhiyah which he said before ar-Rashîd when the latter built his castle and invited his friends to it. Ar-Rashîd said to him: **"What is your opinion about all this?"** He said these lines:

عـــش مـــا بـــدا لـــك ســـالما ... فـــي ظـــل شـــاهقة القـــصور

يـــسعى علـــيك بمـــا اشـــتهي ... لـــدى الـــرواح وفـــي الـــبكور

فـــإذا الـــنفوس تقعقعـــت ... فـــي ضـــيق حـــشرجة الـــصدور

فهـــناك تعلـــم موقـــنا ... مـــا كـــنت إلا فـــي غـــرور

"Live safely for as long as you like in the shade of towering castles. Whatever you desire is brought to you in the morning and evening. But once the soul rattles in the constricted place of the chest, you will come to realize with certainty that you were in absolute deception."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ excuses the person to whom He conveyed to the sixties of his life."**(1) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The [average] age of my *ummah* will be between sixty and seventy. The minority from among them will go beyond that."**(2) Another narration states: **"The harvest time of my *ummah* will be for the person who reached fifty years. He would have reached half a century, what, then, is he waiting for?"**(3)

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(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (6419).

(2) It was checked before.

(3) It was checked before.

لهفي على خمسين عاما قد مضت كانت أمامي ثم خلفتها
لو كان عمري مائة هدني تذكري أني تنصفتها

"Alas! Fifty years have passed. They were ahead of me but they are now behind me. If I knew for certain that my life was going to be 100 years, this would have guided me and reminded me that I have now reached half my life."

One of the books of the past states: Allâh ﷻ has a caller who calls out every day: **"O you who are in their fifties! The time for harvesting the crop has approached. O you who are in their sixties! Come forward to give your account. O you who are in their seventies! What have you sent forth, and what have you left behind? O you who are in their eighties! You have no excuse [you had plenty of time to prepare]."** If only people were not created. Now that they are created, if only they did what they were created for. If only they sat among themselves and recounted what they did. Listen, the Final Hour has arrived, so take your precautions.

Wahb said: **"Allâh ﷻ has a caller in the fourth heaven who calls out every morning: 'O you who are in the forties! The time for harvesting has arrived. O you who are in the fifties! What have you sent forth and what have you left behind? O you who are in the sixties! You have no excuse [you had plenty of time to prepare].'"**

A Hadîth states: **"Allâh ﷻ says to the angels who record deeds: 'Be kind to the person while he is young. But once he reaches forty, be very particular and record every single thing.'"** One of the narrators of this Hadîth would cry when relating it. He would say: **"Now that we have gone old and our bones are gone weak, extra care is being taken in recording our deeds."**

Masrûq said: **"When the forties arrive, be on your guard."** An-Nakha'î said: **"When a person used to reach forty years of age, people would tell him: 'Safeguard yourself [from committing sins].'"**

Many people of the past used to devote themselves totally to worship once they reached forty years of their life. 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *rahimahullâh* said: **"The person who reaches forty years had completed his pilgrimage to Allâh. He then dies for it."** He saw someone telling him in his dream:

إذا مـــا أتـــتك الأربعـــون فعـــندها فـاخش الإلـه وكـن للمـوت حـذارا

"Once you have reached forty years, fear Allâh ﷻ and be prepared for death."

O you who are twenty years old! How many of your friends have passed away and you are still alive. O you who are thirty years old! You have just recently passed your youth but you are not sorrowful. O you who are forty years old! Your youth is gone but you are still devoted to your amusement. O you who are fifty years old! You have reached half a century but you have not been fair to yourself. O you who are sixty years old! You are on the verge of death, yet you are playing and amusing yourself! You have certainly wronged yourself.

وإذا تكامـــل للفتـــى مـــن عمـــره خمـسون وهـو إلـى التقـى لا يجـنح
عكفـت علـيه المخـزيات فمـا لـه متأخـــر عـــنها ولا متزحـــزح
وإذا رأى الـــشيطان غـــرة وجهـــه حـيا وقـال: فـديت مـن لا يفلـح

"When a person reaches fifty years of his age and still does not incline towards piety, all forms of humiliation target him. He can neither retract from them nor shift away. When Satan sees the whiteness of his face, he comes to life and says: 'I have caught someone who cannot succeed.'"

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* asked a person: **"How old are you?"** He replied: **"Sixty years old."** He said: **"You have been travelling towards your Lord for the past sixty years, and you shall reach Him soon."**

وإنَّ إمـرأ قـد سـار سـتين حجـة إلـــى مـــنهل مـــن ورده لقـــريب

"When a person reaches sixty years of his life, he is very close to reaching his drinking place [from where he will taste death]."

O you who is overjoyed by the passage of many years! You are actually expressing joy over the shortening of your life.

Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ and al-Hasan ﷺ said: **"You are made of days; each time one day passes, some of you passes away with it."**

إنـــا لنفـــرح بالأيـــام نقطعهـــا وكـل يـوم مـضى يدنـي مـن الأجـل
فاعمـل لنفـسك قـبل المـوت مجـتهدا فإنمـا الـربح والخـسران فـي العمـل

"We are overjoyed by the passage of days whereas every day

which passes brings us closer to our death. You should therefore strive hard before death. Surely profit and loss is based on deeds."

A wise man said: **"How can a person be happy with a world** whose day is destroyed by the month, whose month is destroyed by the year, and whose year is destroyed by his life?! How can that person be happy when his life is herding him towards his death?!

تجـــدد ســـرورا بـــالهلال إذا بـــدا وما هـو إلا الـسيف للحـتف ينتـضى

إذا قـــيل تـــم العـــام فهـــو كـــناية وتـرجمة عـن شـطر عمـر قـد انقـضى

"You become happy again when the crescent [marking the start of a month] appears. But this crescent is nothing but a sword which is unsheathed for death. When someone says that the year has come to an end, it is a reference to the fact that a part of one's life has passed."

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Death is bound to your forelocks, while the world is being folded away from behind you."**

نـسير إلـى الآجـال فـي كـل لحظـة وأعمارنـا تطـوى وهـن مـراحل

تـرحل مـن الدنـيا بـزاد مـن التقـى فعمـرك أيـام وهـن قلائـل

"We are moving towards our death at every moment, and our lives are being traversed in stages. Depart from this world with the provision of piety because your life is made up of few days."

A wise man said: **"When a person makes his nights into his conveyances, they will take him even if he does not move."**

ومـا هـذه الأيـام إلا مـراحل يحـث بهـا حـاد إلـى المـوت قاصـد

وأعجـب شـيء لـو تأملـت أنهـا مـنازل تطـوى والمـسافر قاعـد

"These days are nothing but stages. The camel driver urges them towards death as the destination. If you were to ponder over this, the strangest thing is that these stages are being traversed while the traveller is sitting."

A wise man said: **"The night and day befall you alternately. The night pushes you to the day, and the day pushes you to the night. This continues until death comes to you."**

أيـا ويـح نفـسي مـن نهـار يقـودها إلـى عـسكر الموتـى ولـيل يـذودها

"O destruction to my soul which is being herded by the day to the army of the dead, and the night is driving it away."

O you whose sins are increasing the longer he lives! O you whose heart is becoming blacker with sins as his hair becomes whiter with the passage of days!

شـــيخ كبيـــر لـــه ذنـــوب تعجـــز عـــن حملهـــا المطايـــا

قـــد بيـــضت شـــعره الليالـــي وســـودت قلـــبه الخطايـــا

"An old man who has so many sins that the conveyances are unable to bear them. The [passage] of nights have caused his hair to become white, while sins have blackened his heart."

O you who, despite year after year passing, is getting deeper in the sleep of heedlessness and slumber. O you who, despite year after year passing, is drowning in an overflowing ocean of sins. O you who witnesses signs and admonitions as the months and years pass, who hears the verses and chapters being recited; but he neither benefits from what he hears nor from the serious things which he sees. Is there a way out for the person who was destined to wretchedness in the Preserved Tablet?! **"It is not the eyes that become blind. Rather, it is the hearts which are in the chests that become blind."** *(Sûrah al-Hajj, 22: 46)* **"He to whom Allâh gives no light, shall find no light at all."** *(Sûrah an-Nûr, 24: 40)*

خليلـي كـم مـن مـيت قـد حـضرته ولكننـــي لـــم أنـــتفع بحـــضوري

وكـم مـن ليالـي قـد أرتنـي عجائـبًا لهـــن وأيـــام خلـــت وشـــهور

وكـم مـن سـنين قـد طوتنـي كثيـرة وكـم مـن أمـور قـد جـرت وأمـور

ومـن لـم يـزده الـسن مـا عـاش عبـرة فـــذاك الـــذي لا يـــستنير بـــنور

"O my friend! How many funerals I attended but I did not benefit from this attendance of mine. Many a night and day I was shown strange things, and this continued into months. Many a year have I passed, and many matters and affairs have transpired. The person who does not take a lesson from the long life which he lived is the one who did not derive enlightenment from any light.

SEASONS OF THE SOLAR YEAR

SPRING

Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The thing which I fear the most for you is the blessings of the earth which Allâh ﷻ takes out for you."** He was asked: **"What are the blessings of the earth?"** He said: **"The splendour of this world."** A man asked: **"Can something good cause evil?"** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ remained silent and I thought that revelation was coming down to him. He then wiped his forehead and asked: **"Where is the person who asked the question?"** The man said: **"Here I am."** He said: **"Good can only bring good. This wealth is very attractive and sweet. Everything which spring causes to grow is what kills by inflation of the belly, or nearly does so, except for the one that eats greenery. It eats until its sides become extended. It then faces the sun, ruminates, passes out thin dung and urinates. It then returns and starts eating again. This wealth is attractive and sweet. It is an excellent aid to the person who takes it with due right and spends it with due right. But if he takes it without its due right, then he is like a person who eats without being satisfied."**

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ feared the world being opened up to his *ummah* and feared that they would be captivated by it. 'Amr ibn 'Auf ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to the Ansâr when some wealth from Bahrain came to him: **"Glad tidings and have hope for what pleases you. By Allâh, I do not fear poverty over you. Rather, I fear the world being laid out to you as it was to those before you, and you then compete to acquire it as they competed, and you be destroyed as they were destroyed."**(1)

In the last sermon which he delivered on the pulpit, he warned them against the splendour of this world. 'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ climbed the pulpit and said: **"I do not fear you ascribing partners after my demise. However, I**

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(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (6425).

fear that you would compete for this world and fight each other. In so doing, you will be destroyed as those before you were destroyed." 'Uqbah ﷺ said: **"This was the last thing which I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying on the pulpit."**(1)

'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When the treasures of the Persians and Romans are opened to you, what type of people will you be?"** 'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn 'Auf ﷺ said: **"We shall say as Allâh ﷻ commanded us."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Or is it something else. You shall compete against each other, have jealousy towards each other, turn away from each other, and then despise each other."**(2)

'Umar ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When the world is opened to any nation, Allâh ﷻ most certainly casts enmity and hatred among them till the day of Resurrection."** 'Umar ﷺ said: **"And I fear that."**(3)

Abû Dharr ﷺ said that a Bedouin said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! We have been devoured by drought and famine."** He said: **"I fear something more terrifying for you: when the riches of this world are poured profusely on you. How I wish my *ummah* does not wear gold."**(4) Another narration states: **"silk brocade."**(5)

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"I do not fear poverty for you, but I fear you competing against each other to acquire more and more."**

'Auf ibn Mâlik ﷺ and Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Do you fear poverty? I take an oath in the name of the Being in whose control is my life, the riches of the world will be poured profusely upon you to the extent that no one's heart will go astray. If there is anything which would cause it to go astray, it is this [world]."** The narration of 'Auf ﷺ contains the words: **"Allâh ﷻ shall most certainly open Persia and**

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(1) Al-Bukhari (6590) and Muslim (2296) checked it.

(2) Muslim checked it (2962).

(3) It was checked by Ahmad (1/16) and Az-Zubaidy in Al-Ithaf (8/53).

(4) It was checked by Ahmad (1/153), mentioned by Al-Hindi in "Al-Kanz" (6240) and Al-Munthery in At-Targhib (4/183).

(5) It was checked by Ahmad (2/308), Al-Hakem (2/534) and Ibn Hibban (2479).

Rome to you." There are other Ahâdîth with a similar theme.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"There is a tribulation for every *ummah*. The tribulation for my *ummah* is wealth."**

In the Hadîth of Abû Sa'îd ﷺ [quoted previously], the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The thing which I fear the most for you is the blessings of the earth which Allâh ﷻ takes out for you."** He then explained this as the splendour of the earth. He was referring to the kingdoms of the Persians, Romans and other unbelievers which will be opened to the Muslims. The Muslims shall inherit their houses, wealth and lands from which their crops, fruits, water, metals [gold, silver, etc.] and various other blessings come out. This is one of the greatest miracles of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ because he informed them that his *ummah* will gain control over the treasures, wealth and houses of the Romans and Persians. And it happened exactly as he foretold. But when he referred to them as the **"blessings of the earth"**, he informed them that this is what he fears the most for them. Some of those who heard this could not understand how he referred to them as **"blessings"** and then said that he fears them the most. This is because a blessing is something good and a source of mercy.

Allâh ﷻ referred to wealth as something good in several places in the Qur'ân. He says: **"He is very intense in his love for wealth (*khayr*)."** *(Sûrah al-'Âdiyât, 100: 8)* **"If he leaves wealth (*khayr*), he makes a bequest to parents and near relatives."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 180)* Allâh ﷻ quotes the statement of Sulaymân ﷺ: **"I have preferred the love of wealth (*khayr*) to the remembrance of my Sustainer..."** *(Sûrah Sâd, 38: 32)* When a person asked him: **"Can good be a cause of evil?"** the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ remained silent to the extent that they thought that he was receiving revelation, and it was probably so. The narration of Muslim *rahimahullâh* in this regard shows that he was receiving revelation: **"he regained his composure and wiped perspiration off him."** When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to receive revelation, he used to perspire and the beads of perspiration looked like pearls. This was because of the severity and heaviness of revelation. This shows that when he was asked about something regarding which he had not received revelation, he would wait for revelation with regard to it. He would not say anything until he received revelation with regard to it. When he received the answer to the question which was posed to

him, he asked: **"Where is the person who asked the question?"** The man said: **"Here I am."** He said: **"Good can only bring good."** The narration of Muslim *rahimahullâh* states that he asked: **"Is it really good?"**(1) This shows that wealth is not unilaterally good. Rather, there is some which is good and some that is bad.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then provides a similitude of wealth, the similitude of the one takes it with due right and spends it with due right, and the one who does not take it with due right nor spends it with due right. Wealth is good in favour of the first person and bad for the second person. This shows that wealth is not always good. Rather, it is a restricted good. If a believer utilizes it in a manner which would benefit him in the Hereafter, it is good for him. If not, it is not.

As for wealth, he described it as being attractive and sweet. He describes wealth and the world with these descriptions in many Ahâdîth.

Hakîm ibn Hizâm narrates that he asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and he gave him. He asked him again and he gave him. He asked him again, so the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said to him: **"O Hakîm! This wealth is attractive and sweet. The person who takes it with a generous heart shall be blessed in it. The person who takes it while hankering after it will not be blessed in it. He will be like a person who eats without being satisfied."**(2)

Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The world is attractive and sweet. Allâh ﷻ shall appoint you to positions of authority in it and see how you behave. You should therefore be wary of the world and be wary of women because the first tribulation of the Banî Isrâ'îl was because of women."**(3) Appointing them to positions of authority refers to Allâh ﷻ enabling them to inherit all that was in the hands of the nations before them, like the Persians and Romans. He warns them against the tribulation of the world, and especially of the tribulation of women. Women are the first in the list of worldly desires and possessions which Allâh ﷻ enumerates in this verse: **"The love of**

(1) Muslim checked it (1052).

(2) Al-Bukhari (1472) and Muslim (1035).

(3) Muslim checked it (2742).

desirable things has deluded the people. [Desirable things] like women, sons, hoarded treasures of gold and silver, branded horses, cattle, and agriculture. This may be enjoyed in the life of this world. And with Allâh alone is a good abode." *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 14)*

Khaulah bint Qays *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"This wealth is attractive and sweet. The one who takes it with its due right shall be blessed in it. Many a person who engrosses himself in what his soul desires of the wealth of Allâh and His Messenger ﷺ shall have nothing but the Hell-fire on the day of Resurrection."** Khaulah bint Thâmir al-Ansârîyyah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The world is attractive and sweet. There are people who engross themselves in the wealth of Allâh ﷻ without due right. For them is the Hell-fire on the day of Resurrection."** Al-Bukhârî *rahimahullâh* narrated this from the words **"There are people..."** till the end. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"This world is attractive and sweet. The one to whom we give thereof with a good heart or a good taste, and without hankering after it shall be blessed in it. The one to whom we give thereof without a good heart or without a good taste, and with hankering after it will not be blessed in it."** There are other Ahâdîth of similar meaning.

The words of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"Everything which spring causes to grow is what kills by inflation of the belly, or nearly does so, except for the one that eats greenery."** [quoted at the beginning of this chapter] is another parable which he provided of the splendour of this world, its beauty, its luxury, and its sweetness to the souls. The similitude is that of the green plants and pastures which grow in spring. These are attractive to the animals which graze these lands, take delight from them, and eat more than what they need because of their sweetness. This either kills the animal because its belly becomes inflated due to overeating, or comes close to dying. It falls severely ill and takes it on the verge of death. This is the example of a person who takes of the world with greed and insatiability – he is neither content with little nor satisfied with a lot, he neither distinguishes between what is lawful and what is unlawful. Rather, the lawful according to him is whatever falls in his hand and whatever he has control over. The unlawful according to him is what is denied to him and what he cannot lay his hand on.

Such is a person who engrosses himself in the wealth of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ with whatever his soul desires. There is nothing but the Hell-fire for him on the day of Resurrection – as in the previously mentioned Hadîth of Khaulah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ*.

