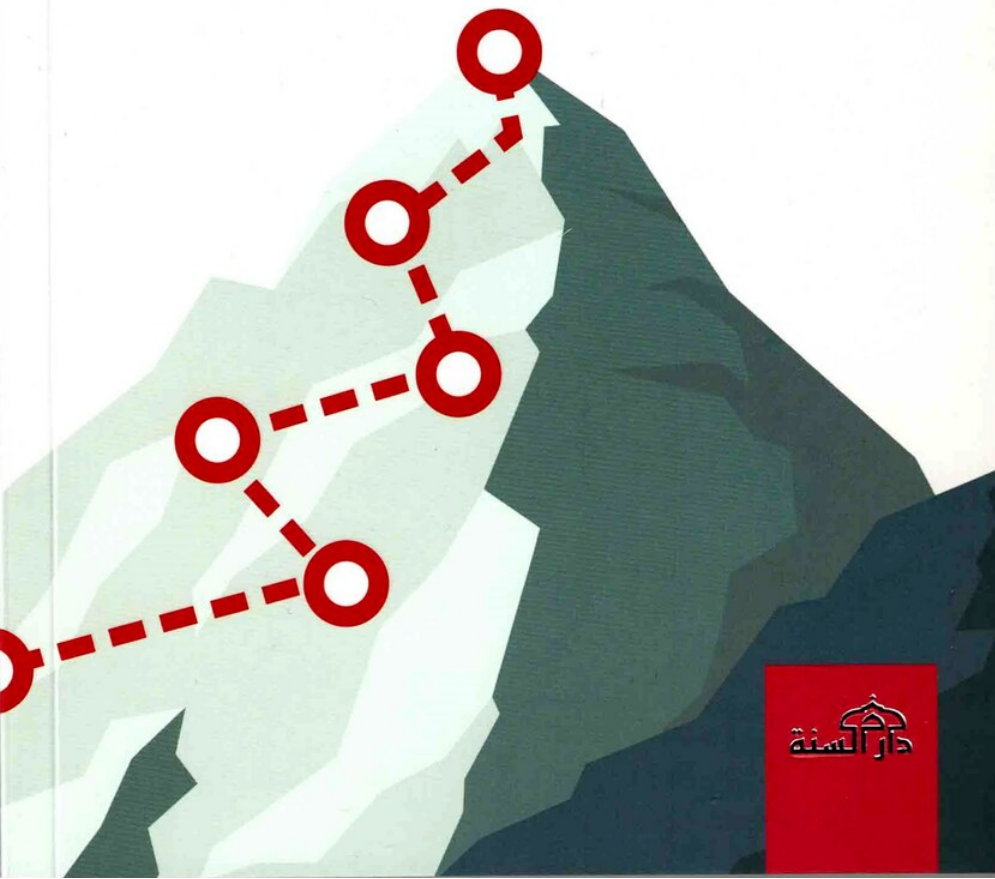


REVIVING THE SPIRIT — OF THE — YOUTH



SHAYKH ṢĀLIḤ IBN FAWZĀN IBN
'ABDULLĀH AL-FAWZĀN



دار السنة

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al-Fawzān

REVIVING the SPIRIT
of the YOUTH

a translation of

‘Min mushkilāt al-shibāb wa kayfa ‘ilajhā al-Islām’



“And this worldly life is not but
diversion and amusement.”

[*al-ʿAnkabūt* (29): 64]

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by
Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Ibn Fawzān Ibn ‘Abdullāh
al-Fawzān



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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allāh, Most Beneficent, Most Merciful

Verily all praise is for Allāh. We praise Him and we seek refuge in Him and ask Him for forgiveness and repent unto Him. We seek protection in Allāh from the evil within us and from our bad deeds. Whosoever Allāh guides, none can lead astray and whosoever He sends astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh, the Absolute who has no partners, and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger. He was sent near the end of time as a Bearer of glad tidings and as a Warner, calling to Allāh by His will and a [guiding] light and radiance. He was sent with the [complete] message, fulfilled his duty and advised the nation and strived for the sake of Allāh in its best form. May the peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, his family, companions and all those who follow him until the Day of Judgement.

To proceed:

The topic that I bring to you is of great concern to each and every Muslim. It is the topic concerning the youth, the modern problems and challenges they face, and how to appropriately remedy these problems while guiding them. I do not say I can sufficiently outline this topic and present in it's entirety. However, I shall address it as best I can and Allāh is the one who grants success.

CHAPTER ONE

The Role of Youth in Life

There is no doubt the role of the youth (*shibāb*) is very important, for if they are upright, the whole society is given a boost and placed in good stead. With the good health and sharp intellect Allāh has provided them, they propagate Islām far and wide and outshine the effort of elders. Even though the elders may have more experience and know-how, they most often are held back by worsening health and lack of energy. With the buoyant enthusiasm the youth have, they are able to do much more. The youngsters from among the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) had a crucial role to play [in stabilising society] through the spreading of Islām, gaining knowledge and striving in the path of Allāh.

Some notable names are, ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar, ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Aas, Mu‘ādh Ibn Jabal, Zayd Ibn Thābit (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*) and many others. These youth engaged beneficial knowledge and preserved it for the nation. This inheritance of the Prophet (ﷺ) was then passed on with every contact they made. Some youth among the Companions (*radīy Allāhu*

'*anbum*) were born-leaders, and Khālid Ibn Walid (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) and Muthanī Ibn Ḥārithah al-Shaybānī are great examples. They all stood as one nation and were focused in single-mindedness on fulfilling their obligations. Therefore, they played a major role in their religion, society and nation at large. Such was their contribution that it is felt to this day and shall continue to be felt as long as Islām proceeds.

The youth of today can become inheritors of the righteous youths of the past, provided they rectify themselves, and realise their [own responsibilities and] status and discharge the trust laid upon them. The Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that a youth who has a pious upbringing falls under the seven categories of people who receive the Shade of Allāh on a Day when there is no shade except His Shade. One such person is the youth who is nurtured and raised upon the worship of Allāh.