The wealth of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ refers to the wealth which the rulers and leaders are bound to protect, and spend in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. This includes booty and spoils of war. This is followed by wealth obtained from *kharâj* (land tax) and *jizyah* (land paid by non-Muslims living in an Islamic state in return for protection). Similarly it refers to the charities which are given to the poor and needy, e.g. zakâh, endowments, etc. In this is a warning that the person who involves himself in wealth which is unlawful, e.g. usury, wealth of orphans which is synonymous to eating fire, usurping wealth, stealing, deception in buying and selling, cheating, plotting, denying trusts, false claims, and other unlawful stratagems – is more worthy of drowning in the fire of Hell. It is through all these types of wealth and others similar to them that people become rich in this world and derive enjoyment from them. It is through them that they acquire the pleasures and desires of the world. After their death, all this changes to one of the embers of Hell which lies in their bellies. Their enjoyment is therefore never fulfilled. A poet says:

تفنى اللذاذة ممن نال لذتها ... من الحرام ويبقى الإثم والعار

تبقى عواقب سوء من تبيعتها ... لا خير في لذة من بعدها النار

"The enjoyment of the person who derives enjoyment from the unlawful comes to an end, but the sin and reproach remain [on his shoulders]. The disastrous consequences remain. There is no good in an enjoyment which is followed by the fire."

It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ likened the person who takes of the world without its due right and spends it in the wrong place to animals which graze on the green pastures of spring until their bellies become inflated from eating it. This either kills the animals or takes them to the verge of death. Similar is the case of the person who takes of the world without its due right and spends it in the wrong place. It will kill him and so his heart and religion will die. This refers to the person who dies without repentance and without reforming himself. He is eligible for the Hell-fire because of his actions. Allâh ﷻ says: **"As for those who are unbelievers, they are enjoying themselves and eating as animals**

eat. And the fire is their abode." *(Sûrah Muhammad, 47: 12)* Such a person is a dead person in reality. A really dead person is one whose heart is dead. A poet says:

لـيس مـن مـات فاسـتراح بمـيّت إنمـا المـيت مـيّت الأحـياء

"The person who passes away and relaxes is not really a dead person. A dead person is the dead among the living.

It is also possible that a person will go close to his death and is then pardoned. This applies to the person who comes to his senses, repents, and reforms his ways before his death. 'Alî ﷺ said with regard to the different categories of knowledgeable people: **"One who has an insatiable greed for pleasures and is continuously restricted by his desires. Or one who is enamoured with the accumulation of wealth and riches. They are not those who guide towards religion. Rather, they have more similarity with grazing animals."**

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *raḥimahullâh* used to say these lines very often:

نهـارك يـا مغـرور سـهو وغفلـة ولـيلك نـوم والـردى لـك لازم

وتـتعب فـيما سـوف تكـره غـبه كـذلك فـي الدنـيا تعـيش الـبهائم

"O you who are deceived! Your day is spent in futility and heedlessness. Your night is spent in sleep and you are bound to destruction. You are tiring yourself over something whose end you will dislike. This is how animals live in this world."

In the Ḥadîth quoted at the beginning of this chapter, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ excluded **"the animal which eats greenery"**. He is referring to a person who is balanced and takes of the world with its due right and only the amount which he needs. Once what he has taken is consumed, he returns and takes as much as he needs with its due right. The **"animal which eats greenery"** refers to the small animal which only eats as much as it needs. It then turns away and faces the sun. It utilizes what is in its belly and expels whatever will be harmful to it by way of dung and urine.

According to some scholars, the **"greenery"** does not refer to the plants of spring according to the Arabs. Rather, it is the pasturelands of summer which become dry and then turn yellow. Grazing camels eat very little of this and their bellies do not become inflated by eating this. So this is the similitude of a believer who is

balanced in this world. He only takes what is lawful – which is very little compared to the unlawful which is available – and that too, he only takes an amount which he needs [and not more]. He takes from the world that which is the simplest and most coarse. He does not go back to take from the world unless what he had is consumed and its excess is gone away. The person who takes in this manner is neither harmed, does not fall ill, nor is he destroyed. Rather, this is sufficient to convey him during his stay in this world, and helps him to prepare for his Hereafter. This similitude praises the person who takes the lawful from this world to the extent which suffices him, and he is content with that amount. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person whom Allâh ﷻ guided towards Islam, who has sufficiency in his livelihood, and is content with it is most certainly successful."**(1) The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The best sustenance is that which suffices."**(2) He said: **"O Allâh! Make the sustenance of Muhammad's family that which is sufficient."**(3)

خذ من الرزق ما كفى ... ومن العيش ما صفا

كل هذا سينقضي ... كسراج إذا انطفا

"Take of the world that which is sufficient, and from your livelihood that which is pure. All this is going to come to an end, just like a lamp when it becomes extinguished."

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then said: **"This wealth is attractive and sweet."** He repeated this a second time in order to warn us from being deceived by it. Its attractiveness lies in its beauty, and its sweetness lies in its lovely taste. It is for this reason that the souls desire it and hasten to acquire it. However, had the souls pondered over its consequences, they would have fled from it. The world is attractive and sweet at present, but its consequences are bitter and filthy. Like a wet-nurse who is beloved to the child when she feeds him, but is disliked by him when she weans him.

إنما الدنيا نهار ... ضوؤه ضوء معار

بينما عيشك غض ... ناعم فيه اخضرار

(1) Muslim checked it (1054).

(2) Ahmad checked it in Az-Zuhd (10) and in Al-Musnad (1/172), Waki' in Az-Zuhd (118), Ibn Hibban (577).

(3) Al-Bukhari checked it (6460).

إذ رمـــــــــــاه زمـــــــــــناه فـــــــإذا فـــــــيه اصـــــــفرار
وكـــــــذاك اللـــــــيل يأتـــــــي ثـــــــم يمحـــــــوه الـــــــنهار

"This world is like a day whose light is borrowed. Your life is fresh, comfortable and green. But once time afflicts it, it turns yellow. Similar is the case with the night. It comes and is then wiped out by the day."

The unlawful of this world is like the oleander plant. It is attractive to the one who sets eyes on it, but kills the person who eats it.

نـــرى الدنـــيا وزهـــرتها فنـــصبوا ومـــا يخلـــو مـــن الـــشهوات قلـــب
فـــضول العـــيش أكثـــره همـــوم وأكثـــر مـــا يـــضرك مـــا تحـــب
إذا اتفـــق القلـــيل وفـــيه ســـلم فـــلا تـــرد الكثيـــر وفـــيه حـــرب

"When we look at the world and its splendour, we exert out efforts for it. Our desires are devoid of a heart [devoid of feeling]. Acquiring more than you need from your livelihood results in worries most of the time. The thing which causes you most harm is the thing which you love. If you have little and it gives you peace, do not desire more if it is going to cause you pain."

The Messenger ﷺ who gave his *ummah* the glad tidings of the treasures of the world being opened to them, also warned them from being deceived by its splendour. He warned them of its attraction and sweetness, and informed them of its destruction and fleeting nature. He told them that before them is an abode whose attraction and sweetness do not end. The one who stops at the present and immediate splendour will be severed and destroyed. The one who does not stop at it and travels towards the other abode, shall reach there and triumph.

Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ narrates that two angels came to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in his dream. One sat at his head and the other by his feet. One said to the other: **"Strike a similitude for him."** The other said: **"His similitude and the similitude of his *ummah* is like that of a** group of travellers who reached the edge of a desert and did not have provisions which would enable them to cross the desert, nor to enable them to go back. While they were in that state, a person wrapped in a silken shawl came to them and said: **"Tell me, if I were to take you to green and lush orchards where there are**

thirst-quenching ponds of water, will you follow me?" They replied: **"Yes."** So he took them to green and lush orchards where there were thirst-quenching ponds of water. They ate, drank and became fat. He then said to them: **"Do you remember the condition in which you were in, and you agreed to come with me to a place which had green and lush orchards and thirst-quenching ponds of water?"** They replied: **"Indeed."** He said: **"There lies ahead of you orchards which are more lush than these, and ponds of water which are more thirst-quenching than these. So come with me and I will take you there."** One group said: **"By Allâh, this person is speaking the truth. We will certainly follow him."** Another group said: **"We are happy where we are, and we will remain here."**(1)

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ and others narrated the above from al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* with additional details: when they ate, got fat, and liked the place, the man shouted and said: **"Come, let's depart because this orchard is going to be destroyed, and this water is going to be absorbed into the ground. There lies ahead of you an orchard which is more lush, with water which is more thirst-quenching."** The people in general disliked this and said: **"We do not want to change this for anything else."** These people were in the majority. The others said: **"He is as truthful now as he was previously. You ought to depart."** The majority refused. The few who went with him were saved. Those who remained did not realize anything when the enemy suddenly pounced upon them at night and they were either killed or imprisoned.

This world is actually green dung. This means that its greenery is growing on a foul smelling dunghill. O you who are low in courage! You are satisfied with an orchard on a dunghill, while the Master is calling you towards His highest Paradise: **"Are you pleased with the life of this world forsaking the Hereafter? The enjoyment of the worldly life is but little compared to the Hereafter."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 38)* Are you pleased with the things which are destroyed by decomposition over Paradise? Oh what foolishness, and what a loss! Are you happy with despicable dry straw while lush green orchards lie ahead of you?

[The Ḥadîth quoted at the beginning of this chapter continues]: **"It is an excellent aid to the person who takes it with due right**

(1) Ahmad checked it (1/267).

and spends it with due right. But if he takes it without its due right, then he is like a person who eats without being satisfied." Those who take wealth are thus divided into two categories:

Two categories of people with regard to wealth

The first category

He is similar to the animal which eats greenery. He is the one who takes it with its due right and spends it in the right place. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ says that it is an excellent aid for such a person. In other words, it is an excellent aid towards the Hereafter for the person who possesses this quality. 'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"How excellent is that virtuous wealth for a virtuous man!"** He is the one who takes it with due right and spends it with due right. His wealth conveys him to Allâh ﷻ. The person who takes wealth in a rightful manner in order to strengthen him and help him in the obedience of Allâh ﷻ, then his taking that wealth and spending it will both be acts of obedience.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"No matter what you spend provided you spend it for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, you will most certainly be rewarded for it. So much so, you will even be rewarded for the morsel of food which you place in your wife's mouth."**(1) Another Ḥadîth states: **"The food which you feed yourself is charity in your favour. The food which you feed your wife is charity in your favour. The food which you feed your children is charity in your favour. The food which you feed your servant is charity in your favour."**(2)

So all that is taken from this world with the intention of gaining strength for the Hereafter is included in the category of desiring the Hereafter and striving for it. It is not considered to be desiring this world and striving for it. Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* said: **"If you seek of this world that which would rectify you, it is not considered to be love for this world. And it is not considered to be abstention from this world if you abstain from what you really need. The one who loves this world and is overjoyed by it will experience fear of the Hereafter disappearing from his heart."**

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(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (1295).

(2) Ahmad checked it (4/131) and Al-Baihaqi (4/179).

Sa'îd ibn Jubayr said: **"Goods of deception are those which divert you from seeking the Hereafter. What does not divert you is not considered to be goods of deception. Rather, it is a means to something better."** An *'ârif* said: **"Whatever you acquire of this world with the intention of desiring this world is reprehensible. Whatever you acquire of this world with the intention of the Hereafter is not considered to be of this world."** Abû Sulaymân said: **"This world is a veil against Allâh ﷻ for His enemies, and a conveyance which conveys His friends (*auliyâ'*) to Him. Glory to the Being who made a single thing a means of attachment to Him and severance from Him."**

The second category

He is similar to the animals which graze on the crops produced by spring. These crops kill the animals because they have inflated their bellies [due to overeating] or take them to the verge of death. He is the person who acquires wealth with undue right by acquiring it through unlawful means, who is not content with it – whether he has a little or a lot – and does not satisfy himself with it. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ therefore said: **"He is like a person who eats without being satisfied."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to seek refuge from a soul which is not satisfied.

Zayd ibn Thâbit ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who makes this world his sole objective, Allâh ﷻ causes his affairs to go in disarray, causes him to see his poverty right in front of him, and he will only receive of the world what was destined for him."** The person who sees his poverty before him will always remain fearful of poverty, his heart will not experience satisfaction from anything, and he will never be satisfied with the world. This is because true wealth is wealth of the heart, and poverty is poverty of the soul. A Hadîth narrated by at-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* states: **"Wealth is in the heart, and poverty is in the heart. The person who is rich of heart will not be affected by what he experiences of the world. The person who is poor of heart will not be content no matter how much of the world he receives. His soul will be affected by its own greed."**

'Îsâ ﷺ said: **"The similitude of the person who seeks this world is like the person who drinks sea water. The more he drinks, the more thirty he becomes until it kills him."** Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh said: **"The person whose affluence is in his heart will**

always remain wealthy. The person whose affluence lies in his earnings will always remain poor. The person who goes to the creation for his needs will always remain deprived." All these statements are ratified by Aḥâdîth. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"If man had two valleys of gold, he would have sought a third one. Nothing but soil will fill the belly of man. Allâh ﷻ relents to the one who repents."** If a greedy person were to ponder over the destiny of this world, he would become content. If a hungry person were to ponder over the excessive wealth of this world, he would be filled.

Allâh ﷻ provides examples of this worldly life, its greenery, its attraction, its splendour, its constant changing and its quick end. He compares it to the crops of this land which grow from the rain water and then go through different stages of their life. Allâh ﷻ says:

"Set forth for them the parable of the worldly life: like water which We sent down from the sky on account of which the vegetation of the earth comes forth mingled with it. The following morning it is reduced to bits flying about in the air. Allâh has power over everything." *(Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 45)*

"This worldly life is only like water which We sent down from the sky, emerging thereby intermingled plants of the earth of which man and animals eat, until – when the earth assumes its splendour and is beautified, and its inhabitants think that they will have control over it – down comes Our order by night or by day and We made it a mown heap as if it had not flourished yesterday. In this way We expound the signs to those who ponder." *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 24)*

"Know that the worldly life is a play, an amusement, a show, mutual boasting among you, and a quest for more riches and children. It is like a rain whose vegetation seemed attractive to the tillers. It then dries up and you see it turning yellow. It is then reduced to trampled grass. In the Hereafter there is a severe punishment and forgiveness as well from Allâh, and His pleasure. This worldly life is nothing but an enjoyment of delusion." *(Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 20)*

"Did you not see that Allâh sent down water from the sky? He then caused the water to flow in springs of the land. Then He brings forth thereby crops of changing colours. Then when it matures, you see it [turning] yellow. Then He reduces it to bits.

Surely in this is an admonition for those who possess intelligence." *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 21)*

The world with all its greenery, splendour and attraction constantly changes and is eventually reduced to dry straw. Allâh ﷻ enumerates the splendour of the world and its attractive goods in the following verse: **"The love of desirable things has deluded the people. [Desirable things] like women, and sons, and hoarded treasures of gold and silver, and branded horses, and cattle, and agriculture. This may be enjoyed in the life of this world. And with Allâh alone is a good abode."** *(Sûrah Âl 'Imrân, 3: 14)*

This will all be reduced to soil, except for gold and silver. But no one will be able to benefit from these two metals because they will only delineate the value of things. The person who keeps them will not be able to benefit from them. He can only benefit from them when he spends them. It is for this reason that al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"The dirham and the dinar are evil companions. They only benefit you when they leave you."**

The bodies of man and all the animals are like the plants of the earth which change from one state to another. They eventually become dry and are reduced to soil. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Allâh brought you forth from the earth like a plant. He will then return you to it and bring you forth afresh."** *(Sûrah Nûh, 71: 17-18)*

وما المرء إلا كالنبات وزهره يعود رفاتا بعد ما هو ساطع

"Man is nothing but like a plant. His flower is reduced to a corpse after it had been flourishing."

Man moves from youth to old age, from good health to illness, and from existence to non-existence.

وما حالاتنا إلا ثلاث شباب ثم شيب ثم موت
وآخر ما يسمى المرء شيخا ويتلوه من الأسماء ميت

"Our stages are just three: youth, then old age, then death. The last name which a person is given is 'old man'. This is followed my the name 'deceased'."

The period of youth is very short like that of the spring flower with its splendour and freshness. When it becomes dry and white, the time for its departure has arrived. The most obvious flowers of spring is the rose. When there is a lot of whiteness on it, the time for its departure has drawn near. Wuhayb ibn al-Ward said: **"Allâh** ﷻ

has an angel who announces every day in the heavens: 'O you who are fifty years old! The time for harvesting the crop has drawn near." A Hadîth states: **"There is a time of harvest for everything. The time of harvest for my *ummah* is between sixty and seventy years."**

قـــد يـــبلغ الـــزرع منـــتهاه لا بـــد لـــزرع مـــن حـــصاد

"The crop most certainly reaches the age of its maturity. The crop has got to be harvested."

At times a crop is afflicted by a calamity before it reaches its time of harvesting and is thus destroyed. Allâh ﷻ makes reference to this: **"when the earth assumes its splendour and is beautified, and its inhabitants think that they will have control over it – down comes Our order by night or by day and We made it a mown heap as if it had not flourished yesterday. In this way We expound the signs to those who ponder."** *(Sûrah Yûnus, 10: 24)*

Maymûn ibn Mahrân said to those who were sitting around him: **"O assembly of old men! What is expected of a crop when it becomes white?"** They said: **"It has to be harvested."** He then looked towards the youth and said: **"O assembly of youth! At times a crop is afflicted by a calamity before it can be harvested."** A person said: **"The majority of people who die are the youth. The proof of this is that we see very few old people among the population."**

أيـــا بـــن آدم لا تغـــررك عافـــية علـــيك ضـــافية فالعمـــر معـــدود
مـــا أنـــت إلا كـــزرع عـــند خـــضرته بكـــل شـــيء مـــن الآفـــات مقـــصود
فـــإن ســـلمت مـــن الآفـــات أجمعهـــا فأنـــت عـــند كمـــال الأمـــر محـــصود

"O man! Do not be deceived by well-being which comes in abundance to you because life is short. You are nothing but like a plant which is green and a target of all calamities. If you are saved from all calamities, you will most certainly be harvested at the completion of your life."

Everything of this world is a reminder of the Hereafter and a pointer to it. The greenness of the plants in spring after their aridity and dryness in winter, and the greenness of the trees and their bearing fruit after they were dry and woody are all pointers to the resurrection of the dead from the ground. Allâh ﷻ mentions this in several places in the Qur'ân:

"You see the earth lying barren. Then no sooner We send water upon it, it stirs and swells and puts forth every type of radiant plant. All this is solely because Allâh alone is the truth, He gives life to the dead, and He has power over everything. That the [Final] Hour is to come – there is no doubt in it. And that Allâh shall raise those who are lying in the graves." *(Sûrah al-Ḥajj, 22: 5-7)*

"We sent down from the heaven blessed water. We caused to grow thereby orchards and harvested grain. And tall date palms whose spathes are in layers. [All this] as a sustenance for the servants [of Allâh]. We give life therewith to a dead land. Such will be the resurrection [from the graves]." *(Sûrah Qâf, 50: 9-11)*

"It is He who sends winds bearing glad tidings prior to the rains. When the winds have brought heavy clouds, We drive the clouds to a dead land. We then send down rain from that cloud. We then bring forth there from every type of fruit. In like manner We shall bring forth the dead so that you may ponder." *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 57)*

Abû Razîn ﷺ asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"How will Allâh ﷻ revive the dead? Is there a sign of this in His creation?"** He replied: **"Did you pass by the valley of your people when it was dry and arid? And then did you pass it when it was green and vibrant?"** He replied: **"Yes."** He said: **"That is how Allâh ﷻ will revive the dead, and that is His sign in His creation."**(1)

The short life span of plants and fruits, the returning of the land to its arid state, and the trees to their previous state are all like the return of man to the soil from which he was created after he had been a living being.

The seasons of the year remind one of the Hereafter. The intense heat of summer reminds one of the heat of Hell. The heat of summer is actually a hot wind from Hell. The severe cold of winter reminds one of the bitter cold of Hell. The cold of this world is actually from the bitter cold of Hell. During autumn, the plucking of the remaining fruits is completed and these are stored in the houses. This serves as warning of the harvesting of the fruits of our deeds in the Hereafter.

As for spring, it is the best season of the year. It reminds one of

(1) Ahmad checked it (4/11) and At-Tabarany (19/208).

the comforts of Paradise and its wholesome life. This ought to urge a believer to prepare to seek Paradise through good deeds. A pious predecessor used to go to the market when aromatic plants and fruits are available. He would stop, look at all of them, ponder, and then ask Allâh ﷻ for Paradise. Sa'îd ibn Jubayr passed by one of the king's sons who was sitting in his assembly with all the pomp and glory of kings. They all greeted him [Sa'îd]. When he was at a distance from them, he began crying profusely and said: **"These youngsters reminded me of the inhabitants of Paradise."**

Silah ibn Ashyam married Mu'âdhah al-'Adawîyyah. Both of them were from among the senior pious people. His nephew took him to a public bath and then took him to his wife who was in a house which was perfumed and fully furnished. Both, husband and wife, spent the time offering salâh till the morning. His nephew then came and asked him about his night [with his bride]. He said: **"Yesterday you took me to a place which reminded me of Hell [referring to the public bath which is very hot]. Then at night you took me to a place which reminded me of Paradise. I thus continued thinking of Paradise and Hell till the morning."**

'Abd al-Wahid ibn Zayd prepared a meal for his friends. 'Utbah, a youngster, was standing at the service of these guests while he himself was fasting. 'Abd al-Wâhid began stealing glances at him while tears were flowing from 'Utbah. Later on he asked him the reason for his crying. He replied: **"I was thinking of the dining tables of Paradise and the youngsters who will be standing at the beck and call of those eating there."** The world has been created as a mirror from which we look at the Hereafter. It is not created for us to merely look at it and stand there with it.

كفـــى حـــزنا أن لا أعـــاين بقعـــة مـــن الأرض إلا ازددت شـــوقا إلـــيكم

وإنـي متـى مـا طـاب لـي خفـض عيـشة تذكـــرت أيامـــا مـــضت لـــي لـــديكم

"It is enough grief for me to see a land which only serves to increase my yearning for you. Whenever I feel depressed with my life, I think of the past days which I spent with you."

Looking carefully and pondering over the condition of plants can enable a believer to gauge the greatness of his Creator, and His perfect power and mercy. In so doing, the ecstasy of the hearts increases in their love for Him. Allâh ﷻ makes reference to this: **"It is He who sent down water from the sky. We then brought forth through it every growing thing. We then brought forth out of it**

green plantations from which We produce grains heaped upon each other. And from the spathe of the date-palm [We produce] low-hanging branches of dates, and [We produce] gardens of grapes, and of the olive, and of the pomegranate: similar to each other and different as well. Look at the fruit of each tree when it bears fruit, and when it ripens. In all this there are signs for the believers." *(Sûrah al-An'âm, 6: 99)*

The entire spring season is a reminder which reminds one of the greatness of its Creator and His perfect power. It creates a yearning to be in His pure presence in His abode of beneficence. Ibn Sam'ûn said in his description of spring: **"Its ground is silk, its breathing is a fragrant aroma, and its entire life-span is a reminder and an admonishment."**

Another person said: **"In spring the ground is emeralds, the trees are jewels, the air is musk, its gentle breeze is a perfume, the water is wine, the birds are songstresses, and everything points to the perfection of the Creator and testifies to His oneness."**

A person said these lines about the spring season:

يـــا قومـــنا فـــاح الـــربيع ... ولاح للأحـــــباب نجـــــدُ
الزهـــــر مـــــسك والـــــريا ... ض أريـــضة والمـــاء جعـــدُ
والظـــــل منـــــثور وفـــــي ... جـــيد الـــشقائق مـــنه عقـــدُ
هـــــذا النـــــسيم مُعَنبـــــر ... وضـــباب هـــذا الـــنوء نـــدُّ
والغـــصن يـــرقص والغـــديـ ... ـــر مـــصفق والـــورق تـــشدو
والجـــو بعـــضٌ مـــنه يـــا ... قـــــوت وبعـــــض لا زَوَرْدُ
والكـــل يـــشهد أن صـــا ... نعـــه قديـــر وهـــو فـــرد

"O my people! Spring is emanating a fragrance and Najd is coming into view for the beloveds. The flowers are dispelling the fragrance of musk, the orchards are thriving, and the water is plentiful. The shadow is scattered and there are necklaces around the necks of my sisters. This gentle breeze has the fragrance of 'amber, and the mist which this wind brings has the frangrance of incence. The branches are dancing, the streams are clapping, and the leaves are singing. Some of the sky is sapphire-blue in colour, and some of it is azure. Everything is bearing testimony to the fact that the Creator is all-powerful,

and One."

Another poet says:

الطل في سلك الغصون كلؤلؤ رطب يصافحه النسيم فيسقط

والطير يقرأ والغدير صحيفة والريح يكتب والغمام يقنط

"The dew on the branches is like wet pearls which the gently breeze blows over and causes to fall. The birds are singing, the pond is like a plate [flat and calm], the wind is blowing and the clouds are spreading."

Someone saw a dream in which he saw one of the past poets who passed away. He asked him as to how he fared and he said: **"I was forgiven because of some couplets which I said about the narcissus."** The lines are:

تفكر في نبات الأرض وانظر إلى آثار ما صنع المليك

عيون من لجين ناظرات بأحداق هي الذهب السبيك

على قضب الزبرجد شاهدات بأن الله ليس له شريك

"Reflect over the plants of the land and look at the effects which the King produced. Eyes of silver are looking with pupils which are gold ingots. They are on branches of chrysolite. They are all bearing testimony that Allâh has no partner."

Glory to the Being to whom the creations praise and fill the universe with His praise. The constellations testify to His oneness and manifest it. The plants glorify him individually and collectively, so do the trees – both old and new. The birds magnify His greatness on the tree tops and the one who hears this is enraptured. Every time the young nightingale learns the lesson of showing gratitude to Him, the senior nightingale teaches it to praise Him. Each time the dove proclaims its lamentation on the upper branches, the one who is madly in love is prompted to proclaim his lamentation and start his own singing. **"Do they not see how Allâh originates the creation, He will then cause it to return."** *(Sûrah al-'Ankabût, 29: 19)*

O how astonishing! Here is a person witnessing all His wisdom and enjoying all His bounties, yet he does not thank Him for His bounties and does not take admonition from His wisdom. More astonishing than this is for the Benefactor to be disobeyed with the very bounties which He provided. Here is a branch of the grape-vine

which remains dry throughout winter. With the arrival of spring, water spreads through it and it becomes green. It first produces sour grapes and people derive benefit from it by using it in their cooking and juicing. When the grapes become ripe and sweet, people benefit from its sweetness both in its fresh state and also when it is dried [into raisins and sultanas]. They extract from it a substance from whose sweetness they derive benefit throughout the year. The vinegar which they produce from the sour grapes is the best vinegar. All these different stages and changes ought to cause an intelligent person to be astonished and surprised at the manufacture of its Maker and the power of its Creator. He ought to devote his intelligence to pondering over these bounties and expressing gratitude for them. As for the ignorant person, he takes the grapes and makes it into wine which covers his intellect which ought to have been used for pondering and expressing gratitude. He becomes so intoxicated that he forgets his Creator who provided him with all these bounties. When he becomes intoxicated, he can neither remember Him nor thank Him. Rather, he forgets the One who created him and provided for him. He thus does not recognize Him at all while in his state of intoxication. This is the limit of showing ingratitude to the bounties of Allâh ﷻ.

فواعجبا كيف يعصي الإله أم كيف يجحده الجاحد

ولله في كل تحريكة وتسكينة أبدا شاهد

وفي كل شيء له آية تدل على أنه واحد

"O how astonishing! How can a person disobey Allâh! Or how can a person deny Him when Allâh is present every time he is in motion and every time he is motionless. In everything there is a sign which shows that He is One."

One of the things worth pondering over after looking at the lifeless earth which Allâh ﷻ revived in spring by sending rains to it is that one can have hope in His generosity to revive the hearts which have become dead because of sins and long periods of heedlessness. A person can achieve this by listening to the admonition and reminder which descends from the heavens. Allâh ﷻ makes reference to this: **"Has the time not come for the believers that their hearts should feel humble at the remembrance of Allâh and what has come down of the true religion...Know that Allâh gives life to the earth after it had become dead."** *(Sûrah al-Hadîd, 57: 16-17)* In this there is reference to the fact that the Being who is able to

revive the earth with rains after its death, is able to revive hard lifeless hearts through admonition and reminder. Perhaps a single moment of His affection and a single breeze of His kindness may rectify all the corruption that is in the hearts. Allâh ﷻ is most affectionate, most generous.

عسى فرج يأتي به الله إنه ... له كل يوم في خليقته أمر
إذا اشتد عسر فارج يسرا فإنه ... قضى الله أن العسر يتبعه اليسر

"Perhaps Allâh ﷻ will bring relief. Surely He decides something everyday in favour of His creation. When the difficulty becomes intense, hope for ease because Allâh ﷻ has decreed that difficulty is followed by ease."

It may well be that the Being who revived the dead land with rain may revive the dead hearts with remembrance (*dhikr*). A breeze of His mercy may blow, and the person who gets some of this good fortune will never experience misfortune again.

إذا ما تجدد فصل الربيع ... تجدد للقلب فضل الرجاء
عسى الحالُ يصلح بعد الذنوب ... كما الأرض تهتز بعد الشتاء
ومن ذا الذي ليس يرجوك رب ... ربع عطائك رحبُ الفناء

"When the spring season returns, the heart is rekindled with the spirit of hope. Perhaps the condition will be rectified after all these sins, just as the land becomes vibrant after winter. Who is there who cannot have hopes in You, O Lord, when the extent of Your bestowal is as wide as the fields?!"

SUMMER

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The Hell-fire complained to its Lord saying: 'O my Lord! Part of me has devoured another part [because of the intense heat].' Allâh ﷻ thus permitted it to take two breaths, one in winter and another in summer. The severest heat which you experience is from the hot wind of Hell. And the severest cold which you experience is from the bitter cold of Hell."**(1)

There is no doubt that Allâh ﷻ created two abodes for His servants in which He recompenses His servants for their deeds. They

(1) Al-Bukhari (3260) and Muslim (617).

shall remain in both abodes forever without experiencing death. He also created another immediate abode for the carrying of deeds, and placed life and death in it. He put His servants through a test in this abode by ordering them to do certain things and prohibiting them for certain things. He imposed on them to believe in the unseen. Belief in the unseen includes belief in recompense, and the two abodes which are created for this purpose. He revealed Books and sent Messengers for this purpose. He established clear proofs for the unseen regarding which He ordered us to believe in. He also provided signs and indications which prove the existence of these two abodes of recompense. One of these two abodes which is created for recompense is an abode of absolute comfort – it has no pain whatsoever in it. The other is the abode of absolute punishment – there is no comfort whatsoever in it.

This fleeting abode [world] is intermingled with comfort and pain. All the comforts which are here remind a person of the comforts of Paradise. And all the pain that is here reminds a person of the pains of Hell. Allâh ﷻ placed many things in this abode which remind us of the eternal and yet-to-come unseen abode.

There are certain times and places which remind us of Paradise. As for the places, Allâh ﷻ created certain countries, like Syria and other places, which contain such foods, drinks, clothes, and other things which remind a person of the comforts of the Hereafter. As for the times, the excellence of spring reminds a person of the comforts and excellence of Paradise. The coolness which is experienced at the time of pre-dawn reminds a person of the coolness of Paradise.

At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates a Hadîth: **"Paradise is opened every night at the time of pre-dawn. Allâh ﷻ looks at it and says: 'Increase in your goodness for your inhabitants.' It thus increases in its goodness. That is the coolness of the pre-dawn which people experience."** Sa'îd al-Jarîrî narrates from Sa'îd ibn Abî al-Hasan that Dâ'ûd ﷺ said: **"O Jibra'îl! Which part of the night is the most superior?"** He replied: **"I do not know. However, the Throne [of Allâh ﷻ] trembles at the time of pre-dawn. Don't you see the fragrance of every tree emanating [at that time]?"**

Then there are things which remind us of the Hell-fire. Allâh ﷻ created many things in this world which remind us of the Hell-fire which is prepared for those who disobey Him. These include the pains and punishments from places, times, bodies, etc. As for places, we find many of them are extremely hot or extremely cold. The cold

of these places remind us of the bitter cold of Hell. The heat of these places remind us of the hot winds of Hell. There are some buildings which remind us of the Hell-fire. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ said: **"What an excellent place the bath is! A believer enters it, removes all the filth from his body, and seeks refuge in Allâh ﷻ from the Hell-fire."** The pious predecessors used to remember the Hell-fire when they entered the bath. This would cause them to engage in worship.

Ibn Wahb entered the bath and heard someone reading this verse: **"When they will dispute with each other in the fire."** *(Sûrah al-Mu'min/al-Ghâfir, 40: 47)* When he heard this, he fell unconscious.

Silah ibn Ashyam got married and entered the bath. He then went to his bride that night and continued offering salâh till the morning. He said: **"Yesterday I went to a place which reminded me of the Hell-fire, and last night I went to a place which reminded me of Paradise. I continued pondering over these two places till the morning."**

A pious predecessor used to enter the bath, and when he experienced discomfort in it, he would say: **"O You who are most kind and most merciful! Be kind to us and protect us from the punishment of the intense heat [of the Hell-fire]."**

A pious person poured water from the bath onto his head and found that it was extremely hot. He began crying and said: **"I thought of this verse: 'Boiling water is poured over their heads.'** *(Sûrah al-Hajj, 22: 19)***"**

Every single thing in this world points to its Maker, reminds us of Him, and points to His attributes. All the comforts and luxuries in this world point to the generosity of their Creator, His bounty, His kindness and His affection. All the pains, difficulties and hardships point to His severe punishment, stern seizing, subjugation and revenge. The changing conditions of the world from hot to cold, night to day, etc. all point to the fleeting and temporary nature of this world.

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: The Companions ﷺ used to say: **"All praise is due to Allâh, the beloved who, if He were to make the** creation constant without any changes, the person who doubts about the existence of Allâh ﷻ would have said: 'If this creation had a creator, he would have caused it to go through changes.' Allâh ﷻ caused many changes as you see. He produces light which covers the

East and West. He provides the means of livelihood and a glittering light [the sun] in the day. Then when He wills, He takes away that creation [the sun] and brings darkness which pervades East and West. He provides comfort in the night, and gives us stars and the shining moon. When He wills, He creates an edifice in which He places rain, lightning, thunder, and thunderbolts. He then directs these things to the creation whenever He wills. When He wills, He brings cold which causes people to shiver. When He wills, He takes that cold away and brings such intense heat that it leaves people gasping for breath. He does all this so that people may realize that this universe has a Lord who displays all these signs. In like manner, He can take away the world and bring the Hereafter.

Khalîfah al-'Abdî said: **"If Allâh ﷻ were to be worshipped solely** on the basis of being seen, no one would have worshipped Him. However, the believers pondered over the arrival of this night when it comes and pervades everything and fills everything, and the power of the day is wiped out. Then they pondered over this day when it arrives, fills and pervades everything, and the power of the night is wiped out. They pondered over the verse: **'the clouds that are subservient to His command between the heaven and earth'** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 164)* and over the verse: **'the ships that sail upon the ocean with things of benefit for mankind'** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 164)*, and they pondered over the coming of winter and summer. The believers continued pondering over all the things which their Lord created for them to the extent that their hearts were filled with conviction and they were worshipping Allâh ﷻ as if they were seeing Him. The heat and cold certainly remind you of what you hope for [Paradise] and what you fear [Hell]. Whatever the *'ârifûn* see of this world, it reminds them of the same good and well-being which Allâh ﷻ promised of the Hereafter.

قلـــوب العارفـــين لهـــا عـــيون تـــرى مـــا لا يـــراه الناظـــرونا

"The hearts of the *'ârifûn* have eyes which see what others cannot see."

The heat and cold remind us of the intense heat and bitter cold of Hell. The above Hadîth tells us that this is because of the two breaths which Hell takes during these times. Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Every cold which destroys something is because of the breathing of Hell. Every heat which destroys something is because of the breathing of Hell."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When the heat is severe, offer salâh when it becomes cool**

because the intensity of the heat is from the heat of Hell."(1) 'Uthmân ad-Dârimînî narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When it is an intensely hot day and a person says: 'There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. It is so hot today. O Allâh! Save me from the heat of Hell.' Allâh ﷻ says to Hell: 'One of My servants sought refuge in Me from you, and I have given him refuge.' When it is a severely cold day and a person says: 'There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. It is so cold today. O Allâh! Save me from the bitter cold of Hell.' Allâh ﷻ says to Hell: 'One of My servants sought refuge in Me from your bitter cold. I make you witness to the fact that I have given him refuge.'"** The Companions ﷺ asked: **"What is the *zamharîr* of Hell?"** He said: **"It is a house in which the unbeliever is cast and thus experiences its bitter cold."**

The gates of Hell are locked, but are opened occasionally. All the gates of Hell are opened at mid-day. It is for this reason that the heat intensifies at this time, and it is a reminder of the fire of Hell.