CHAPTER TWO

Examples of Prophet (ﷺ) Instructing the Youth

Our Prophet (ﷺ) used to be considerate of the youth and give careful instructions to them. He (ﷺ) said to Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*): “Young lad, should I not teach you some words through which Allāh will facilitate benefit for you?” I said: ‘Of course!’ He (ﷺ) said: “Safeguard Allāh and He will safeguard you. Safeguard Allāh and you will find Him in front of you. Know Allāh in times of ease and He will know you in times of hardship. When you ask, ask Allāh. When you seek aid, turn to Allāh.”¹

The Prophet (ﷺ) also asked Mu‘ādh Ibn Jabal (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) while he was riding alongside him on the camel: “O Mu‘ādh, do you know the right of Allāh upon the servant and the right of the

¹ Tirmidhī, #2516 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, #2669, #2763, #2803 and it is *ṣaḥīḥ*. Refer to Ibn Rajab’s explanation to this profound ḥadīth published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers, Birmingham, UK, 1st ed., 2009 under the title ‘The Legacy of the Prophet (ﷺ)’.

servant upon Allāh?” [till the end of that ḥadīth].

‘Umar Ibn Abī Salamah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), the foster child of the Prophet (ﷺ) put his wandering hand on a plate of food while eating with the Prophet (ﷺ). He held ‘Umar’s hand and said: “Young lad, begin with the Name of Allāh and eat with your right hand and eat that which is nearest to you [on the plate].”²

This is an example of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) instruction to a child thereby instilling in him eating etiquettes at a tender age. This sheds light on the importance of guiding the youth to goodness and the responsibility borne by adults towards these youth.

² Bukhārī, #5061, Muslim, #2022, Abū Dāwūd, #2777, Ibn Mājah, #3267, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/26 and others.

CHAPTER THREE

Assisting the Youth

Islām places great importance in nurturing the youth, for the youth of today are adults and leaders of tomorrow. They shall also assume the roles of their fathers in the future and inherit from them. Here is some Islāmic guidance that will assist the youth in their life.

Section One:

Choosing a Pious Wife

As she is the bearer of off-springs, our Prophet (ﷺ) urged us to choose a pious wife. He said: “Choose the one who is righteous.”³ Indeed the pious wife shall give her children a proper up-bringing and shall discharge her duties towards them in a goodly manner.

³ Bukhārī, #4802, Muslim, #1466, Abu Dāwud, #2047, Nasā’ī, #3230, Ibn Mājah, #1858 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/428.

Section Two:
The Father's Role in Selecting a
Good Name for his Child

One of the first responsibilities of the father when he has a child is to give him or her a proper name. A good name has a nice meaning and bears dignity. The Prophet (ﷺ) urged us to give the newborn a good name and instructed us to avoid a bad name that might have an improper meaning [and reflect badly on the child].

Section Three:
The Father making *'aqīqah*
on behalf of the child

Islām encourages fathers to perform a thanks-giving slaughter on behalf of the child (*'aqīqah*) as it is a sunnah that is much emphasised. This act has a wholesome impact on the child beyond just the meat that is consumed and the celebration that follows it. Thus, Islām is a positive influence on the youth from his very birth.

Section Four:
The Importance of Nurturing the Youth

When a child reaches the age where he can distinguish right from wrong and he has gained a certain level of intelligence, he should be given religious guidance. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Instruct your children to pray when they are seven years old and reprimand them if they do not do so by ten. And separate them from the bed [i.e. provide separate beds for sleep]."⁴

⁴ Abū Dāwūd, #495 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/187.

This clearly illustrates the point that Islām gives much importance to the youth and guides them with advice that is appropriate to their age. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Each child is born upon the natural inclination (*fitrah*). The parents make them into a Jew or a Christian or a fire-worshipper.”⁵

If this *fitrah* is well preserved by the parents, it shall gravitate to only that what is naturally dispositional and good. Yet if they digress from this, then the child’s *fitrah* will be tarnished because of their lax and improper upbringing. If the father is a Jew, Christian or a fire-worshipper (*majūsi*), the child is reared in these religions and thus his *fitrah* is adversely affected. However, if the father is a pious Muslim, the child will be bred in ways that maintain the pure *fitrah* that Allāh placed within the child, and so it thrives and flourishes.

Section Five:

The Obligation of Being Dutiful

The youth is nurtured from a very young age to be dutiful to parents. Allāh commands that if either one or both parents reach old age, they should be treated kindly and with honour. Children should reflect on the days when their parents took care of them during their infancy. Allāh, the Most High said:

إِمَّا
يَبْلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا
أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾ وَأَخْفِضْ

⁵ Bukhārī, #1692, Muslim, #2658, Tirmidhī, #3138 Abū Dāwūd, #4714, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/275 and others

لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي

صَغِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾

“And your Lord has decreed that you not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], “uff”, and do not repel them but speak to them a noble word. And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say: ‘My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small.’”

[*al-Isrā'* (17): 23-24]

The focal point of the verse:

كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾

“as they brought me up [when I was] small.”

[*al-Isrā'* (17): 24]

Is that parents should raise children by providing for them adequately. This does not mean just the material aspect like food, drinks, clothing and other human needs, but it should encompass more noble needs. Needs that preserve his *fitrah* will inevitably leads to vituousness, which become firmly embedded within him and continues to thrive as he grows older. Nurturing bodily needs only would merely serve to corrupt the child.

Indulging them in food and appeasing their desires at the expense of proper wholesome nurturing will lead them to live a spiritually bankrupt life [similar to what animals have]. It is an obligation upon parents to nourish them within Islāmic guidelines, which requires absence of extravagance and wastage. This nourishment

goes hand in hand with spiritual nurturing that will aid the child to reflect on his early years while in his adulthood and says:

رَبِّ اَرْحَمُهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْتَنِي صَغِيرًا ﴿٢٤﴾

“My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small.”

[*al-Isrā'* (17): 24]

CHAPTER FOUR

The Problem Facing the Youth and their Causes

We would like to identify the problems faced by the youth and the pertinent actions that should be carried out to remedy these problems in light of the Qur'ān and Sunnah. In fact, Islām is the solution to every problem, and if it is adhered to strictly and correctly, then one can rid himself of all his problems. The youth of today face some of the following dilemmas:

Section One: New Trends

Youth today are bombarded with dangerous new trends; this is from the biggest problems and challenges. If left to fester and manifest themselves, these trends easily lead to the corruption of character and faith of the youth. These trends are numerous and reach the youth with little effort through mass media as well as social media.

Radio, television, internet and printed media all carry potent venom that kills off the innocence of the youth who are unable to discern between good and bad, right and wrong. These mediums maliciously strike at the core of a teenager's being, and sweep him towards annihilation. It has become a common sight in our society to see youth mimic unhealthy and destructive trends beaming from around the globe; a direct result of ingesting the immorality mass media beams out. The outcome, therefore, is diminishing faith.

We find youth receptive to apostasy, Marxism, Socialism and other decadent ideologies. Whenever exposed to evil content that undeniably is easily accessible, it is consumed extensively. Immaturity contributes to this onslaught as a turbulent nature and a lack of knowledge prevents the youth from being selective about what to see, hear or read and what to avoid. As the saying goes, 'an idle mind is a devil's workshop': a mind that is void of beneficial knowledge will be receptive to its opposite, which will then become imbedded, and to remove these ideas will be a difficult task indeed.

Section Two:

Corruption of Thought and Mannerism

These problems can be tackled in a number of ways.

Firstly and foremost amongst them is restricting the youth from unfettered access to mass media and social media. I am not suggesting a complete restriction; beneficial programs and activities must be encouraged. However, as corruption holds sway in these medium, it is the responsibility of the parent and care-giver to be discerning.

Secondly, the youth must be prevented from travelling to foreign countries unnecessarily without reason. Visiting and touring certain destinations that are known for social deprivation and moral decadence will impact hugely and negatively on mannerism and may even reach the extent where it affects and rattles faith.

Tourism in general entails immersing oneself in the culture and way of life of the host nation; this usually means ideals of a nation and of its people deemed corrupt [such as liberalism] will affect the tourist. There is no defence for him from this type of attack, as most often, no one is beside him to offer sincere counsel. Consequently, the lack of spiritual fortification contributes to his gradual downward spiral.

Travelling abroad brings the youth up close and personal with foreign people and their foreign values, the result is disastrous. He starts to snub his religion and the Islāmic community at large. He returns home a social outcast albeit a secretive one. Therefore our youth should be told to restrict themselves to certain places and avoid tourist hotspots where debauchery and mischief is abound.

Section Three: Widespread Ignorance

Many of the youth are ignorant of their faith and religious heritage. This is due to reluctance to educate themselves about Islām and its sciences. Had they made a genuine effort, then differentiating between good and evil, benefits and harms, the lawful and the unlawful would have become easy. For this reason amongst

others, our youth are afflicted by decadence that is becoming more evident by the day, its ill-effects have reached alarming proportions.

CHAPTER FIVE

Effective Solutions to the Problems Faced by the Youth

If we advise for the sake of Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ), and in accordance with the Qur'ān and Sunnah directed towards all levels of social and societal spectrum, a solution can be achieved very quickly and easily.

Section One: Educational Learning

Our educational learning curriculum [in Saudi Arabia] contains Islāmic knowledge that is fit for purpose and guides to a pure creed—a curriculum that teaches to distinguish lawful (*ḥalāl*) from unlawful (*ḥarām*) in business transactions, in food and drink, in behaviour and in culture. Hearts and minds are filled with beneficial knowledge which, is harnessed correctly, will confer the owner wisdom to discern right from wrong. It repels doubts that they might encounter while:

a) Rectifying the curriculum initially

b) Selecting suitable teachers who can express this knowledge in such a way that it reaches the hearts of the youth. These teachers motivate and encourage their students towards this same knowledge.

c) Interaction between the youth and scholars at school, in the *masjid* and elsewhere. This allows the youth to clarify doubts pertaining to Islām. Scholars offer sound advice enabling one to lead an Islāmic life. Thus, the responsibility of the scholars towards the young generation is immense. Ironically, I say with much regret that presently they are at polar ends and there exists a huge chasm between them. This factor has contributed to the youth going wayward; a close mentoring by the scholars allows the youth to get a good grip over their affairs. A want of this, sets the youth spiralling into depravity.

⁷ Bukhāri, 11/178, Aḥmad, 3/220, Abū Dāwūd, 2/90, Tirmidhī, 5/520 and Nasā'ī, 8/257 on the authority of Anas Ibn Mālik (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*).

CHAPTER SIX

Youth and Marriage

Another problem afflicting the youth is their abstention from marriage. This is a big predicament and only Allāh knows the extent of the damage it will bring. Youths give these following reasons for the abstention:

1. Early marriage hinders education and disrupts planning for the future.
2. It burdens him as he now has to provide for the wife and children.
3. The above is cited as the principal factor why handicapped women are marginalised when it comes to marriage. She is perceived as a yoke on the neck of her husband.

These reasons create the dilemma that is rife in our society. The solution to this is simple if indeed we have purified intentions. Young adults should be made to ponder on the great privilege marriage brings to their lives. It imbues wholesome goodness and offers a high status to them. This should undoubtedly put to rest

their misgivings towards a wedded life. All negative forces have a positive one to counter it. Similarly, all problems in life have solutions lying in wait. There are bound to be problems in a marriage that can be resolved if it is rationally approached. Parents and elders need to constantly drum into them the untold benefits of marriage.

Section One: Keeping Chaste

Keeps one chaste and lowers one's gaze. In the way of explaining this point, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "O the young generation! whoever can afford a house, let him marry for verily it [helps] lower the gaze and preserves chastity. Whoever cannot afford to do so, let him fast."⁶

The Prophet (ﷺ) instructed the youth to get married if they indeed had the capacity to do so, as it would in time reap great rewards. Hence they are urged to marry as early as possible provided they can afford it. Praise be to Allāh, affordability is not an issue today. Therefore one should not cite it as a barrier. The Prophet (ﷺ) infers to the inherent danger of our groin in the ḥadīth above and immediately offers the remedy.

Section Two: Marriage Safeguards against Sin

Early marriage safeguards from sin, as Allāh, the Most High said:

⁶ Bukhārī, #4778, Muslim, #1400, Tirmidhī, #1081, Nasā'ī, #2240, Abū Dāwūd, #2046, Ibn Mājah, #1845, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 1/378 and others.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَفْوَاجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ﴿٢٩﴾ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ
أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ ﴿٣٠﴾

“And those who guard their private parts. Except from their wives or those their right hands possess, for indeed, they are not to be blamed.”