Creations which remind us of the Hell-fire

The sun

There are many creations in this world which remind us of the Hell-fire. Among them is the sun when its heat is intense. It is said that it was created from Hell and shall return to it. At-Tabarânî *rahimahullâh* narrates that there was a man during the era of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ who removed his clothes and began rolling on the intensely hot ground, saying to himself: **"Taste this heat, the heat of Hell is far more intense. You lie [asleep] like a corpse at night, and act very brave during the day."** He noticed the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ looking at him so he said: **"O Messenger of Allâh! I was overcome by my self."** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"All the doors of the heavens have been opened for you and Allâh ﷻ is boasting about you before the angels."**

As for appearing before the sun as a form of worship, this is not permitted. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw Abû Isrâ'îl standing in the sun so he asked him to sit in the shade. This person had taken a vow of standing in the sun while he was fasting. The Messenger of

(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (533) and Muslim (615).

Allâh ﷻ ordered him to complete his fast only.(1) Appearing in the sun [as a form of worship] is only permitted to a person in *iḥrâm*. Ibn ʻUmar ﷺ said to a *muḥrim* (person in *iḥrâm*) who was sitting in the shade: **"Go out into the hot sun for the Being for whom you donned your *iḥrâm*."** A pious predecessor used to abstain from going into the shade when he was in *iḥrâm*. Someone said to him: **"Why don't you practise on the leeway (*rukhṣah*) [provided by the Sharîʻah]?"** He replied with the following lines:

ضحيت لـه كـي أسـتظل بظلـه إذا الظـل أضـحى فـي القـيامة قالـصا

فـوا أسـفا إن كـان سـعيك خائـبا ووا أسـفا إن كـان حظـك ناقـصا

"I went out in the sun for Him so that I may resort to His shade on the day of Resurrection when all shade would have dwindled. O how sorrowful if all your efforts went in vain! O how sorrowful if there is a deficiency in your share!

We are also ordered to exercise patience over the intense heat when we go out for jihad. Allâh ﷻ says with reference to the hypocrites: **"They say: 'Do not travel in the heat.' Say: 'The fire of Hell is more intense.' If only they possessed understanding."** *(Sûrah at-Taubah, 9: 81)* Similar is the ruling with regard to walking to the musjid for the Friday prayer, other congregational ṣalâhs, attending funeral prayers, and other acts of obedience. One can even sit in the sun waiting to perform these acts if there is no shade available.

A pious predecessor went for the Friday prayer and saw that all the shady place had been taken away. He therefore sat in the sun. A person sitting in the shade called to him to come and sit with him. He refused because it would have meant having to walk over people. He then recited this verse: **"bear with patience whatever befalls you. Surely these are acts of courage."** *(Sûrah Luqmân, 31: 17)*

It was the practice of a pious predecessor that whenever he returned from the Friday prayer and went out into the blazing sun, he would think of how the people would depart from the accounting of deeds and proceed either towards Paradise or Hell. This is because the Final Hour will take place on a Friday, and it is by mid-day that the people destined for Paradise will proceed to Paradise and have a siesta there, and those destined to Hell will proceed to Hell. This is

(1) Al-Bukhari checked it (6704).

stated by Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ, and he recited this verse: **"On that day, the inhabitants of Paradise shall have an excellent abode and an excellent place of siesta."** *(Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 24)*

The person who is in the heat of the sun ought to think of the heat on the day of Resurrection. The sun will be brought closer to the people on that day and its heat will be increased. The person who cannot bear the heat of the sun in this world must ensure that he abstains from deeds which would make him eligible for entry into the Hell-fire. This is because no one has the strength and patience to bear its heat.

Qatâdah *raḥimahullâh* said while talking about the drink of the inmates of Hell: **"It is the pus which flows from the skin and flesh. Do you think you have anything to ransom you from it or do you think you have the patience to bear it? O people! Obedience of Allâh ﷻ is easier for you. You should therefore obey Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ."**

نسيت لظى عند ارتكابك للهوى وأنت توقي حرَّ شمس الهواجر

كأنك لم تدفن حميما ولم تكن له في سياق الموت يوما بحاضر

"You forgot the blazing fire when you were following your desires, yet you try to save yourself from the heat of the afternoon sun. It is as though you never buried a close friend [and thereby take admonition from his death], and you will never be presented for death."

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *raḥimahullâh* saw some people fleeing from the sun towards some shade in a funeral, and they were safeguarding themselves against the dust. He began crying and said:

من كان حين تصيب الشمسُ جبهته أو الغبار يخاف الشين والشعثا

ويألف الظل كي تبقى بشاشته فسوف يسكن يوما راغما جدثا

في ظل مقفرة غبراء مظلمة يطيل تحت الثرى في غمها اللبثا

تجهزي بجهاز تبلغين به يا نفس قبل الردى لم تخلقي عبثا

"The person who fears disfigurement and becoming dishevelled when the sun strikes his forehead or when dust falls on him, and he resorts to the shade to protect his appearance shall one day inhabit a grave reluctantly, in the shade of a dusty, deserted and dark place. He will remain in this sorrowful place beneath the soil for a long time. O soul! Take sufficient

provisions [of good deeds] which would convey you there, before you are disgraced. You have not been created in vain."

Fasting

Fasting during the intense heat increases the reward because of the thirst which is experienced. Mu'âdh ibn Jabal ﷺ expressed sorrow at the time of his death over the fact that he is going to miss out on the thirst of the heat. Similar was the case with other pious predecessors. It is said that Abû Bakr as-Siddîq ﷺ used to fast during summer and abstain from fasting in winter.

When 'Umar ﷺ was departing from this world, he advised his son, 'Abdullâh ﷺ, saying: **"Adhere strictly to the salient traits of îmân."** The first of these traits which he enumerated was fasting during the intense heat of summer.

Al-Qâsim ibn Muhammad said: **"'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* used to fast during the intense heat."** Someone asked him: **"Why was she doing that?"** He replied: **"She was hastening death."**

Majma' at-Taymî used to fast in summer to the extent that he would fall down.

A pious woman of the past used to wait for the hottest days and fast during such days. When anyone asked her the reason for this, she would say: **"When an item is cheap, everyone purchases it."** She was making reference to the fact that she opted for a deed which very few people are able to do because it is so difficult for them. This shows her high courage.

Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arîyy ﷺ was on a ship when he heard someone calling out: **"O people on the ship! Stop."** He said this three times. So Abû Mûsâ ﷺ said: **"How can we stop? Can't you see where we are? How can we stop the ship?"** He said: **"Should I not inform you of the decree of Allâh ﷻ which He decreed upon Himself?"** He said: **"Indeed, tell us."** He said: **"Allâh ﷻ decreed upon Himself that if anyone stays thirsty on a hot day for the sake of Allâh ﷻ, He makes it a duty upon Himself to quench his thirst on the day of Resurrection."** Abû Mûsâ ﷺ would thus wait for such an intensely hot day which man can barely tolerate and fast **on that day."**

Ka'b ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ said to Mûsâ ﷺ: 'I have taken an oath to Myself that on the day of Resurrection, I will quench the thirst of the person who bears thirst for My sake."**

A person said: **"The following is written in the Taurâh: 'Glad tidings to the person who stays hungry for the greatest day of satiation. Glad tidings to the person who remains thirsty for the greatest day of thirst-quenching."**

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"The doe-eyed damsel (*hur*) will say to the friend of Allâh ﷻ while he is lying with her on the bank of a river of wine in Paradise. She will be passing him a cup while he is thoroughly enjoying himself, and she will say to him: 'Do you know on which day Allâh ﷻ got me married to you?' Allâh ﷻ was looking at you on an extremely hot and long day, while you were experiencing intense thirst because of the severe heat. Allâh ﷻ boasted about you to the angels saying: 'Look at My servant. He left his wife, pleasure, food and drink for My sake, and out of yearning for the reward which I have in store. Bear witness that I have forgiven him.' Allâh ﷻ forgave you on that day and got me married to you.'"**

When 'Âmir ibn 'Abd Qays travelled from Basra to Syria, Mu'âwiyah ﷺ asked him to present his needs to him, but he refused. When Mu'âwiyah ﷺ persisted, he said: **"All I need is for you to return the heat of Basra to me so that I could feel the severity of fasting. I find it easy to fast in your country."**

Al-Hajjâj stopped over at an oasis between Makkah and Madînah, and asked for his food. He saw a Bedouin and invited him to eat with him. The Bedouin said: **"Someone better than you invited me, and I have already accepted his invitation."** Al-Hajjâj asked: **"Who is that?"** He replied: **"Allâh. He invited me to fast, and I am fasting."** He asked: **"In this intense heat?!"** He replied: **"Yes. I am fasting in preparation for a day which is going to be much hotter than this."** Al-Hajjâj said: **"Open your fast now, and you can fast tomorrow."** He said: **"I will do that if you can guarantee that I will live till tomorrow."** Al-Hajjâj said: **"I cannot guarantee that."** He said: **"How can you ask me to do something immediately and defer it for a later stage while you cannot guarantee it?"**

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ went on a journey with his companions, and on the way laid out their dining mat. A shepherd passed by them so they invited him to join them in the meal. He said: **"I am fasting."** Ibn 'Umar ﷺ said: **"You are fasting on an intensely hot day like this, in these mountain passes, and while tending to these sheep!?"** He replied: **"I am trying to do as much as I can during these**

empty days of mine." Ibn 'Umar ﷺ was most astonished by him, and said: **"Will you sell us one of your sheep and we will provide you with some of its meat so that you could open your fast with it? And we will pay you the price of that sheep?"** He replied: **"The sheep do not belong to me, they belong to my master."** He said: **"What will happen if you were to tell your master that a wolf ate the sheep?"** The shepherd continued on his way, looking towards the sky and saying: **"Then where is Allâh?"** Ibn 'Umar ﷺ continued repeating these words of the shepherd. When he came to Madînah, he called for the shepherd's master, purchased the sheep and the shepherd from him, freed the shepherd, and gave all the sheep to him.

Rauḥ ibn Zanbâ' stopped over at a place between Makkah and Madînah on a very hot day. A shepherd descended from the mountain, so he said to him: **"O shepherd! Come eat."** He said: **"I am fasting."** He asked: **"Are you fasting on a hot day like this?"** He replied: **"Should I let my days go to waste?"** Rauḥ said: **"O shepherd! You have certainly been holding back your days while Rauḥ ibn Zanbâ' has been wasting them away."**

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ used to keep optional fasts to the extent that he would fall unconscious. But he would not break his fast. Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* used to fast until he would fall unconscious. He would then wipe water over his face. He was asked about a fasting person who feels extremely hot. He said: **"He may soak a cloth in water and cool himself with it, and pour water over himself."**

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was at al-'Irj, pouring water over his head while he was fasting. Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ used to say: **"Fast on an intensely hot day in preparation for the heat of the day of Resurrection. Offer two rak'ahs of ṣalâh in the darkness of the night in preparation for the darkness of the grave."**

Abû ad-Dardâ' ﷺ said: **"I remember when I was with the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ on one of his journeys on an intensely hot day. There were some who were placing their hands on their heads because of the intense heat. There was none among all of us who was fasting except for the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and 'Abdullâh ibn Rawâḥah."** Another narration states: **"This was in the month of Ramaḍân."**

When the fasting people bear hunger and thirst in the intense heat, Allâh ﷻ sets aside for them a special door of Paradise. It is the

door known as ar-Rayyân. The person who enters it shall drink, and the person who drinks will never experience thirst again. Once they have passed through this door, it will be locked and no one else will be able to enter through it.

Thunderbolts and whirlwinds

At times certain events take place which remind us of the Hell-fire, e.g. thunderbolts, and hot winds which burn crops. Allâh ﷻ says: **"He sends thunderbolts and afflicts thereby whomever He wills."** *(Sûrah ar-Ra'd, 13: 13)* It is related that thunderbolts are actually pieces of fire which fly at the time when Allâh ﷻ becomes extremely angry.(1) Allâh ﷻ says: **"Thereafter a whirlwind in which there is a fire befalls that orchard, whereby it is burnt."** The Arabic word *i'ṣâr* refers to a whirlwind in which there is a fire. The word *ṣirr* refers to a whirlwind which is intensely cold. Allâh ﷻ punished the people of Shu'ayb ﷺ with a *ẓullah* (a shadow or a gloomy cloud). It is said that a heat seized them and took their breath away. So they went out of their houses into the desert. A cloud came, shaded them and they experienced some coolness. So they all gathered under the cloud. A fire rained down on them from that cloud and burnt all of them.

All these punishments are because of sins. They are actually preludes and examples of the punishments of Hell.

Among the things which point to Paradise and Hell are the things which Allâh ﷻ hastens in this world for those who obey Him and those who disobey Him. Allâh ﷻ hastens for His friends and His obedient servants fragrances of the comforts of Paradise which they experience and witness with their hearts. These are things which can neither be described nor encompassed by references. One of them said: **"At times I experience such ecstasy that I think to myself that if the people of Paradise experience anything similar to what I am experiencing, then they are indeed enjoying a good life."**

Abû Sulaymân said: **"Those who spend the night in worship experience more enjoyment than those who are occupied in their play and amusement."** A person said: **"Pleasure is the greatest door of Allâh ﷻ, it is the Paradise of the world, and the comfort of the ardent worshippers."**

(1) At-Tirmidhi checked it (3117) and Ahmad (2479).

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Whoever did good, be it man or woman, and is a believer, to him We will give a good life."** *(Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 97)* Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Allâh ﷻ shall bestow him with obedience whose enjoyment he will experience in his heart. The people of piety are in comfort no matter where they are: in this world, in the grave, and in the Hereafter."**

العـــيش عيـــشهم والملـــك ملكهـــم مـــا الـــناس إلا هـــم بانـــوا أو اقتـــربوا

"True life is the life which they lead, and true kingdom is the kingdom which they enjoy. The rest of the people are either far away or still approaching."

As for those who disobey Allâh ﷻ and turn away from Him, Allâh ﷻ hastens upon them some samples of the punishments of Hell in this world. Some of them are known by experience. You can well imagine the misery of constriction and restriction which they experience from the punishments for sinning which are hastened to them in this world even if it may be after some time of their disobedience. This is from the winds of Hell which are hastened to them. They are then transferred to an abode which is worse and more constricted than this. It is for this reason that the grave becomes so constricted on some of them that their ribs interlock, a door of the Hell-fire is opened to them, and its hot wind comes to them. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Whoever turns away from My remembrance, for him is a life of constriction..."** *(Sûrah Tâ Hâ, 20: 124)* A Hadîth explains this as punishment of the grave. They will then proceed to the constriction of Hell. Allâh ﷻ says: **"When they are flung into a narrow space inside it [Hell], chained all together, they will cry out for death there and then. Do not cry out for one death today, rather cry out for many deaths."** *(Sûrah al-Furqân, 25: 13-14)*

Fever

The fever which afflicts man is also from among the things in this world which remind one of the Hell-fire. A fever is actually an internal fire. Some fevers are from the hot winds of Hell while others are from the bitter cold of Hell. Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates a Hadîth which refers to the fever as being a share of a believer which comes from the Hell-fire.(1)

(1) Checked by Ahmad (9384) and Ibn Majah (3470).

This means that a fever atones for the sins of a believer and purifies him from them just as the bellows purifies the scum from steel. When a believer is purified of his sins in this world, he will not experience the heat of the Hell-fire when he passes by it on the day of Resurrection. This is because people's experiencing its heat when they pass by it will be according to their sins. The person who is pure of sins in this world will cross the *Sirâṭ* with the speed of lightning and as fast as the wind. He will not experience any of the heat of the Hell-fire nor perceive it. The Hell-fire shall say to the believer: **"O believer! Pass, because your lustre (*nûr*) has extinguished my flames."**

Imam Aḥmad *raḥimahullâh* quotes a Ḥadîth from Jâbir ﷺ: **"When they enter it, it will be cool and a source peace for them as it was for Ibrâhîm ﷺ. In fact, the Hell-fire will clamour from their coolness."**

Fire

One of the greatest things which reminds us of the Hell-fire in this world is fire itself. Allâh ﷻ says: **"It is We who made it a reminder and an article of use for the jungle-dwellers."** *(Sûrah al-Wâqi'ah, 56: 73)* In other words, the fire of this world reminds us of the Hell-fire. Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ passed by some blacksmiths who had just taken out steel from the fire. He stood watching them and began crying. It is related that he passed by a person who blows the bellows and fell down. Always used to stand by the blacksmiths and look at how they blow the bellows. When he would hear the sound of the fire he would scream and fall down. Similar was the case with ar-Rabî' ibn Khathyam. Many pious predecessors used to go to the blacksmiths to see what they were doing with the steel. They would cry and seek refuge in Allâh ﷻ from the Hell-fire.

'Aṭâ' as-Sulaymî saw a woman who had just heated her oven and he fell unconscious. Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* said: **"There were times when a fire would be lit for 'Umar ﷺ and he would take his hand close to it, and say to himself: 'O Ibn al-Khaṭṭâb! Do you think you can endure this?'"**

Al-Aḥnaf ibn Qays would come to a lamp and place his finger in it, saying: **"Taste this."** He would then reprimand himself over his sins. An ardent worshipper kindled a fire in front of him and began reprimanding himself. He continued reprimanding himself until he died.

The fire of this world is one seventieth part of the fire of Hell. It was washed in the ocean two times until it glittered and its heat subsided a bit. If this was not done to it, people would not have been able to derive any benefit from it in this world. It supplicates to Allâh ﷻ not to return it to the Hell-fire.

A pious predecessor said: **"If the inmates of the Hell-fire were removed from it and cast into the fire of this world, they would have a siesta in it for two thousand years."** In other words, they would sleep in it and consider it to be cool.