[*al-Ma‘ārij* (70): 29-30]

Marriage prevents the eyes from wandering and the married person does not consider engaging in illicit sexual acts as his desires can be fulfilled in a lawful way.

Section Three:

Marriage provides Solace and Tranquillity to the Heart

Marriage provides solace and brings tranquillity to the heart. Allāh, the Most High said:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ
أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً

“And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquillity in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy. Indeed in that are signs for a people who give thought.”

[*al-Rūm* (30): 21]

Youth who are perturbed and anxious realise soon after marriage that they have rid themselves of these symptoms. Goodness comes to him one after another, and as a result he attains peace of mind.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Advantages of an Early Marriage

Being blessed with children at an early age is an immense source of pride and pleasure. Allāh, The Most High says:

وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا
هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا
لِلْمُنْقِبِينَ إِمَامًا ﴿٧٤﴾

“And those who say: ‘Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us a leader [i.e., example] for the righteous.’”

[*al-Furqān* (25): 74]

The spouse and children are described as coolness or comfort to the eyes (*qurrat al-‘ayn*). This comfort stems from a marriage. This alone should embolden a youth to marry early. In another verse Allāh describes children as being part of all worldly treasures. Allāh, the Most High says:

الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

“Wealth and children are [but] adornment of the worldly life.”

[*al-Kahf* (18): 46]

Man has an innate desire for the treasures of this world and offspring is his main objective along with material gain. This being the worldly scenario, the Hereafter offers even more happiness. The pious child shall be a source of redemption for his or her parents even after their death. Our beloved Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When the son of Ādam [mankind] dies, all his [good] deeds terminate except three: The knowledge with which he benefited people, the perpetual charity or the pious child who supplicates for him [the parent].”⁷

Offspring bring us comfort not only in this world, but also in the Hereafter. Another advantage of an early marriage is the opportunity to bear more children with the Will of Allāh. That ultimately increases the Muslim community and the Islāmic nation in the wider perspective. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Marry the loving and the fertile [woman] for verily my nation shall be the most numbered on the Day of Judgement.”⁸

The assumed barriers to an early marriage are rendered invalid in light of the aforementioned merits. As for the one who claims that an early marriage hinders learning and pursuing higher education, he is shrouding himself in deception. His assumptions run

⁷ Muslim, #1631, Tirmidhī, #1375, Abū Dāwūd, #2880, Ibn Mājah, #242, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/372 and others.

⁸ Abū Dāwūd, #2050 and Nasā’ī, #3227

contrary to the practical truth. There is no denying that marriage gives one stability and peace of mind. This state is only conducive to obtaining knowledge and not a hindrance to it. In fact, being single poses a bigger setback to learning as the mind is constantly racing with hormones wrecking havoc on his thought processes. However, if he is married, he can completely focus on his studies and not worry about a lot of other things. His wife is at hand to provide solace and assistance.

And then there are those who claim that the wife and children will be a financial burden. This is also another falsity. A marriage brings along with it much blessings and goodness. It is an act of obedience to Allāh and His Messenger. All obedience has merit. If a youth marries heeding the Prophet's command and it is done with full conviction that it shall bear rewards with the Will of Allāh, then that marriage will be a true success provided that his intentions are pure. Everyone's sustenance is in the Hands of Allāh. He, the Most High said:

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا

“And there is no creature on earth but that upon Allāh is its provision.”

[*Hūd* (11): 6]

In contrast to what is prevalently uttered by most youth, marriage does not stretch one beyond his capability. Given that it is a Commandment from the Creator, it is incumbent upon Him to provide for the married couple. The notion that it hinders livelihood emanates from mischief-makers who want anarchy to reign.

The marriage per say does not require a huge dowry (*mahr*) and lavish banquet to feed the guests and other such opulence. What

is expected in a marriage is in fact simplicity. People need to be forewarned that extravagance in marriage ceremonies will only culminate in the corruption of their own children who delay marriage due to the exorbitant price tag. The pious will not associate themselves with this self-indulgent culture. Therefore, the current approach to marriage must be altered such that marriage becomes moderate and reasonable. Only then will it play an effective role in life.

We ask that Allāh, the Most High bless us all with enlightenment and guidance and that he rectifies the affairs of all Muslims. I ask Him to rectify our Muslim youth and ask that their dignity and status be restored to the level of the predecessors. Allāh, the Most High says:

وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ، وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ
الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾

“And to Allāh belongs [all] honour, and to His Messenger, and to the believers, but the hypocrites do not know.”

[*al-Munāfiqūn* (63): 8]

May Allāh give them insight into their religion and may He be a sufficient Helper against the evil of their enemies.

*May peace and blessings of Allāh be upon our Prophet Muhammad,
his family and all his Companions.*

Praise be to Allāh, Lord of the Worlds.

APPENDIX ONE

Youth and Free Time¹

Foreward

All praise is to Allāh who created the creation for His worship (*'ibādah*) and implemented among them what He decreed and willed. I praise Him, Pure is He, and I testify that there is none worthy of worship besides Him alone. He has no partner. I also testify that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is His Slave and Messenger.

To proceed: I had delivered an impromptu lecture at one of the *masājid* in Riyadh regarding making use of time (*waqt*) and the prohibition of wasting time. Thereafter, one of the brothers transcribed this lecture from the recording with the desire to spread it, after making some minor corrections which were due to the slip of the tongue. I granted him permission to do so, however due to other commitments I was unable to amend and arrange it.

¹ Beneficial treatise on the youth and free time (*al-Shibāb wa'l-Firāgh*) by Shaykh 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān al-Jibrīn (may Allāh have mercy on his soul).

Nevertheless, it will not be void of benefit (*fā'ida*), Allāh willing.

In these times we see the Muslim community devoting considerable amount of time to distractions (*mulahiyāt*) and games (*al'āb*) that consume and ruin one's life (*ḥayā*). Similarly a huge number of diversions (*fitan*) have taken away from the majority of the community, the purity of their time. In fact the end result is that, it has caused those who persist in these distractions to fall into sin (*ma'āsīya*) and prohibitions (*muḥaramāt*) that have become set within their minds (*'aqūl*) and which have taken control of their resolve (*irāda*), and enslaved their desires (*ahwā'*) and inclinations (*mayūl*). Resulting in extreme difficulty (*sa'b*) for them to rid themselves of these sinful passions (*shahwāt al-āthamā*).

Worse still, is that many believe the path they have taken is correct and they disregard those who differ with them or point out their error.

While there are others who admit their fault yet offer excuses that these passions and inclinations have taken a firm root within them, rendering them unable to part with them.

Allāh, through His Grace, has guided many of them and they were able to desist from these actions, make amends in balancing their lives, and utilise their time in things that are beneficial to them in this world and the next.

Allāh guides whomsoever He wills by His Grace. We ask Him, Pure is He, to grant us guidance and to bring back Muslims who are lost to the path of guidance in the most beautiful manner. Allāh knows best. May peace and salutations be on the Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) and his Companions.

INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allāh, Most Beneficent, Most Merciful

All praise is for Allāh; we praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of our souls and our bad actions. Whoever Allāh guides none can misguide and whoever He misguides none can guide.

I testify that there is none worthy of worship besides Him alone. He has no partner. I also testify that Muḥammad (ﷺ) is his Slave and Messenger. May peace and abundant salutations be on him, his Family and his Companions.

To proceed:

There is no doubt that when an intelligent person (*'āqil*) realises that his days are from his most precious capital (*ra'as māl*), he will be eager to utilise and take benefit from them to ensure nothing of his capital is wasted.

Talking about the importance of free time (*ahmiyya al-waqt wa'l-firāgh*) will take too long and we may not be able to do justice to the topic because of its vastness (*iṭāla*) and many facets. Spending too much time on this may also defeat the purpose since speaking aplenty may cause one to forget something.

We will therefore deal briefly with the importance of time and the problem (*mushkila*) of having free time that many people face. And then we will look at how this free time could be occupied. Thereafter we will mention some of the factors (*dawāfi*) that will motivate one to perform the subsequent actions. Finally we will briefly answer a very important question, 'How can one be strong enough to resist the distractions (*muqāwama fitan*) of our current era?'

May Allāh enable us to do that which He loves and is pleased with. We ask Him to make our actions purely for His pleasure, for He is the One who grants ability.

CHAPTER ONE

Importance of Time (*ahmiyya al-waqt*)

Everyone knows how important time is. A person's time is his capital (*māl*); it is his life (*ʿumr*) that consists of his days and nights. When capital is wasted away, there can be no profiting from it. When man realises his time is his capital, he will be cautious of how he utilises it and show zeal in wanting to benefit from it and thus not waste it. If a person has money and begins to waste some of it—and each day a part of it is lost—he can be certain that a day will come when nothing will be left and he will be left empty handed with no capital. Similarly he must ensure his hours, days and nights are not wasted away—and be eager to benefit from them so that they are profitable.

When a person utilises his capital and invests it wisely, he retains his wealth with the profit he makes. Likewise we can say, a man's capital is his days and nights that he must utilize and be eager to spend in something of benefit.

Allāh uses as proof against His slaves, the fact that He extended their lives and said addressing the people of the Fire:

أَوَلَمْ نَعْمِرْكُمْ مَا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمْ النَّذِيرُ

“But did We not grant you life enough for whoever would remember therein to remember, and the warner had come to you?”

[*Fāṭir* (35): 37]

In other words, did Allāh not give you life in which you had sufficient time to take heed and learn? What then did you do in these days and in this life?

We need to know that we will be taken to account for every moment that passes. This is proven in the statement of the Prophet (ﷺ): “The feet of a slave will not move until he is asked about four things: his life and how he passed it; his youth and how he used it; his wealth: how he earned it and how he spent it; and his knowledge: What did he do with it?”²

Look at how in this noble ḥadīth, there are two questions about life and specifically about youth! So indeed you will be asked about these days and how you used them. Did you use them in something that was of harm to you, or in something that was of no benefit?

If you spent your time in something useful (*muḥīd*) and beneficial (*nāfi*), then you will profit and reap the fruits (*thamara*) thereof. However if you spent your days [wasted away] in something, then you will have no answer.

² Tirmidhī, #2417, and Dārimī, #539. It was graded ṣaḥīḥ by al-Albānī in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi*, #7177 and *Silsilat al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #946.

CHAPTER TWO

How Can The Youth Take Advantage Of Their Time?

Section One: Proper Use Of Time

It is undoubtedly crucial that a person values his time and makes good use of it. How then does he ensure to accomplish this?

Ways to take genuine advantage of time is by:

- i. Organising time
- ii. Taking advantage of gatherings of knowledge

We will briefly explain these two points below:

Section Two:

Organising Time (*tartīb al-waqt*)

It is vital you organise your time properly and attach to every moment a specific task so that you become accustomed in knowing what to do at a certain time or day.

For example you are required to work in order to earn a living, so you assign a part of your time for example, five to ten hours, to earning lawful provision (*riʒq al-ḥalāl*).

You are also in need of discharging certain duties and obligations for Allāh, like the [five daily] prayers (*ṣalāh*), so you assign a part of your time for this, for example, two hours, on a regular daily basis.

You need to spend time with your family, colleagues and friends so you can assign to them an hour or two. In this way you will have about twelve hours to spare. If you assign from these six hours for sleeping you will have six hours remaining. So in what can you spend these six hours so that they yield a profit for you?

There are some very important matters in which you can spend the remaining time and benefit from them. If you waste the opportunities, then you will certainly have regret.

From such important matters is arranging visitation to scholars and keeping company with the pious. Assign an hour or two for them, either on a weekly or daily basis. This will have a great impact and benefit in your life in terms of your knowledge (*ʿilm*) and actions (*ʿaml*). You will reap rewards that will be added to your record of good deeds (*ḥasanāt*).

There are also friends and loved ones with whom you can spend time and benefit from their knowledgeable company that will encourage understanding and practice of your religion (*dīn*). If you assign time for your pious friends you will benefit and profit from it.

There is also calling to Allāh (*da'wab ilAllāh*): which is an action that will bring you closer to Allāh, the Most High. This calling can be with your words or deeds for which you can also assign a portion of your time.