'Umar ﷺ used to say: **"Remember the Hell-fire constantly because its heat is intense, its pit is deep, and its rods are of iron."** It was the practice of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ and others of the past that when they drank cool water, they would cry and think of the wish of the inmates of Hell who would wish for cool water, and it would be denied to them. They will say to the inhabitants of Paradise: **"Pour a little water upon us or some of the sustenance that Allâh has given you."** *(Sûrah al-A'râf, 7: 50)* They will say to them: **"Allâh has barred both things from the unbelievers."**

The greatest calamity shall be when the Hell-fire will be shut upon its inmates and they will lose all hope of freedom. It is the greatest terror which the people of Paradise will be safe from. **"Those for whom goodness has been determined from Us since before – they shall remain far from it."** *(Sûrah al-Ambiyâ', 21: 101)*

لـــو أبـــصرت عيـــناك أهـــل الـــشقا ... ســـيقوا إلـــى الـــنار وقـــد أحـــرقوا

شـــرابهم المهـــل فـــي قعـــرها ... إذا خالفـــوا الرســـل ومـــا صـــدقوا

تقـــول أخـــراهم لأولاهـــم ... فـــي لجـــج المهـــل وقـــد أغـــرقوا

قـــد كنـــتم خوفـــتم حـــرها ... لكـــن مـــن النيـــران لـــم تفـــرقوا

وجـــيء بالنيـــران مذمـــومة ... شـــرارها مـــن حـــولها محـــدق

وقـــيل للنيـــران أن أحرقـــي ... وقـــيل للخـــزان أن أطـــبقوا

"If your eyes were to behold the wretched ones when they are herded into the fire and burnt. Their drink in its pit shall be pus because they opposed the Messengers and did not believe them. Those who enter Hell later shall say to those who entered before them, while they are already drowning in the deep pit of pus: 'You were warned against its heat but you did not fear the fire.' The despicable fire will be brought and its flames will

surround them from all round. The fire will be ordered: 'Burn them', and the guard will be ordered: 'Seal it upon them.'"

WINTER

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates from Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ who narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Winter is the spring of a believer."**(1) Narrated by al-Bayhaqî and others. He adds: **"Its nights are long, so he spends them in night worship. Its days are short, so he spends them in fasting."**(2) Winter is the spring of a believer because he grazes in the gardens of obedience and the fields of worship. He relaxes his heart in the orchards of deeds which are made easy in this season. He does all this just as animals graze on the fields of spring. These animals become fat and their bodies become healthy. In like manner, the Islam of a believer becomes healthy in winter because of the ease which Allâh ﷻ provides him for carrying out acts of obedience. A believer is able to fast in winter without experiencing the difficulties of hunger and thirst. Because the days are short and cool, he does not experience the hardship of fasting. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Fasting in winter is a cold booty."**(3)

Abû Hurayrah ﷺ used to say: **"Should I not show you the cold booty?"** People would reply: **"Indeed."** He would say: **"Fasting in winter."** The meaning of it being a cold booty is that it is acquired without any fighting, fatigue and difficulty. The person thus acquires it easily without any burden.

As for engaging in night worship in winter, because the night is so long, the soul can get its share of sleep and wake up thereafter for salâh. The person can recite his full quota of the Qur'ân after he had his full share of sleep. In so doing, he would have his required sleep while also completing his quota of the Qur'ân. He would be combining the good for his religion with rest for his body. Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh said: **"The night is long, do not shorten it with your sleep. Islam is pure, do not make it dirty with your sins."**

On the other hand, since the night of summer is long and hot, a person is overcome by sleep and the soul cannot get its share

(1) Ahmad checked it (3/75).

(2) Al-Baihaqi checked it (4/297).

(3) Ahmad checked it (4/335) and At-Tirmidhi (797).

without sleeping the full night. Engaging in night worship at such a time requires an effort. Because the night is so short, the person cannot complete his quota of the Qur'ân. Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ said: **"Welcome to winter in which blessings descend, the night is long for worship, and the day is short for fasting."** A *marfû'* Hadîth is attributed to him in this regard but it is not authentic.

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"What an excellent time winter is for the believer. His night is long to engage in worship, and his day is short for fasting."** It is said that when winter would arrive, 'Ubayd ibn 'Umayr would say: **"O people of the Qur'ân! Your nights are long for your recitation, so recite. Your days are short for fasting, so fast."**

Engaging in night worship in winter is equal to fasting in summer. It is for this reason that Mu'âdh ﷺ cried at the time of his death. He said: **"I am crying over the fact that I will miss the thirst of the afternoon [due to fasting], engaging in worship in the winter nights, and frequenting the *'ulamâ'* in order to attend the assemblies of *dhikr*."** Ma'dad said: **"Were it not for three things, I would not have bothered if I was a male bee. The three things are: thirst because of the heat, engaging in night worship in winter, the joy of reciting the Book of Allâh in the dark of the night."**

The souls find it difficult to engage in night worship in winter because of two reasons:

(1) The difficulty which the soul experiences in getting out of bed when it is intensely cold. Dâ'ûd ibn Rushayd said: **"One of my brothers stood up at night to engage in worship on a severely cold night. He was wearing just two worn out garments. The cold struck him and he began crying. Someone called out to him saying: 'We enabled you to get up and engage in night worship while We kept them sleeping. And now you are crying!?"** Narrated by Abû Nu'aym.

(2) The difficulty which the soul experiences in performing a complete ablution when it is severely cold. Performing a complete ablution is one of the most superior of deeds. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Should I inform you of that with which Allâh ﷻ wipes out sins and with which He raises ranks?"** The Companions ﷺ said: **"Certainly, O Messenger of Allâh!"** He said: **"Performing a complete ablution despite**

difficulties, taking many steps to the musjids, and waiting for the next salâh immediately after the present salâh. That is real *ribât*![1] That is real *ribât*."[2]

Mu'âdh ibn Jabal ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saw Allâh in his dream and He said to him: **"O Muhammad! Do you know what the angels of the highest level are disputing about? They are disputing about the deeds which increase the levels and the different atonements. The atonements are: (1) performing a complete ablution despite difficulties, (2) walking for the Friday prayers – another narration states congregational prayers, (3) waiting for the next salâh immediately after having performed the present salâh. The person who does all this shall live a good life and die a good death. Moreover, he will come out of his sins like the day his mother gave birth to him. As for the deeds which increase the levels [in Paradise], they are: (1) providing food to people, (2) making the *salâm* (Islamic greeting) common, (3) offering salâh at night while people are sleeping."** Narrated by Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî *rahimahullâh*. Some narrations have the words: **"Performing a complete ablution when it is severely cold."**

The highest attributes of Îmân

Performing a complete ablution when it is severely cold is one of the highest attributes of îmân. Ibn Sa'd narrates that 'Umar ﷺ was advising his son when he was on his death bed. He said to him: **"O my son! Adhere to the attributes of îmân."** He asked: **"What are they?"** He said: **"Fasting when it is extremely hot in summer, killing the enemy with the sword, exercising patience over a calamity, performing a complete ablution on a cold day, hastening in offering salâh on a cloudy day, and abstaining from the muck which makes a person insane."** He asked: **"What is the muck which makes a person insane?"** He said: **"Consuming intoxicants."**

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(1) Since the person who is regular in performing the above deeds expects forgiveness for his sins, an increase in his good deeds and admission into Paradise, the Prophet ﷺ compared him to a person guarding the Islamic border (*ribât*) expecting martyrdom and forgiveness. Others are of the opinion that the above good deeds are named *ribât* because they bind the person and prevent him from committing sins and acts of disobedience. Allâh ﷻ knows best.

(2) It was checked by Muslim (251).

Al-Auzâ'î *rahimahullâh* narrates from Yahyâ ibn Abî Kathîr who said: **"If six qualities are found in a person, he has sought to perfect his îmân: (1) fighting the enemies of Allâh ﷻ with the sword, (2) fasting in summer, (3) performing a complete ablution on a cold day, (4) hastening the salâh on a cloudy day, (5) abstaining from argumentation even if you know that you are correct, (6) exercising patience over a calamity."** This is also narrated as a *marfû'* Hadîth. Muhammad ibn Nasr al-Marwazî narrated it in *Kitâb as-Salâh* through a weak chain from Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ: **"If six qualities are found in a person, he would have reached the essence of îmân: (1) striking the enemies of Allâh ﷻ with the sword, (2) hastening in offering the salâh on a cloudy day, (3) performing a complete ablution despite difficulties, (4) fasting when it is hot, (5) exercising patience during calamities, (6) abstaining from argumentation even if you are correct."**

Imam Ahmad *rahimahullâh* narrates in *Kitâb az-Zuhd* from 'Atâ' ibn Yasâr who said: **"Mûsâ ﷺ said: 'O my Lord! Who is Your family whom You will shade in the shade of Your Throne?"** Allâh ﷻ said: **"They are the ones whose hands are soiled but their hearts are pure. They love each other for My grandeur. When I am mentioned, they engage in My remembrance. When they engage in My remembrance, I am remembered [by others] because of them. They perform a complete ablution despite difficulties. They engage in My remembrance just as an eagle goes repeatedly to its nest. They go to pains in earning My love just as a child goes to pains in earning the love of people. They become angry when My prohibitions are made lawful just as a tiger becomes angry when it is disturbed."**

Dâ'ûd ibn Rushayd said: **"A person got up on a cold night to perform ablution for salâh. He found the water very cold so he started crying."** He heard a voice saying: **"Does it not please you that I caused the people to sleep and enabled you to wake up so that you may cry because of Us?"** Narrated by Ibn as-Sam'ânî.

Performing ablution in the middle of the night

Going to pains in performing ablution in the middle of the night for *tahajjud* ensures the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ and His boasting before the angels. This is further emphasised if it is done on a cold night. 'Uqbah ibn 'Âmir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

"There are two people from my *ummah*: One of them wakes up at night and imposes on his self to perform ablution. He has several knots. He commences his ablution: when he washes his hands, one knot becomes untied; when he washes his face, one knot becomes untied; when he passes his wet hands over his head, one knot becomes untied; when he washes his feet, one knot becomes untied. Allâh ﷻ says to the angels who are behind the veil: 'Look at this servant of Mine who is imposing all this on his self. He shall receive whatever he asks for.'"(1)

'Aṭîyyah narrates from Abû Sa'îd ﷺ that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ is most pleased with three people: (1) A person who gets up in the middle of the night, performs an excellent ablution and offers ṣalâh. (2) A person who falls asleep while in prostration. (3) A person who is with a defeated army. He is sitting on a swift horse and could have fled had he wanted [but he remained steadfast in battle]."**(2)

Abû Sulaymân ad-Dârânî said: **"I was in the *miḥrâb* (semi-circular enclosure in a musjid) on a cold night and the cold agitated me. I tucked away my one hand because of the cold and left the other extended. I was overcome by sleep and heard someone telling me: 'O Abû Sulaymân! We placed in this [extended] hand whatever it earned. Had the other one been extended, We would have placed in it as well.' I then made a promise to myself that I will always supplicate with both my hands extended irrespective of whether it is hot or cold."**

Imam Mâlik *raḥimahullâh* said: **"Ṣafwân ibn Sulaym used to perform ṣalâh during the cold winter nights on the roof, and in summer, inside the house. He used the cold and heat to remain awake, and used to engage in worship till the morning. He would then say: 'This endeavour is from Ṣafwân and You know better about it.' His feet used to get swollen and look worthless due to standing in worship at night, and his veins would appear pronounced and green."** Ṣafwân and other ardent worshippers used to offer ṣalâh during the winter nights while wearing just one garment so that this would prevent them from falling asleep. Some of them were such that if they were overcome by slumber, they would

(1) Ahmad checked it (4/159, 201) and Ibn Hibban (1052).

(2) Al-Bazzar checked it as in Al-Majmaa' (2/256).

plunge themselves into [cold] water and say: **"This is better than the pus of Hell."**

'Aṭâ' al-Khurâsânî used to call out to his companions at night: **"O such and such person! O such and such person. Wake up, perform ablution and perform ṣalâh. Spending this night in worship and fasting during this day is easier than drinking pus and having to face the iron rods in the Hell-fire tomorrow. O deliverance, O deliverance!"**

There were some ardent worshippers who used to spend the night in the musjid and offer the *tahajjud ṣalâh* there. One of them woke up one night and found his companions asleep. He heard someone calling out from one end of the musjid:

أيا عجبا للناس من قرت عيونهم مطاعم غمض بعدها الموت منتصب

وطول قيام الليل أيسر مؤنة وأهون من نار تفور وتلتهب

"How astonishing that there are people whose eyes gain satisfaction from sleep after which death is certain. Whereas spending lengthy periods of the night in worship is an easier provision than a fire which rages and blazes."

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ saw a dream in which a person came to him and proceeded with him towards the Hell-fire. He looked at it and saw some people whom he recognized, and they were suspended from chains. An angel came to him and said: **"Do not fear, you are not of its inmates."** Ibn 'Umar ﷺ related this dream to his sister, Ḥafṣah *raḍiyallâhu 'anhâ*, who related it to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ. He said: **"'Abdullâh is an excellent person, if only he were to offer the night [*tahajjud*] ṣalâh."** Subsequently, Ibn 'Umar ﷺ used to sleep very little at night.

Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* said: **"The most superior form of worship is ṣalâh in the middle of the night."** He said: **"It is the quickest way of gaining proximity to Allâh ﷻ."** He said: **"I have not come across a more severe act of worship than it."** Someone saw Salamah ibn Kuhayl in a dream and he said: **"I found the night worship to be the most superior deed. There is nothing more noble than it."** A pious predecessor saw a pitched tent and asked: **"Whose tent is this?"** He received the reply: **"For those who strive with the Qur'ân."** Consequently, he abstained from sleeping.

فما لي بعيد الدار لا أقرب الحمى وقد نصبت للساهرين خيام

علامــة طــردي طــول ليلــي نــائم وغيــري يــرى أن المــنام حــرام

"How is it that I am so far and cannot go near the sanctuary while tents have been pitched for those who remain awake? My being driven away is because I sleep the entire night while others consider sleep to be unlawful."

There were some righteous people who used to find delight with night worship in both hot and cold weather. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ supplicated in favour of 'Alî ﷺ for Allâh ﷻ to remove heat and cold from him. He would thus wear summer clothes in winter and vice versa without feeling cold or hot. A Tâbi'î found it difficult to perform ablution in winter. He supplicated to Allâh ﷻ and so he used to be provided with steaming hot water in winter.

While Abû Sulaymân was on the road to hajj on an extremely cold day, he saw an old man wearing two worn out garments perspiring profusely. He was surprised and asked him about this. He said: **"The heat and cold are two creations of Allâh ﷻ. If He orders them to cover me, they will cover me. If He orders them to leave me, they will leave me."** He added: **"I am in this desert for the past three years. Allâh ﷻ causes me to wear the heat of His love in winter, and the coolness of His love in summer."** Another person was wearing two tattered garments on a severely cold day, so someone said to him: **"Why don't you take cover at some place where you will be protected against the cold?"** He replied:

ويحــسن ظنــي أننــي فــي فــنائه وهــل أحــد فــي كــنه يجــد البــردا

"I feel content with the fact that I am in His courtyard. Is there anyone in his true nature who experiences cold?"

As for those who feel cold – and they are the masses in general – they are ordered to protect themselves against it with warm clothes and other items. Allâh ﷻ was most kind to His servants for He created from the wool, fur and hair of animals items which provide them with warmth. Allâh ﷻ says: **"The cattle, He created for you. In them there is warmth and numerous benefits, and some of them you eat."** *(Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 5)* **"From the wool of sheep and the fur of camels..."** *(Sûrah an-Nahl, 16: 80)*

Ibn al-Mubârak *rahimahullâh* narrates from Safwân ibn 'Amr from Sulaym ibn 'Âmir who said: **"When winter arrived, 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ used to write the following advice to them: 'Winter**

has arrived. It is an enemy so prepare for it by wearing wool, leather socks, and socks. Use woollen clothing as your inner and outer garments because the cold is an enemy. It enters quickly and leaves slowly." ʿUmar ﷺ used to write this to the people of Syria when this land was conquered during his caliphate. He feared for the Companions ﷺ and others who were there because they were not used to the severe cold of Syria. This demonstrates the perfection of his advice, his good insight, his affection and concern for his subjects. May Allâh ﷻ be pleased with him.

Kaʿb ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ said to Dâ'ûd ﷺ: 'Prepare for the enemy which is approaching.' He said: 'O Lord! Who is my enemy because I see no enemy near me?' Allâh ﷻ said: 'Indeed. It is winter.'"**

This does not mean that the person must protect himself from winter to such an extent that it does not afflict him at all. Because this is also harmful. There was a ruler who used to protect himself totally from the heat and cold to the extent that his body never felt either of the two. He thus destroyed his internal self and passed away very quickly. Allâh ﷻ, through His wisdom, placed heat and cold in this world for the well-being of His servants. The heat is to melt the humours of the body while the cold is to harden them. When the body does not receive either of the two, it is destroyed very quickly. What we are ordered is to safeguard ourselves from what is harmful to the body. Harmful heat and harmful cold are both considered to be the enemies of man.

Someone said to Abû Ḥâzim: **"You are extremely severe."** That is, severe in worship. He said: **"Why should I not be severe when fourteen enemies are lying in wait for me?"** The person asked him: **"Are they waiting specifically for you?"** He replied: **"No, for all those who possess intellects."** The person asked: **"Who are these enemies?"** He replied: **"The first four are: (1) a believer who is jealous of me, (2) a hypocrite who despises me, (3) an unbeliever who fights me, (4) Satan who deceives me and leads me astray. As for the other ten, they are: (5) hunger, (6) thirst, (7) heat, (8) cold, (9) nakedness, (10) illness, (11) poverty, (12) senility, (13) death, (14) the Hell-fire. I cannot fight them unless I have all the weapons, and I have not come across a better weapon than piety (*taqwâ*)."** He thus included the heat and the cold among his enemies.