There are also some special actions which you need to perform. If you use one or two hours for these you will benefit immensely. These actions need to divide your time during the day and night, thus no portion of your time will be used except in the obedience of Allāh, and as something that will benefit you in this life. You will not lose any part of your life and will protect your time and utilise it wisely.

Section Three:

Taking Advantage of Gatherings of Knowledge (*istighlāl al-majālis*)

Gatherings are normally held by people senior in age and usually in one of their homes by which they pass time. Many such people complain that they have no occupation or work. They therefore fall into things that are detrimental to them and not beneficial.

Therefore how do they spend time in those gatherings? How can these gatherings be used for something that will be of benefit?

These gatherings could be used for example, for the recitation the Qur'an and studying it. If one person in the gathering recites the Book of Allāh Almighty whilst others listen, will that not be a righteous deed?

Indeed, he will benefit and those listening will also benefit. They could also research the meanings of the verses of Allāh and their explanations. In this way they will preserve their time and increase their good deeds. They will learn about things related to their religion (*dīn*). It will be of no harm if they spend an hour or two in this way.

Such gatherings can also be used for reading traditions (*ahādīth*) or matters of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), or anything else [from the sciences of religion]. One person can read a book of Prophetic traditions, religious laws or manners, or a book on the biography of the Prophet (ﷺ) or other biographies, or topic of Islāmic history, or a book of admonition [and heart softeners].

They may alternate between reading different topic on separate days and spend two or three hours daily. This will be of immense benefit, and in this way their time and actions will be preserved and they will gain a deeper understanding of religion and lead to increase of their righteous deeds.

This is no doubt easy, but it is also important considering that many [youth] remain generally unaware. This will preserve their time for them and be of benefit to them as a provision for the Hereafter.

If they become bored of these readings, then they will lose interest and commence idle talk among themselves. At this point we

advise them to be cautious again of withering away the time (*idā'at al-waqt*) in chit chat (*qīl wa'l-qāl*), gossip (*gbiba*) and slander (*namīma*).

We advise them to instead focus their conversation upon Allāh's creation and pondering over His signs around us. This will bring great benefit by enabling them to preserve their time and take heed from such lessons. It will strengthen the faith in their hearts.

My dear brothers, ponder over the signs of Allāh as He commanded us, and comprehend what Allāh, the Most High mentions repeatedly. We are the creation of Allāh Almighty. He is the One who has created us and placed us on this earth. We marvel at how man was created and how he was formed. How Allāh, the Most High spread these creations across the face of the earth. How he made provision for every creature, those that fly with wings and some that crawl on the earth.

Ponder over the earth's vegetation of varying types and colours. How Allāh, the Most High made it grow in this form? And how He made all kinds of fruit in them? How Allāh, the Most High spread out the earth and placed therein mountains, ravines, valleys, low-grounds, high-grounds, sandy-grounds, plains, mines, water and similar things?

If man only ponders over these creations repeatedly he will save his time from being lost, increase his conviction (*yaqīn*) and strength (*qawī*) of faith (*īmān*), so that doubts (*shakūq*) or whisperings of Satan (*takhīlāt al-shaytāniyya*) will never be able to infiltrate his mind.

Likewise if he ponders over the star constellations, celestial

spheres, heavenly bodies such as stars, the sun, the moon, the winds, clouds, rain and similar things, he will most definitely occupy his time with things of benefit, thereby increasing his conviction and deriving great lessons (*'ibrab*).

If these people speak about these things in their gatherings, they will most certainly benefit and safeguard their time.

In a like manner they may enquire from one another about incidents from the near or distant past from which there are lessons to be learnt. They could also discuss issues of importance affecting the Muslim community or their own society. They could talk about things they are required to do or able to change.

They will find things that concern society that require effort by any one of them and the entire group. It is of importance that they deal with these issues before they take root in the society and worsen.

If the society gets involved in such activities it will most certainly be of benefit if Allāh wills, even though there may be some people who have no aspiration (*himma*) or determination (*'ulū*), and do not feel the need to learn. They therefore [usually] speak about things that do not concern them.

There are others who feel they are not fit to learn so they do not find anything else to do but to speak of things in which there is harm and no benefit.

CHAPTER THREE

Improper Use Of Time

Some people waste their time indulging in things of no value or benefit. They usually find nothing else to do except speak about things in which there is harm. This is detrimental to one's morals and a sheer waste of time. The following are just some examples.

Section One:

Wasting Time in Play & Amusement

(diyā' al-waqt fi'l-lahwu wa'l-la'b)

It is noticed within youth, adults and even elderly people who spend their free time in play (*la'b*) and sinful entertainment (*al-lahwu al-bātil*) only. You find them engrossed in such means of entertainment and game playing throughout the day and night and it occupies all their free time.

Even when some of them are at work, they do not have any work to do and mostly spend time playing hand-held games just to pass the time. They claim that they do this to relax their minds

and have a break. You find them fooling around and laughing aloud having fun in total oblivion; and in things that bring them no benefit whatsoever. In this manner they lose a considerable amount of time.

There is no doubt that this is a total waste of valuable time for which they will be questioned about. Sometimes they present the excuse that by doing this they are saving themselves from getting involved in backbiting, slander and speaking ill of others. We say to them: “You have spoken the truth and you have lied. What will make you get involved in backbiting and slander? Can’t you find something else to spend your time in besides that which is of no benefit and instead is harmful? You have wasted this valuable time. Together with this you have become involved in amusement and futile things.”

Allāh, the Most High, has said regarding those who engage in futility (*ablu'l-labw*):

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ
لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

“And of the people is he who buys the amusement of speech to mislead [others] from the way of Allāh.”

[*Luqman* (31): 6]

There is no doubt that they indeed perpetrate ‘idle talk’ (*labw al-ḥadīth*) since anything that distracts from goodness is included therein. Additionally it prevents from the way of Allāh (*sabīl Allāh*).

Allāh has praised those who shun futility (*labw*) in the following verses:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴿٣﴾

“And they who turn away from ill speech.”