Al-Aṣmuʿî said: **"The Arabs used to refer to winter as *al-fâḍiḥ***

(something which is dishonourable). An Arab woman was asked: **"Which of the two is more difficult for you: the heat or the cold?"** She replied: **"Glory to Allâh! Who can compare misery to annoyance?!"** She referred to the cold as misery, and the heat as an annoyance. A pious predecessor said: **"Allâh ﷻ described Paradise with the attributes of summer and not of winter. He said: 'They shall live among thorn-less lote trees, bananas in clusters, extended shade, flowing water, and abundant fruit."** *(Sûrah al-Wâqi'ah, 56: 28-32)"*

Allâh ﷻ describes the people of Paradise: **"Reclining therein on couches. They will neither see sun there nor [experience] the bitter cold."** *(Sûrah ad-Dahr/al-Insân, 76: 13)* Allâh ﷻ says that they will not experience severe heat and cold. Qatâdah *raḥimahullâh* said: **"Allâh ﷻ knows that severe heat is harmful, and severe cold is harmful. He therefore protected them against both."**

Abû 'Amr ibn al-'Alâ' said: **"I dislike winter because it curtails obligations, takes away responsibilities, and imposes misery on the poor."** It is related in a Ḥadîth that the angels express delight with the departure of winter because of the difficulties which are experienced by the poor believers. However, the chain of this Ḥadîth is not authentic.

A Ḥadîth states: **"The best summer is the one which is hottest, and the best winter is the one which is coldest. The angels cry in winter out of mercy towards humans."** The chain of this Ḥadîth is also baseless.

A pious predecessor said: **"The cold is an enemy of religion."** He is making reference to the fact that many deeds are left out and the souls therefore become lazy. A person said: **"The hearts were created from clay. They become soft in winter just as clay becomes soft in winter."**

Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* said: **"Winter is a male and impregnation takes place in it. Summer is a female and birth takes place in it."** What he means by this is that it is in summer that the animals and trees reproduce. Summer according to the Arabs is actually spring. As for *ṣayf* (summer), the Arabs refers to it as *qayẓ*. It is in winter that heat penetrates inside a tree and the ingredients for the fruit combine at that time. The initial stages of this appears in spring. The tree then flowers, then bears leaves, and when the fruits appear, the heat of the sun gets strong for them to

ripen.

There is great virtue in providing the poor with provisions which remove the cold from them. Safwân ibn Sulaym came out of the musjid of Madînah one cold night and saw a naked man. He removed his clothes and clothed that man. A person in Syria saw a dream in which Safwân ibn Sulaym entered Paradise because of a shirt with which he clothed someone. This person came to Madînah and inquired about Safwân. When he met him, he related his dream to him.

Mis'ar saw a Bedouin standing in the sun and saying:

جاء الشتاء وليس عندي درهم ولقد يخص بمثل ذاك المسلم

قد لبس الناس الجباب وغيرها وكأنني بفناء مكة محرم

"Winter has arrived and I do not have a single dirham. A Muslim normally has such an amount. The people are wearing jubbahs and other garments, while I am outside in Makkah, deprived of all this."

On hearing this, Mis'ar removed his jubbah and gave it to the Bedouin.

A person went to a pious governor and informed him that there is a woman who has four orphan children. They are all naked and hungry. He ordered someone to go to them and take sufficient clothes and food for them. He then removed his own clothes and took an oath saying: **"I will not wear them nor keep myself warm until you return and inform me that you have clothed and fed them."** The person went, returned, and informed him that they have been clothed and their hunger has been satiated. The governor was shivering from the cold all this while. Only after hearing this did he wear his clothes again.

Abû Sa'îd ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The person who feeds a hungry believer, Allâh ﷻ shall feed him of the fruits of Paradise on the day of Resurrection. The person who provides water to a thirsty believer, Allâh ﷻ shall provide him of the sealed nectar on the day of Resurrection. The person who clothes a believer who has no clothes, Allâh ﷻ shall clothe him of the green garments of Paradise."**(1)

(1) At-Tirmidhi (2449), Abu Dawoud (1682) and Ahmad (10717).

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ ﷺ narrates from Ibn Mas'ûd ﷺ: **"On the day of Resurrection, people will be resurrected in the most naked form they ever were, in the most hungry state and in the most thirsty state. Allâh ﷻ shall then clothe the person who clothed others for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. He will feed the person who fed others for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. He will provide drink to the person who provided drink to others for the sake of Allâh ﷻ. And Allâh ﷻ shall pardon the person who pardoned others for the sake of Allâh ﷻ."**(1)

The merits of winter

One of the merits of winter is that it reminds us of the bitter cold of Hell, and causes us to seek refuge from it. Abû Hurayrah ﷺ and Abû Sa'îd ﷺ narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"When it is a severely cold day and a person says: 'There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. It is so cold today. O Allâh! Save me from the bitter cold of Hell.' Allâh ﷻ says to Hell: 'One of My servants sought refuge in Me from your bitter cold. I make you witness to the fact that I have given him refuge.'"** The Companions ﷺ asked: **"What is the *zamharîr* of Hell?"** He said: **"It is a house in which the unbeliever is cast and thus experiences its bitter cold."**

Zabîd al-Yâmî got up one night for *tahajjud* and went to a utensil of water from which he used to perform ablution. When he inserted his hand in the water he found it freezing cold – on the verge of becoming ice. He immediately thought of the bitter cold of Hell while his hand was still in that utensil of water. He did not remove his hand till the morning. His slave woman came to him while he was still in that condition. She said: **"What is it with you, O my master? Why did you not perform salâh at night as you normally do? Why are you sitting here like this?"** He said: **"I inserted my hand in this utensil of water and found it freezing cold, and I thought of the bitter cold of Hell. By Allâh, I did not perceive the freezing cold of this water until you came and stood here. Now do not relate this incident to anyone as long as I am alive."** No one came to know of this incident until he passed away.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Hell takes two breaths, one in winter and another in summer. The severest heat which you experience is from the hot wind of Hell. And the severest cold**

(1) Al-Munthery mentioned it in At-Targhib (2/66).

which you experience is from the bitter cold of Hell."(1)

Ibn ʻAbbâs ﷺ said: **"The inmates of the Hell-fire seek refuge from the heat. So they are provided with a cold wind which causes their bones to split because of its cold. And so, they ask for the heat again."** Mujâhid *raḥimahullâh* said: **"They run towards the bitter cold. When they fall into it, their bones shatter to such an extent that their shattering sound is heard."** Kaʻb ﷺ said: **"There is a cold in Hell which is known as *zamharîr*. It causes the flesh of people to fall to such an extent that they seek refuge in the heat of Hell."**

ʻAbd al-Malik ibn ʻUmayr said: **"I heard that the inmates of the Hell-fire asked the guard to take them to one side of Hell. When they were taken to that side, the bitter cold destroyed them. They returned to the centre and entered it because of the cold which they felt on the side."** Allâh ﷻ says: **"Neither coolness shall they taste therein nor any [thirst-quenching] drink. Only boiling water and flowing pus. A full recompense."** *(Sûrah an-Naba', 78: 24-26)* **"This is it. Now let them taste it – boiling water and pus."** *(Sûrah Sâd, 38: 57)*

Ibn ʻAbbâs ﷺ said: **"The pus refers to the bitter cold which burns because of its coldness."** Mujâhid *raḥimahullâh* said: **"It is something which they cannot taste because of its coldness."** Others say that it refers to something which is extremely cold and foul-smelling. May Allâh ﷻ save us from Hell through His bounty and kindness.

O you to whom the descriptions of Hell are read, who witnesses its breathing every year to the extent that he can perceive it and experiences pain from it! Yet he is persisting in doing things which would guarantee his entry into it. And he knows well what he is doing. You will come to know when Hell is herded by 70 000 reins. Do you think you can endure its heat and cold? Tell me, and speak. Is there any hope in your rectitude? Allâh ﷻ knows best.

كـــم يكـــون الـــشتاء ثـــم المـــصيف ... وربـــيع يمـــضي ويأتـــي الخـــريف

وارتحـــال مـــن الحـــرور إلـــى البـــر ... د وســـيف الـــردى علـــيك منـــيف

يـــا قلـــيل المقـــام فـــي هـــذه الدنـــيا ... إلـــــى كـــــم يغـــــرك التـــــسويف

(1) Al-Bukhari (3260) and Muslim (617).

يـــا طالـــب الـــزائل حتـــى متـــى قلـــــبك بالـــــزائل مـــــشغوف

عجـــبا لامـــرئ يـــذل لـــذي الدنـــيا ويكفـــــيه كـــــل يـــــوم رغـــــيف

“How many winters, summers, springs and autumns are going to come and go, and how often are you going to move from the heat to the cold, while the sword of humiliation is towering above you?! O you who have no status in this world! For how long is procrastination going to delude you? O you who are hankering after something which is fleeting! Till when is your heart going to remain engrossed with the fleeting [things of this world]? I am most astonished at a person who humiliates himself for this world while just one piece of bread can suffice him.”

REPENTANCE BEFORE DEATH

Ibn 'Umar ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Allâh ﷻ accepts the repentance of a person as long as he does not experience the pangs of death."** This Hadîth demonstrates Allâh's acceptance of repentance from His servant as long as his soul remains in his body and has not reached his throat as yet.

The Qur'ân also makes a similar reference to this: **"The acceptance of repentance is surely on Allâh for those who commit an evil act out of ignorance and then repent speedily. It is they whom Allâh forgives. And Allâh is all knowing, wise."** *(Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 17)*

In this verse, **"an evil act"** is mentioned. This refers to all sins – minor and major. The words **"out of ignorance"** mean that the person goes forward to commit the evil act even if he knows that it is evil. Every person who disobeys Allâh ﷻ is an ignorant person. And every person who obeys Him is a knowledgeable person. This can be explained in two ways:

(1) The person who has knowledge of Allâh ﷻ, His greatness, His grandeur, and His might, will fear Allâh ﷻ. He will never disobey Him while he is fully conscious of all these qualities of Allâh ﷻ. Someone said: **"If people were to ponder over the greatness of Allâh ﷻ, they will never disobey Him."** Another said: **"The fear of Allâh ﷻ is sufficient to label one knowledgeable. To be misled about Allâh ﷻ is sufficient to label one ignorant."**

(2) The person who gives preference to disobedience over obedience has actually been prompted to this by his ignorance and his assumption that it will benefit him immediately. If such a person has îmân, he would hope for salvation from its evil consequences by repenting towards the end of his life. This is absolute ignorance because he is hastening sin and humiliation while he is missing out on the honour of piety, the reward of piety, and the joy of obedience. He may be able to repent after all this, or he may be overtaken by death all of a sudden. He is thus like a hungry person who eats poisoned food to get rid of his immediate hunger, and hopes to be rid of its harm by drinking an antidote later on. None but an ignorant

person will do something like this. Allâh ﷻ says with regard to those who give preference to magic and sorcery: **"And they learn that which harms them and does not benefit them. They have known well that the one who opts for magic, there is no share for him in the Hereafter. Extremely vile is the thing for which they sold themselves. If only they had understanding."** *(Sûrah al-Baqarah, 2: 102)*

This means that they gave preference to magic over piety and îmân because they hoped for its immediate benefits in this world while they knew that they will lose out on the reward of the Hereafter. This shows their ignorance because had they possessed real knowledge, they would have given preference to îmân and piety over everything else. They would have set aside the reward of the Hereafter, felt secure against the punishment of the Hereafter, hastened the honour of piety in this world, and they may have well acquired whatever they hoped for of this world, or something better and more beneficial. The most that is sought after through magic is the fulfilment of needs considered to be unlawful or reprehensible by Allâh ﷻ.

As for a pious believer, Allâh ﷻ recompenses him in this world with something better than what a magician seeks, while also acquiring the honour and dignity of piety, the reward of the Hereafter, and the high ranks therein. It becomes clear from this that giving preference to disobedience over obedience is prompted by ignorance. It is for this reason that every person who disobeys Allâh ﷻ is an ignorant person, and every person who obeys Him is a knowledgeable person. The fear of Allâh ﷻ is sufficient to label one knowledgeable. To be misled about Allâh ﷻ is sufficient to label one ignorant.

As for repenting speedily [as mentioned in the above-quoted verse], all the *'ulamâ'* say that it refers to repentance before death. One's entire life is speedy, and this entire world is speedy. The person who repents before death has repented speedily. As for the person who passes away without repenting, he is very far away [from the mercy of Allâh ﷻ]. A poet says:

يقولـــون لا تـــبعد وهـــم يدفنونـــي وأيـــن مكـــان الـــبعد إلا مكانـــيا

"They say: 'Do not remain far', while they are burying me. There is no far place except my place."

Another poet says:

مـــن قـــبل أن تلقـــي ولـــيـ ـــس الـــنأي إلا نـــأي دارك

"Before you can even meet, nothing but your abode is remote."

Another says:

فهـم جيـرة الأحـياء أمـا مـزارهم فـــدان وأمـــا الملتقـــى فبعـــيد

"They are the neighbours of the living. Their visiting place is near but their meeting place is distant."

The living person is near while the dead is far from the world despite being so close to it. His body is decomposing in the ground, while his soul is with Allâh – either enjoying itself or being punished. It is not hoped to meet them in this world.

A poet says:

مقـيم إلـى أن يـبعث الله خلقـه لقـاؤك لا يرجـى وأنـت قـريب

تـزيد بلـى فـي كـل يـوم ولـيلة وتنـسى كمـا تبلـى وأنـت حبـيب

"You are present until Allâh resurrects His creation. We cannot hope meeting you despite your being so close. Your decomposition is increasing every day and night. You are being forgotten as you are decomposing, but you are still beloved."

Dâ'ûd at-Tâ'î *rahimahullâh* heard the above two lines from a woman in a graveyard addressing a deceased one. They made such an impression on his heart that he came to his senses, became aloof from this world, started yearning for the Hereafter, and devoted himself to worship until he passed away. Thus, the person who repents before experiencing the pangs of death is considered to have hastened in repentance, and it is accepted from him. With regard to the verse: **"and then repent speedily"**, Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ says: **"Before illness and death."** This shows that the best time of repentance is for a person to hasten towards it while he is healthy and before the affliction of illness so that he is able to do good deeds. It is for this reason that Allâh ﷻ attached repentance to good deeds in many places in the Qur'ân.

Repentance while a person is healthy and hopes for life is similar to giving charity while one is healthy and hopes for life. Repentance when one is ill and the signs of death are present is similar to giving charity at the time of death. The person who only repents during his illness is as if he has spent his health and time in

following his desires and worldly pleasures. Now when he loses hope from the world and from life, he repents and gives up all that he was doing. How can his repentance compare with the repentance of the person who repents speedily while he is healthy and strong enough to commit sins!? He gives up sins out of fear for Allâh ﷻ, hope in His rewards, and giving preference to His obedience over His disobedience.

Some people went to Bishr al-Hâfî while he was ill. They asked him: **"What resolution have you made?"** He said: **"That if I am cured, I will repent."** One of them said to him: **"Why don't you repent right now?"** He said: **"O brother! Don't you know that kings do not accept protection from a person who has shackles around his feet and an iron collar around his neck? They accept protection from a person who is sitting on his horse with his sword unsheathed."** On hearing this, they all cried. This means that a repentant person who is healthy is like a person who is sitting on his horse with his unsheathed sword. He is able to move back and forth, and has the ability to fight. He can also flee from the king and disobey him. If he comes in such a condition to the king, submits before him and asks him for protection, he will become part of the king's elite and beloved ones. This is because he came obediently to him, chose to come to him, desiring to be close to him and in his service.

As for the person who is under the captivity of the king with shackles around his feet and an iron collar around his neck, and he were to ask for protection from the king, he would be doing it out of fear for his life. He would neither be doing it out of love for the king nor giving preference to his pleasure. This is the example of the person who only repents when he is ill and about to die. The first is like a person who repents when he is healthy, strong and energetic.

However, the King of kings is the most affectionate and most merciful. Every creation is a prisoner under His control. No one can tire Him, no one can flee from Him, and no one can leave Him. Despite this, every person who seeks protection from His punishment receives protection no matter what condition he is in. This is provided he is genuine in his quest. An *'ârif* said:

الأمـــان الأمـــان وزري ثقـــيل وذنوبـــي إذا عـــددن تطـــول

أوبقتنـــي وأوثقتنـــي ذنوبـــي فتـــرى لـــي إلـــى الخـــلاص ســـبيل؟

"Give me immunity, give me immunity! My burden is heavy,

and my sins – if they were to be enumerated – will prolong. My sins have destroyed me and shackled me. Do you see any way of escape for me?"

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Repentance is not for those who go on committing evil acts till death presents itself before one of them then he says: 'I repent now', nor the repentance of those who die in a state of unbelief. For them We have prepared a painful punishment."** *(Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 18)*

In this verse, Allâh ﷻ considers the person who repents at the time of death and the one who dies without repentance to be equal. Repentance at the time of death refers to repentance when the veil is lifted from the person, he witnesses things of the Hereafter, and sees the angels. Îmân, repentance and all deeds are only beneficial when they are on the unseen. But once the veil is lifted and the unseen becomes the seen, neither does îmân nor repentance benefit in that condition.

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates from 'Alî ﷺ: **"A person continues enjoying respite for repentance as long as the angel of death does not come to take away his soul. Once the angel of death descends, no repentance is accepted."**

Ath-Thaurî *rahimahullâh* said that Ibn 'Umar ﷺ said: **"Repentance is laid open as long as the king of death does not descend."**

Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* said: **"Repentance is presented to man as long as death does not vent its anger on him."** Bakr al-Muzanî said: **"Repentance is laid open to a person as long as the angels [of death] do not come to him. No sooner he sees them, the possibility of recognition is severed."** Abû Mijlaz said: **"A person continues remaining in repentance as long as he does not see the angels [of death]."** He also narrates in *Kitâb al-Maut* that Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arîyy ﷺ said: **"When the deceased sees the angel, all realization departs from him."** A similar statement is attributed to Mujâhid *rahimahullâh.*

Husayn said: **"I heard that when the angel of death touches the vein of man, his eye becomes blank and he becomes unaware of people around him."** Ibn Mâjah *rahimahullâh* narrates that Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arîyy ﷺ said: I asked the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ: **"When does a person lose his recognition of people?"** He replied: **"When he sees [the angels of death]."** There is some reservation with

regard to the chain of this Hadîth. The previous *mauqûf* Hadîth is more acceptable. It is said that the person is prevented from repenting at that time. The reason for this is that if he loses his recognition, loses control over his intellect, then neither can remorse nor determination be conceived from him. This is because remorse and determination are only possible with presence of mind. This is essential to see the angels, as demonstrated by these traditions.