[*al-Mu'minun* (23): 3]

And Allāh, Most High said:

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ
أَعْرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَقَالُوا لَنَا أَعْمَلُنَا
وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَلُكُمْ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ
لَا تَبْتَغِي الْجَاهِلِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

“And when they hear ill speech, they turn away from it and say, ‘For us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds. Peace will be upon you! We seek not the ignorant.’”

[*al-Qaṣaṣ* (28): 55]

Frivolous talk refers to false speech (*al-kalām al-bātil*) and [unfettered] laughter (*dabk*). One of the greatest wrongs (*‘ayūb*) in this world is when people take this life as play and amusement. Allāh has mentioned regarding the people of the fire:

الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَهُمْ لَهْوًا وَلَعِبًا

“Those who took their religion for distraction and amusement.”

[*al-A‘rāf* (7): 51]

Allāh also said:

وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهْوٌ وَلَعِبٌ

“And this worldly life is not but diversion and amusement.”

[*al-‘Ankabūt* (29): 64]

Are not these people who spend their time in gambling and games included amongst those who are involved in amusement and distraction?

Allāh has forbidden gambling and games of chance in the verse:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ
مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ

“Indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than Allāh], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan.”

[*al-Mā'idah* (5): 90]

If a game is played for money, then such a game is considered gambling that has been forbidden in this verse. If the game is not played for money then it is included in 'idle talk' that Allāh has condemned. It can also be included in false games that have been prohibited in some sayings of the Prophet (ﷺ), for example: “Whoever plays backgammon³ it is as if he has dyed his hands in the flesh and blood of a swine.”⁴

Indeed there is no benefit for a person in such futile games—rather there is harm due to his wasting of valuable time, about which he will be questioned about and taken to account for.

³ The Arabic word used is *Nardashir*

⁴ Muslim, #2260

Section Two:

Wasting time in Backbiting and Slander

(*diyā' al-waqt fi'l-ghība wa'l-namīma*)

From amongst the futile activities that many people engage in is congregating at various locations—not for the obedience of Allāh—but for sin. We see many people on the roads and streets gathered in groups and we ask:

Why are these people gathered in groups?

Are they gathered for remembrance of Allāh and to implore Him?

Are they gathered to recite the Qur'an and to advise one another?

Are they gathered to teach and learn from one another?

Are they gathered to think about and ponder over the creation of Allāh?

No! Rather they are gathered to speak evil—which at the very least amounts to backbiting and slander—and to talk bad about people who are not there.

No doubt, this is very common in gatherings today. People gather to gossip about their brothers, and commit the sins of backbiting and slander which Allāh Almighty has prohibited in His saying:

وَلَا يَغْتَبِ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا أَيُّحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ
يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ

“And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it.”

[*al-Hujurāt* (49): 12]

Allāh Almighty has likened speaking ill of a Muslim to one who eats his flesh after he dies. This is indeed a most terrible deed. The proofs for the prohibition of backbiting are numerous. We therefore urge the Muslims to make their gatherings beneficial in terms of knowledge and practice so that they may gain what is of use to them. We urge them to avoid sitting with people who take pleasure in speaking ill of others, who regard such actions as a means of entertainment, spending their time in order to drive away boredom, as they claim.

Such people—if they do have free time—should spend it in that which benefits. If they must, then let them talk about people that are present in their gathering so that they can draw their attention to any deficiency. Perhaps this will be of benefit and they will not have to spend their time in anything that harms Muslims who are not present.

Section Three:

Listening to Music and Songs (*samā' al-aghāni*)

Sometimes people sit in normal gatherings but they are not free of harmful things. One of these harmful things is listening to music and songs. This refers to the prohibited singing that involves listening to melodious voices that raise emotions, stir instincts, drives evil souls to commit sin and prevents one from the remembrance of Allāh and from prayer.

Listening to such songs sadly has become a pastime for many people and occupies much of their time, taking them away from their purpose of being created. They take this as entertainment and leisure for which they cannot find a substitute.

This is not the occasion to speak on the prohibition of music. However we say that those people who spend their time listening to music have wasted their time in things of destruction and regret. They should be repentant for their loss and realise they will be taken to account for it.

From one angle it is a waste of valuable time. From another angle it exposes the listener to dangers in the harmful effects that such voices and tunes create.

No doubt, listening to such voices creates love for evil and decreases the love for good in the heart. You will find that the person who listens to these songs will be desirous of satisfying his instincts and always seeking pleasure therefrom.

Another of its evil effects is that it drives a person to commit sin: to drink intoxicants, to fornication, viewing pornography and other such evils. We therefore advise the Muslim to refrain from these things in order to protect his religion and safeguard his time.

Section Four:

Looking at Prohibited Things

(ashya' al-muharama)

Just as listening can mislead, so too can looking! They say, 'we just look for entertainment' but what are they looking at? They are watching pornographic material through modern gadgets and entertain themselves the whole night until the early hours of the morning—or even the whole day!

How much of valuable time gets wasted from such films and books. If this was only a loss of time, would not it be a great loss?

Is this not a reason for sorrow and regret over the time wasted?

If it is assumed that a person does in fact, have free time and no other work, as they say, and then only spends his surplus time watching these films and pictures, then what will be the result?

If he sees pictures of beautified and exposed women, or if a woman sees picture of exposed men—will that not drive their instincts and stir their passions?

Will it not drive them to fall into immoral acts?

No doubt this is a cause for the increase in immorality and fornication. The increase in listening and watching results in the increase of these immoral acts we see around us.

How many times do we hear that so and so has become pregnant through adultery (or out of wedlock)?

How many times do we hear that a certain woman has committed an immoral act?

How many times we hear that a certain man has committed fornication numerous times?

Sometimes those who watch these films and are unable to satisfy their desires locally, travel to countries where immorality is rife in order to easily satisfy their instincts. They look for countries that have overt evils, immoral women and ease of means for them to satisfy their desires and wrongful objectives.

What leads them to such deeds is the listening of those enchanting voices and seeing those lewd pictures, which they only did as

they say, to pass time.

They spend their free time like this and they think that that they are relaxing but the end result is that they fall into unimaginable evil. Sometimes they are unable to control themselves, and their passions overpower them, rendering them unable to curb these instincts that forcefully spur them on to evil.

Certainly people of today have been tried with many forms of amusement—regarded as one of the evils of this life. Indeed sin is in watching and doing, but it is also a waste of time and indeed what a waste it is!