The Hadîth of Ibn 'Umar ﷺ states: **"As long as he does not gurgle."** This means as long as his soul does not reach his throat when it is leaving him. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ compares the reaching of the soul in the throat to water and other liquids which a person uses to gargle his throat. The Qur'ân makes reference to this as well: **"Then why not at the time when the soul reaches the throat? And you are looking at that time? We are nearer to him than you but you do not see."** *(Sûrah al-Wâqi'ah, 56: 83-85)* **"Never! When the soul reaches the collar bone."** *(Sûrah al-Qiyâmah, 75: 26)*

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates from al-Hasan who said: **"The severest experience of death is at the time when the soul reaches the collar bone. It is at that time that he trembles, and his soul rises."** Al-Hasan *rahimahullâh* began crying when he said this.

عـــش مـــا بـــدا لـــك ســـالما ... فـــي ظـــل شـــاهقة القـــصور
يـــسعى علـــيك بمـــا اشـــتهي ... لـــدى الـــرواح وفـــي الـــبكور
فـــإذا الـــنفوس تقعقعـــت ... فـــي ضـــيق حـــشرجة الـــصدور
فهـــناك تعلـــم موقـــنا ... مـــا كـــنت إلا فـــي غـــرور

"Live safely for as long as you like in the shade of towering castles. Whatever you desire is brought to you in the morning and evening. But once the soul rattles in the constricted place of the chest, you will come to realize with certainty that you were in nothing but deception."

Because man always hopes for life, he does not stop hoping from the world. His soul does not permit him to disavow all the pleasures, desires, sins, etc. of the world. Satan causes him to delay repentance till the end of his life. When he becomes certain of death and despairs of life, he recovers from his intoxication with the desires of the world and regrets his shortcomings to such an extent that it

almost kills him. He requests to be returned to the world so that he may repent and do good, but neither of this is accepted. He thus experiences the stupor of death with the remorse of all that he lost.

Allâh ﷻ warns His servants about this in the Qur'ân so that they may prepare for death before its arrival through repentance and good deeds. Allâh ﷻ says: **"Turn towards your Sustainer and submit before Him before the punishment comes upon you, then no one will come to your assistance. Follow the best that has been revealed from your Sustainer before the punishment comes upon you suddenly and you are not even aware [of its arrival]. Lest a soul may say: 'How unfortunate over the fact that I continually displayed shortcomings towards Allâh and I continually mocked.'"** *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 54-56)*

A person who was in the throes of death was heard slapping himself and saying: **"O how sorrowful over the shortcomings which I displayed before Allâh."** Another person said: **"The world mocked at me until my days are over."** Another person said at the time of his death: **"Do not let this worldly life delude me as it deluded me."**

Allâh ﷻ says: **"Till death reaches one of them, he shall say: 'O my Sustainer! Send me back. I might do some good deed in that which I left behind.' Never! It is merely a word that he utters."** *(Sûrah al-Mu'minûn, 23: 99-100)* **"Spend from some of** that which We provided you before death comes to one of you and then he says: **"O Sustainer! If only You would give me respite for a short while so that I may give in charity and become of the righteous. Allâh will never give respite to a soul once its appointed time has come. Allâh is aware of all that you do."** *(Sûrah al-Munâfiqûn, 63: 10-11)* **"A barrier has fallen between them and their hopes."** *(Sûrah Saba', 34: 54)* 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *raḥimahullâh* and a group of pious predecessors explain this last verse by saying that they sought repentance when a barrier was made to fall between them and repentance. Al-Ḥasan *raḥimahullâh* said: **"O man! Fear Allâh. Do not allow two things to be combined in you: the stupor of death with the regret of missing out."**

Ibn as-Samâk *raḥimahullâh* said: **"Be careful of the stupor and the regret. Do not let death fall suddenly upon you while you are deluded. None will be able to describe what you are experiencing and seeing."**

Al-Fudayl *rahimahullâh* said: **"Allâh ﷻ says: 'O man! If you are enjoying My bounties while being engrossed in My disobedience, beware of Me that I do not cause you to fall between sins which you commit against Me."** An Isrâ'îlî narration states: **"O man! Beware that Allâh ﷻ does not seize you while you are committing a sin for then you shall meet Him with no excuse whatsoever."** Many people who were persistent in sinning passed away in the worst of conditions while they were actually committing a sin. This resulted in their humiliation in this world together with the punishment of the Hereafter which they are yet to face. This happens very often to those who are habitual consumers of intoxicants. As a poet says:

أتـــأمن أيهـــا الـــسكران جهـــلا بـــأن تفجـــأك فـــي الـــسكر المنـــية

فتـــضحى عبـــرة للـــناس طـــرا وتلقـــى الله مـــن شـــر البـــرية

"O you who are intoxicated out of ignorance. Do you feel safe from death coming suddenly upon you in your intoxicated state? You would thus become a source of admonition for all people, and you will meet Allâh ﷻ as the worst of the creation."

A person of the past became intoxicated one night and his wife reprimanded him for leaving out his salâh. He therefore took an oath of three divorces to her in three days in which he does not offer salâh. He found it difficult to remain separated from his wife and continued abandoning salâh. He passed away within these three days in that condition while he was persistent in consuming alcohol and abandoning salâh.

A person by the name of Abû 'Amr was a habitual drinker. One night he slept away in an intoxicated state. He saw someone telling him in his dream:

جـــد بـــك الأمـــر أبـــا عمـــرو وأنـــت معكـــوف علـــى الخمـــر

تـــشرب صـــهباء صـــراحية ســـال بـــك الـــسيل ولا تـــدري

"O Abû 'Amr! The matter has become serious and yet you are devoted to alcohol. You are drinking wine openly, and the flood water has taken you away without your even realizing it."

He got up with a fright and informed whoever was with him of what he saw. His intoxication overpowered him and he fell asleep once again. He then passed away by the morning.

Yahyâ ibn Mu'âdh said: **"This world is the wine of Satan. The**

person who becomes intoxicated with it will only come to his senses when he is in the army of the dead, regretting with all those who are losers." A Hadîth states: **"Every person who passes away is regretful."** The Companions ﷺ asked: **"What is his regret?"** He said: **"If he was a good person, he regrets not having done more good. If he was a sinner, he regrets not having reprimanded himself."** If a doer of good regrets at the time of death, what can be said of the sinner?

The greatest wish of those who are dead in their graves is life of a single hour in which they can make up for the repentance and good deeds which they missed out on. On the other hand, the people of the world are committing excesses while they are alive and their lives are going to waste in heedlessness. And there are those of them who are passing their lives in sins. A person of the past said: **"You awoke in the wish of many people."** In other words, the dead are all wishing for a life of a single hour so that they may repent in it and strive in obedience. But there is no **way that they can do that."** A poet says:

لـو قـيل للقـوم مـا مـناكم؟ طلـبوا حـــياة يـــوم ليـــتوبوا فـــاعلم
ويحـــك يـــا نفـــس ألا تـــيقظ يـــنفع قـــبل أن تـــزل قدمـــي
مـضى الـزمان فـي تـوان وهـوى فاسـتدركي مـا قـد بقـي واغتنمـي

"If you were to ask the people: 'What is your wish?' They would ask for a single day so that they may be able to repent. So take a lesson from this. O soul! Are you not going to wake up so that I could derive some benefit before my feet falter? Time has passed in heedlessness and desires. Try and catch up and make the best of what remains [of your life]."

Different categories of people with regard to repentance

The one who never repents

One is the person who is not inspired towards sincere repentance. Committing evil deeds is made easy for him from the beginning of his life till the end. He remains persistent in sin until he dies. This is the condition of the wretched ones. Worse than this is the person who was able to do good deeds at the beginning of his life and then ends his life with evil deeds and dies in this manner. An authentic Hadîth states: **"One of you does the deed of the**

inhabitants of Paradise until there is just one arm span between himself and Paradise. Destiny overtakes him and he does the deed of the inmates of the Hell-fire and thus enters it." Another Hadîth states: **"A person does the deeds of the inhabitants of Paradise for seventy years. When his death comes to him, he is unjust in making his bequest [will] and therefore enters the Hell-fire."**(1)

It is most difficult for a person who had eyesight to become blind. More difficult than that is deviation after having guidance, disobedience after being righteous. Many a face will be downcast when it hears the effects of its deed. **"Many faces are to be downcast on that day. Toiling, worn out. Falling into a blazing fire."** *(Sûrah al-Ghâshiyah, 88: 2-4)* Many a person is on the verge of reaching the shore of salvation, but when he tries to climb out, the wave of desires plays around with him and he drowns. Everyone is posed to this danger. The hearts of the servants are between the two fingers of the Merciful, He turns them about as He wills.

Someone said: **"There is nothing astonishing about a person being destroyed and how he was destroyed. What is really astonishing is about a person who was saved and how he was saved."**

يـــــا قلـــــب إلام تطالبنـــــي بلقـــا الأحـــباب وقـــد رحلـــوا
أرســـلتك فـــي طلبـــي لهـــم لـــتعود فـــضعت ومـــا حـــصلوا
ســـلم واصـــبر واخـــضع لهـــم كـــم قـــبلك مـــثلك قـــد قـــتلوا
مـــا أحـــسن مـــا علقـــت بـــه آمالـــك مـــنهم لـــو فعلـــوا

"O my heart! For how long are you going to ask me to meet with the beloveds who have already departed? I sent you to search for them and bring back whatever they acquired, but you got lost. Remain at peace, be patient, and submit yourself because so many before you who were like you have been killed. How excellent is the thing to which your hopes became attached. If only they were able to do it."

The one who repents at the end of his life

One is the person who wastes his life in heedlessness and evil.

(1) Abu-Dawoud checked it (2867) and At-Tirmidhi (2117).

He is then inspired to do good and passes away in this state. This is the condition of the person who does the deeds of the inmates of the Hell-fire until there remains just one span between himself and the Hell-fire. His destiny overtakes him, he does the deeds of the people of Paradise and enters it.

Actions are judged on the manner in which they are concluded. A Hadîth states: **"When Allâh ﷻ wills good for a person, He sweetens him."** The Companions ﷺ asked: **"What is the meaning of sweetening him?"** The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"He inspires him to do good deeds and then takes away his life in that state."**(1)

From this category, there is the person who wakes up at such a time before his death that he is able to take sufficient provision of good deeds with which his life comes to an end. Then there is the person who wakes up at the time when death approaches him. He is inspired to repent sincerely and die on it. 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"When Allâh ﷻ wills good for a person, He appoints an angel for him one year before his death. The angel guides him and makes good deeds easy for him until he passes away in the best condition he ever was. People begin speaking: 'He passed away in the best condition he ever was.'"**

Al-Bazzâr *rahimahullâh* narrated the above from 'Â'ishah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* as a *marfû'* Hadîth. His narration reads thus: **"When Allâh ﷻ wills good for a person, He sends an angel to him in the year in which he is going to pass away. The angel guides him and makes good deeds easy for him. When it is the time of his death, the angel of death comes to him and sits by his head, saying: 'O you soul which has acquired tranquillity! Come out to the forgiveness and pleasure of Allâh.' This is when the person loves to meet Allâh ﷻ, and Allâh ﷻ loves to meet him. When Allâh ﷻ wills misery for a person, He sends to him a devil in the year in which he is going to die, and he leads him astray. When it is the time of his death, the angel of death comes to him and sits by his head, saying: 'O you wretched soul! Come out to the wrath and anger of Allâh.' It then scatters in his body. This is when the person abhors meeting Allâh ﷻ and Allâh ﷻ abhors meeting him."**

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(1) Ahmad checked it (4/200).

There is a supplication which reads: **"O Allâh! Make the best part of my deed the concluding part, and the best part of my life the last part."**

'Abdullâh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Âs ﷺ said: **"The person who repents one year before his death shall have his repentance accepted. The person who repents one month before his death shall have his repentance accepted. He eventually said, one day, then one hour, then the time when a dying person gasps."** Someone asked him: **"What if the person was a polytheist and he embraces Islam?"** He replied: **"I am merely relating what I heard from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ."**(1)

'Abd ar-Rahmân ibn al-Baylamânî said: Four Companions of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ assembled. One of them said: **"I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: 'Allâh ﷻ accepts the repentance of a person half a day before he passes away.'"** The third person from among them said: **"Did you really hear this from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ?"** He replied: **"Yes."** He said: **"I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: 'Allâh ﷻ accepts the repentance of a person at the forenoon before he passes away.'"** The fourth person said: **"Did you really hear this from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ?"** He replied: **"Yes."** He said: **"I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ saying: 'Allâh ﷻ accepts the repentance of a person as long as he does not gurgle with his soul.'"**(2)

Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrîyy ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"Satan said: 'O Lord! I take an oath by Your honour, I will continue deluding Your servants as long as their souls are in their bodies.' Allâh ﷻ said: 'I take an oath by My honour and grandeur, I will continue forgiving them as long as they ask Me for forgiveness.'"**(3)

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates: One of the kings of Basra was leading a devout life, but then he became inclined towards the world and Satan. He built a house, fortified it, had carpets laid out, and furnished the house. He prepared a huge feast and invited the people to it. People began arriving, eating, drinking, looking at the building,

(1) Ahmad checked it (2/206) and Al-Hakem (4/258-259).

(2) Ahmad checked it (3/425).

(3) Ahmad checked it (3/29).

showing their admiration, thanked him, and departed. This continued for several days. When he finished with all the people, he sat with a group of his special people and said: **"You have seen how** pleased I am with this house of mine. I have thought to myself and concluded that I should make a similar house for each of my children. I would like you to stay with me for a few days so that I may enjoy your company and also consult you on what I want in these buildings for my children. They stayed with him for a few days, amusing themselves, playing around, and advising him as to how he should build the houses for his children, and what he should do. One night while they were in their play and amusement, they heard someone calling out from one end of the house:

يأيهـــا البانـــي الناســـي منيـــته لا تأمـــنن فـــإن المـــوت مكـــتوب

علـى الخلائـق إن سـروا وإن فـرحوا فالموت حتف لـذي الآمـال منصوب

لا تبنـــين ديـــارا لـــست تـــسكنها وراجـع النـسك كـيما يغفـر الحـوب

"O you who are building, and forgetting his death! Do not feel secure because death is decreed on all the creations even if they are happy and joyful. Death is certain even for the person who has many hopes. Do not build houses which you are not going to inhabit. Return to piety so that the sins will be forgiven."

The king and his friends became extremely terrified and were awe-struck at what they heard. He asked them: **"Did you hear what I just heard?"** They replied: **"Yes."** He asked: **"Do you also feel what I feel?"** They asked: **"What do you feel?"** He said: **"I feel a whiff of something in my heart and I think that it is certainly an illness of death."** They said: **"It cannot be. You are going to live long and healthy."** He began crying and said: **"You are my friends and brothers, what can I tell you?"** They said: **"Order us to do whatever you like."** He ordered that all the wine be poured out and thrown away, and all the instruments of play and amusement be removed. He then said: **"O Allâh! I make You witness and also all Your servants who are present here witness to the fact that I repent to you from all my sins, and I regret my excesses which I committed during the days of my respite. If You take away my life, I ask You to forgive me my sins out of Your favour to me."** He experienced more severity and continued repeating: **"By Allâh, I am experiencing death. By Allâh, I am experiencing death."** He continued saying this until his soul departed. The jurists of the time

were of the opinion that he passed away on repentance.

Al-Wâḥidî narrates in the book *Qatlâ al-Qur'ân* that a nobleman of Basra was travelling towards Basra in a ship with his slave woman. He drank on one day and his slave woman sang to him with a lute. There was a poor righteous person on the ship. The man said to this poor person: **"O young man! Do you find this singing appealing?"** He replied: **"I find something else more appealing than this."** This poor person had a beautiful voice, and he began reciting this verse: "Say: **"The enjoyment of this world is little and the Hereafter is better for the pious. And you shall not be wronged equal to a thread. Wherever you may be, death will overtake you even though you may be in reinforced forts."** *(Sûrah an-Nisâ', 4: 77-78)*

The man threw the wine which was in his hand into the water and said: **"I swear that this is better than what I heard. Can you read something else to me?"** He replied: **"Yes."** He then recited this verse: **"Say: The truth is from your Lord. Then whoever wills, let him believe; and whoever wills, let him disbelieve. We have prepared for the sinners a fire, the awnings of which will encompass them."** *(Sûrah al-Kahf, 18: 29)* This verse made a great impact on him, he threw all the wine in the water, threw the lute away, and said: **"O young man! Is there any way out of this?"** He replied: **"Yes."** And recited this verse: **"Say: O My servants who have committed excesses against their own selves! Do not despair of the mercy of Allâh. Surely Allâh forgives all sins. He is all-forgiving, most merciful."** *(Sûrah az-Zumar, 39: 53)* On hearing this, he shouted loudly. When the people looked at him, they found him dead. May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on him.

Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates that Sâliḥ al-Murîyy *raḥimahullâh* was sitting in his assembly one day, and relating to the people when someone read this verse before him: **"Inform them of that near approaching day when the hearts will come up to the throats, choking [them]. The sinners have no friend nor an intercessor whose word can be accepted."** *(Sûrah al-Mu'min/al-Ghâfir, 40: 18)* Sâliḥ *raḥimahullâh* began talking about the Hell-fire, the condition of the sinners in it, and the manner in which people will be herded into it. He went into great detail in this and the people began crying. A youngster who was present in the assembly and who had been wronging his self stood up and said: **"Is all this going to take place on the day of Resurrection?"** Sâliḥ *raḥimahullâh* said: **"Yes. And**

even more than this. I heard that they will scream so much in the Hell-fire that they will lose their voices and they will have no voice except the sighing and moaning of an emaciated sick person." On hearing this, the youngster screamed: **"O Allâh! O my negligence towards my soul in the days of my life! O my sorrow over my shortcomings in obeying You, O my Master! O my sorrow over my wasting my life in this worldly life!"** The youngster then turned towards the *qiblah*, made a firm pledge of sincere repentance to Allâh ﷻ, asked Allâh ﷻ to accept him, and cried until he fell unconscious. He was carried away from the assembly. Sâlih *rahimahullâh* and his companions went on several occasions to visit him and he eventually passed away. A large number of people attended his funeral. Sâlih *rahimahullâh* used to mention him a lot in his assemblies and used to say: **"I take an oath that he passed away through the [impact of the] Qur'ân. I take an oath that he passed away through the impact of admonitions and concerns."** A person saw this youngster in his dream and asked him how he fared. He replied: **"The blessing of Sâlih's assembly engulfed me and I entered the wide expanse of Allâh's mercy which encompasses everything."**

The person who is injured by the whips of admonitions and screams out [in repentance] shall have no sin against him. The one whose injury is more severe and he passes away on account of it, his blood was lawful.

قضى الله في القتلى قصاص دمائهم ولكن دماء العاشقين جُبارُ

"Allâh ﷻ decreed retribution for those who are murdered. However, there is no retribution for the blood of lovers."

The one who spends his entire life in obedience

One category remains. It is the noblest and loftiest of all. It is of the person who spends his entire life in obedience. He is then informed of the approach of his end so that he may strive harder and prepare for the departure with good deeds which make him worthy to meet Allâh ﷻ, and which are a conclusion of all his deeds. Ibn 'Abbâs ﷺ said: **"When this verse was revealed to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ:** 'When the help of Allâh ﷻ comes, and victory...' *(Sûrah an-Nasr, 110: 1)* the demise of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ was announced to him. He therefore began striving even more in matters related to the Hereafter.

Umm Salamah *radiyallâhu 'anhâ* said: **"Towards the end of his life, the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ used to say: *sub-ḥânallâhi wa bi ḥamdihi*, when standing, when sitting, when going, and when coming. So I mentioned this to him and he said: 'I have been ordered to do this.' He then recited this verse."**

It was his habit to go into seclusion (*i'tikâf*) for ten days in every Ramadân and recite the Qur'ân once to Jibra'îl ﷺ. In the year of his demise he went into seclusion for twenty days and recited the Qur'ân two times. He used to say: **"I am doing this solely because of the approach of my end."** He then went for the Farewell Pilgrimage and said to the people: **"Learn your rites of ḥajj from me because I may not meet you next year."** He began bidding farewell to the people and they said: **"This is the Farewell Pilgrimage."** He returned to Madînah, but before he could reach the city, he addressed the people saying: **"O people! I am merely a mortal. The messenger [angel of death] of my Lord may well come to me and I will respond to His call."** He then ordered them to adhere to the Book of Allâh. He passed away soon after reaching Madînah. If the leader of all the doers of good is ordered to conclude his life by increasing in goodness, what can be said of the sinner?

خذ في جد فقد تولى العمر كم ذا التفريط قد تداني الأمر

أقبل فعسى يقبل منك العذر كم تبني كم تنقض كم ذا الغدر

"Become serious because life has passed. How much of excesses are you going to approach?! Move forward [with good deeds], perhaps your excuses will be accepted. How much are you building? How much are you destroying? How many acts of treachery are you committing?"

An ardent worshipper fell ill, so someone suggested a certain medicine which he should drink. He saw a dream in which he was asked: **"Are you going to drink the medicine while the doe-eyed damsel of Paradise has already prepared herself for you?"** He got up with a fright. He offered ṣalâh for three days until his back became bent. He then died on the third day.

There was a person who remained in solitude and engaged himself in worship. He saw someone in his dream saying to him: **"O you person! Your Lord is calling you. Prepare and depart for ḥajj, you are not going to return."** He departed for ḥajj and died on the way.

A righteous person saw a dream in which someone was saying to him:

تأهـــب للـــذي لا بـــد مـــنه ... مـــن المـــوت المـــوكل بالعـــباد
أترضـــى أن تكـــون رفـــيق قـــوم ... لهـــم زاد وأنـــت بغيـــر زاد

"Prepare for the inevitable: for death which is appointed for the servants. Would you like to accompany people who possess provisions [for the journey] while you have no provisions?"

Jâbir ﷺ narrates that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ delivered a sermon and said in it: **"O people! Repent to Allâh before you die. Hasten with good deeds before you become occupied."** The chain of this Hadîth is weak. The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ commands hastening with repentance before death. Every moment of a person which passes by could well be the moment of his death. In fact, every breath he takes could be his last. A poet says:

لا تـأمن المـوت فـي طـرف ولا نفـس ... ولـو تمـنعت بالحجـاب والحـرس

"Do not feel secure from death even for the blink of an eye or a single breath, even if you were to defend yourself against it with obstacles and guards."

Luqmân ﷺ said to his son: **"O my son! Do not delay repentance because death comes suddenly."** A wise man said: **"Do not be one who hopes for the Hereafter without good deeds, and delays repentance because of high hopes."**

إلـى الله تـب قـبل انقـضاء مـن العمـر ... أخـــي ولا تـــأمن مفاجـــأة الأمـــر
ولا تتأخـــر عـــن دعائـــي فإنمـــا ... دعـــوتك إشـــفاقا علـــيك مـــن الـــوزر
فقـــد حـــذرتك الحادثـــات نـــزولها ... ونادتـــك إلا أن ســـمعك ذو وقـــر
تـــنو وتبكـــي للأحـــبة إن مـــضوا ... ونفـسك لا تبكـي وأنـت علـى الإثـر

"O my brother! Repent to Allâh before the expiry of your life. Do not feel secure from sudden death. Do not delay in harkening to my call because I called you out of fear for you from sin. The descent of calamities have warned you and called out to you, but you are turning a deaf ear. You sigh and cry when your beloveds pass away, but your soul does not cry over the fact that you are going to follow them soon."

A person of the past said: **"They woke up repenting in the morning, and spent the evening in repentance."** He is making

reference to the fact that it is not becoming of a believer to get up in the morning and spend the evening except in a state of repentance. This is because he does not know when death will strike him – in the morning or in the evening. The person who neither repents in the morning nor in the evening is in serious danger because there is the fear that he will meet Allâh ﷻ without repentance and will be raised among the wrongdoers. Allâh ﷻ says: **"And whoever does not repent – it is they who are the wrongdoers."** *(Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 11)*

تب من خطاياك وابك خشية ... ما أثبت منها عليك في الكتب

أية حال تكون حال فتى ... صار إلى ربه ولم يتب

"Repent from your sins and cry out of fear. There is nothing more certain than this in the books. What can be said of the condition of the youth who goes to his Lord without having repented!?"

It is terrible to delay repentance when one is young. It is far more despicable to delay it when one is old.

نعى لك ظل الشباب المشيب ... ونادتك باسم سواك الخطوب

فكن مستعدا لداعي الفناء ... فكل الذي هو آت قريب

ألسنا نرى شهوات النفو ... س تفنى وتبقى علينا الذنوب

يخاف على نفسه من يتوب ... فكيف يكون حال من لا يتوب

"The shade of youth announced the death of the old person. Calamities announced the name of someone other than you. So you must remain prepared for the one who calls towards death. Everything that is approaching is very near. Do we not see the desires of the souls destroyed while our sins remain with us? The one who repents fears for his life. What, then, can be said of the one who does not even repent?"

When illness befalls a person and he delays in repenting, then this is the worst of all. This is because illness warns of death. It is advisable for a person who visits a sick person to remind him to repent and seek forgiveness. There is no better conclusion to life than with repentance and seeking forgiveness. If he had evil deeds, it will be an atonement for them. If he had good deeds, it will be like a seal for them.

The Hadîth which makes reference to the main form of seeking

forgiveness (*sayyid al-istighfâr*) states that the person who says it in the morning and evening, and then passes away that day or that night shall be among the people of Paradise. A person who is ill should engage in abundant remembrance of Allâh ﷻ, especially the *kalimah tauḥîd*. The person whose last words are this *kalimah* shall enter Paradise.

Abû Sa'îd ﷺ and Abû Hurayrah ﷺ narrate that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said: **"The Hell-fire will not taste the person who says the following during his illness and passes away in that illness."** The supplication is:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ، وَاللهُ أَكْبَرُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ، وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَلَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللهِ.

"There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. Allâh is the greatest. There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. He is one, He has no partner, His is the kingdom, and to Him belongs all praise. There is none worthy of worship except Allâh. There is no power and might except with Allâh." Narrated by an-Nasa'î *raḥimahullâh*, Ibn Mâjah *raḥimahullâh* and at-Tirmidhî *raḥimahullâh*.(1)

The pious predecessors were of the opinion that the person who passes away after a good deed, e.g. after the fasts of Ramaḍân, after performing ḥajj or 'umrah, then there is hope that he shall enter Paradise. Despite their striving with good deeds when they were healthy, they used to strive in repentance and seeking forgiveness at the time of death. They used to conclude their deeds with seeking forgiveness and the *kalimah tauḥîd*.

When al-'Alâ' ibn Ziyâd was on the verge of dying, he began crying. Someone asked him: **"Why are you crying?"** He replied: **"I always loved to meet death with repentance."** They said: **"May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on you. So why don't you repent now?"** He asked for water, performed ablution, asked for a new garment of his, wore it, faced the *qiblah*, nodded his head one or two times, lied down, and passed away.

When 'Âmir ibn 'Abdillâh was on the verge of dying, he began crying and said: **"It is for such an occasion that people should**

(1) At-Tirmidhi checked it (3430) and Ibn Majah (3794).

work and strive. O Allâh! I seek Your forgiveness for my shortcomings and excesses. I repent to You from all my sins. There is none worthy of worship except Allâh." He continued repeating this until he passed away. May Allâh ﷻ have mercy on him.

'Amr ibn al-'Âṣ *raḥimahullâh* said at the time of his death: **"O Allâh! You ordered us but we disobeyed. You prohibited us but we still committed the unlawful. Nothing but Your pardon can suffice us. There is none worthy of worship except You."** He repeated this until he passed away.

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azîz *raḥimahullâh* said at the time of his death: **"Make me sit up."** The people made him sit up, and he said: **"I am the one whom You ordered but I displayed shortcomings. You prohibited me but I disobeyed You. But there is none worthy of worship except Allâh."** He then raised his head and remained staring. The people said to him: **"O Amîr al-Mu'minîn! You are staring very hard!?"** He said: **"I see a group who are neither humans nor jinn."** He then passed away. May Allâh ﷻ show mercy to him. The people heard someone reciting this verse: **"That abode of the Hereafter – We shall give it to those who do not seek to exalt themselves in the land, nor to cause corruption. The blessed end is for those who fear."** *(Sûrah al-Qasas, 28: 83)*

يـا غافـل القلـب عـن ذكـر المنـيات عمـا قلـيل سـتُلقى بـين أمـوات
فاذكـر محلـك مـن قـبل الحلـول بـه وتـب إلـى الله مـن لهـو ولـذات
إن الحمـام لـه وقـت إلـى أجـل فاذكـر مـصائب أيـام وسـاعات
لا تطمـئن إلـى الدنـيا وزينـتها قـد آن للمـوت يـا ذا اللـب أن ياتـي

"O you who are heedless of remembering death! Soon shall you be cast among the dead. So think of your abode before you go to it, and repent to Allâh for all your play and pleasures. The fate of death has a certain time, so remember the afflictions of days and hours. Do not be at peace with the world and its attractions. O intelligent person! The time of death has arrived."

Repent, repent before your turn of death comes to you. The person who was committing excesses shall experience regret and loss.

Turn to Allâh, turn to Allâh before the door of acceptance is shut. Wake up, wake up, because the time of waking up has drawn

near. How wonderful is the uneasiness of the repentant! How sweet is the arrival of those who were absent! How beautiful is their standing at the door!

أســأت ولــم أحــسن وجئــتك تائــبا وأنــى لعــبد مــن موالــيه مهــرب
يــؤمل غفــرانا فــإن خــاب ظــنه فمــا أحــد مــنه علــى الأرض أخــيب

"I sinned and I did not do any good. I have come in repentance to You. How can a slave flee from his Master? He is hoping for forgiveness. If he fails in this hope of his, there is no one on earth who is more lost than him."

The person who has grey hair is like a pregnant woman whose months of pregnancy have come to an end. She is waiting for nothing but the delivery of her child. Similar is the case of the grey-haired person – he is waiting for nothing but death. It is therefore despicable for him to persist in sinning.

أي شــيء تــريد منــي الذنــوب شــغفت بــي فلــيس عنــي تغــيب
مــا يــضر الذنــوب لــو أعتقتنــي رحمــة بــي فقــد علانــي المــشيب

"O sins! What do you want from me? You are enamoured by me and therefore not leaving me. What harm will it be to you if you free me? Have mercy on me [O sins], because I am now overcome by grey hairs."

However, the repentance of a youngster is better and superior. Ibn Abî ad-Dunyâ narrates a Hadîth: **"Allâh ﷻ loves a repentant youngster."** 'Umayr ibn Hâni' said: **"Repentance says to a youngster: 'Welcome to you!' It says to an old person: 'We shall accept you despite all that you have done.'"** A youngster abstains from sinning despite having the strength which calls him to it. On the other hand, the desires of the old man have weakened and the invitation to sin has lessened. Therefore, the repentance of the two cannot be the same.

It is stated in some traditions that Allâh ﷻ says: **"O youngster who abstains from his desires, who spends his youth for Me! You are to Me like some of My angels."**

'Umar ibn al-Khattâb ﷺ said: **"Those who desire sins but do not commit them are: 'it is they whose hearts Allâh has tested for piety. For them is forgiveness and a mighty reward.'** *(Sûrah al-Hujurât, 49: 3)* **What a vast difference between the one who says: 'I seek refuge in Allâh! My master has kept me well.'** *(Sûrah*

Yûsuf, 12: 23) **and an impotent old man who is invited in a similar way and complies!"**

'Umar ﷺ used to patrol the streets of Madînah at night. He heard a woman whose husband was gone [for jihad] saying:

تطاول هذا الليل تسري كواكبه ووافقني أن لا خليل ألاعبه

فوالله لو لا الله لا شيء غيره لحرك من هذا السرير جوانبه

ولكن تقوى الله عن ذا تصدني وحفظا لبعلي أن تنال مراكبه

ولكنني أخشى رقيبا موكلا بأنفسنا لا يفتر الدهر كاتبه

"This night is long and its stars are moving. Coincidentally, I have no friend [husband] with whom I can play. By Allâh, were it not for Allâh and nothing else but Allâh, the sides of this bed would have shaken [I would have committed adultery]. However, the fear of Allâh and protecting my husband's honour are preventing me from that. Moreover, I fear the watcher [angel] who is appointed over us – who never ever tires from recording [our deeds]."

'Umar ﷺ said to her: **"May Allâh have mercy on you."** He then sent a message to her husband ordering him to return to his wife. He also issued an order that no one should remain away from his wife for more than four months and ten days.

If sins have departed from an old man, he does not deserve any praise for this. A poet says:

تاركك الذنب فتاركته بالفعل والشهوة في القلب

فالحمد للذنب على تركه لا لك في تركك للذنب

"You were asked to give up sins, so you gave them up physically, but the desire [to commit sins] is still present in your heart. So praise belongs to sin for giving up on you, and not to you for giving up the sin."

Are you not ashamed of Us? When the pleasures of the world were turned away from you, there remained no desire in you for them. You were reduced to a useless item which no one needs. You came to Our door and said: **"I am repentant."** We give shelter to everyone who seeks shelter at Our door. We give refuge to everyone who seeks refuge in Us. We love the one who turns in repentance to Us. So glad tidings, it may well be that grey hairs will intercede in

favour of the person against the punishments.

An old man who committed excesses passed away. Someone saw him in a dream and asked him how he fared. He said: **"Allâh ﷻ said to me: 'Were it not for your old age, I would have punished you.'"**

An old man was standing at 'Arafât while the people around him were crying in supplication, but he was silent. He then held his beard and said: **"O my Lord! I am an old man, O my Lord! I am an old man who is hoping for Your mercy."**

لمـــا أتـــونا والـــشيب شـــافعهم وقـــد توالـــى علـــيهم الخجـــل
قلـــنا لـــسود الـــصحائف انقلبـــي بيـــضا فـــإن الـــشيوخ قـــد قـــبلوا

"They came to Us overcome by shame, while old age was their intercessor. We said to the black pages [on which the sins were recorded]: 'Become white [by becoming filled with rewards]. Because the old people are accepted [by Us].'"

A righteous person used to say:

إن الملـــوك إذا شـــابت عبـــيدهم فـــي رقهـــم عـــتقوهم عـــتق أبـــرار
وأنـــت يـــا خالقـــي أولـــى بـــذا كـــرما قد شبت في الرق فاعتقني من النار

"When the slaves who are under the slavery of kings become old, the kings free them as they free obedient servants. You, O my Creator! Are more worthy of such kindness. I am in the slavery of old age. So free me from the Hell-fire."

O you sinner! Do not let hope be severed from your becoming righteous. We set the traps of these admonitions so that you may fall into them. When you depart from the assembly with full determination to repent, the angels of mercy shall say to you: **"Welcome to you!"** If your friends with whom you commit sins say to you: **"Come to us."** Say to them: **"Never. That is the wine of desires which you are promising. It has now changed to vinegar."** O you whose book of deeds has become black with sins, the time has come for you to wipe it clean with repentance. O you whose heart is intoxicated with desires! Has the time not come for your heart to come to its senses?

يـــا نادمـــاي صـــحا القلـــب صـــحا فاطـــردوا عنـــي الـــصبا والمـــرحا
هـــزم العقـــل جـــنودا للهـــوى فاســـدي لا تعجـــبوا إن صـــلحا

زجـــر الحـــق فـــؤادي فارعـــوى وأفـــاق القلـــب منـــي وصـــحا

بـــادروا الـــتوبة مـــن قـــبل الـــردى فمـــــناديه يناديـــــنا الـــــوحا

"O my remorse! My heart has come to its senses. So repulse all desires and merriment from me. The intellect has defeated the armies of desires. So do not be astonished if my depravity has been rectified. The truth reprimanded my heart so it came to attention. My heart came to its senses and regained consciousness. Hasten with repentance before destruction. The caller is calling us towards inspiration."

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All praise is due solely to Allâh ﷻ for enabling me to complete the translation of this inspiring book. I beseech Allâh ﷻ to accept this work from me, enable me and others to benefit from it and practise on it, and to make it a means of my salvation in this world and in the Hereafter.

Mahomed Mahomedy

9 Jumâdâ al-Ukhrâ 1430 A.H.

3 June 2009