Alternatively, playing or watching games of sports naturally provides some benefit. It strengthens the body and increases one's knowledge; yet becoming overly engrossed in watching such games is no doubt a waste of time. Therefore we prohibit and warn you of becoming engrossed so that you may save your time and benefit from it in other ways.

CHAPTER FOUR

Factors that Cause Delinquency in the Youth

This life is certainly filled with things that occupy one's time; things that benefit and things that bring no benefit. When a youth becomes aware of this and identifies what brings benefit, he will gain immensely. If he does not learn about what brings benefit, then he will fall into what brings harms and will regret it when it's too late. We therefore urge the Muslim youth to safeguard their time and not be misled by those trials that take root in the hearts and have affected many.

Indeed, in the first stage of life and in the prime of youth, man has an inclination to some form of play and amusement. This is something we witness that generally occurs from childhood to early adulthood.

Perhaps the wisdom in this is that Allāh, the Most High, has placed in the nature of children the love for movement so that their bodies may grow in that way. You see, for example, a child

of two to five years always active and in motion. He cannot sit for long, and if you ask him to sit for half an hour you won't be able to keep him.

This is natural for youth. However sometimes Allāh blesses a young person by turning his attention away from play and amusement towards obedience and acts of goodness. This is regarded as a sign that Allāh intends good for such a person and is a wonder which is contrary to the norm. That is why we find in the hadith: "Allāh Almighty is pleased with a youth who does not have playfulness"⁵

Meaning he does not have inclination towards play and amusement. If you see youth of today involved in gaining knowledge and implementing it, engrossed in worship and obedience, avoiding the people of futility and falsehood and seeking beneficial things, you will be envious of him because: firstly, he is going against the norm of the majority of the youth; secondly, he is going against his natural instinct that urges him towards play and amusement; and thirdly, he was able to overpower his soul and gain control over it despite the strong urges, and in spite of the many distractions nowadays that were unable to draw him towards them.

There are many factors that push the youth to stray. The following are some of the important ones:

- i. Having elder friends
- ii. Having younger friends
- iii. Giving in to temptation
- iv. Indulging in amusements

⁵ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/151. Al-Albānī classified it weak in *Da'if al-Jāmi'*, #1658 and *Silsilah al-Aḥādīth al-Da'ifah*, #2462

v. Indulging in desires etc.

Despite their heavy influence, a person is able to resist them all. If for example, a young man's friends come to him and ask him, "Come with us, let's go to that recreational ground—we'll go to that park and relax and we'll see this and do that. We will kill some time!"

If the youth refuses to join them and responds, "We have not been created to play" just as it is reported about Prophet Yahyā ('alaybis-salām) that when the children said to him, "Come, let's play", he replied, "O Youth! We have not been created to play"—i.e. we have been created for worship and not play.

When a youth responds in such a way, he is emulating a noble Prophet [in this case] Yahyā Ibn Zakariyya ('alayhumas-salām) about whom Allāh said:

وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْخُكْمَ صَبِيًّا ﴿١٢﴾

"And We gave him judgement [while yet] a boy."

[Maryam (19): 12]

until the verse

وَسَلَّمَ عَلَيْهِ يَوْمَ وُلِدَ وَيَوْمَ يَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ يُبْعَثُ

حَيًّا ﴿١٥﴾

"And peace be upon him the day he was born and the day he dies and the day he is raised alive."

[Maryam (19): 15]

Likewise, if a young man's friends come to him and coax him,

“Come, let’s go relax in such and such gathering by reading some stories or magazine illustrations etc”, so he refuses saying, “This is temptation and we don’t like to be tempted in our minds and desires. We do not want to fall into temptation nor come near it. I do not need your company whilst you are involved with these activities.”

If his family for example, ask him to buy things of amusement, like musical devices and illicit videos he refuses saying, “I do not want that because it’s forbidden in the Shari’ah. Allāh has forbidden the means to evil and causes of corruption. He has explicitly forbidden these pictures and acquiring them as well as listening to music. Furthermore these things lead to further evil and corruption.” So you find this youth not agreeing with them, even though his society and his family are all involved in it.

Sometimes Allāh blesses a pious youth with steadfastness but his father and brothers watch these distractions and listen to evil throughout the night and day. This saddens him but he remains firm and Allāh inspires him with guidance to refrain from that. He tries to praise his family and conceal their evil. He tries to make them repent and remove these instruments of entertainment from their midst. He tries to encourage his brothers out of this. If they don’t listen he then attempts to save himself even if he is alone. This is so he does not go astray because one who is close to temptation is prone to falling prey to it in his religion and belief.

Sometimes a youth has friends who urge him to evil and say to him for example, “Why don’t you relax? Why don’t you come with us and do what we do? You are a fanatic... You are an extremist... You are too radical in religion... etc!”

They say this to him whilst they themselves commit many wrongs. They spend their nights intoxicated on alcohol and smoke. They stay awake the entire night and sleep close to the time of prayer and then only wake up at midday. They miss their obligatory prayers, and most of the time they do not even pray, or sometimes pray after the time has passed if they do pray at all.

Then they want to corrupt you just as they are corrupt so that you become like them. We therefore advise you to hold firm onto the teachings of your religion even if they label you a radical or extremist. Save yourself so that you may be one of those whom Allāh will shade with His shade as it appears in a ḥadīth reported from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said: “Seven people will be given shade by Allāh on the day when there will be no shade except His. A just ruler, a youth who grows up in the obedience of Allāh, a man whose heart is linked to the *masājid*, two people who love one another for the sake of Allāh—they get together and leave one another on this, a man who is called by a prominent and beautiful woman but he says ‘I fear Allāh’, a man who conceals his charity such that his left hand does not know what his right hand spent and a man who remembers Allāh in solitude and sheds tears.”⁶

One of the seven who will be granted shade by Allāh is a youth who grows up in the obedience of Allāh and goes against what his soul desires or what his society calls him towards, especially a corrupt society in which evil and corrupt people prevail.

How many callers to corruption there are in these times! How often they criticise the pious devoted one. When they see him using the miswāk whilst they use cigarettes, they criticise him for over-

⁶ Bukhārī, #660 and Muslim, #1031.

doing it. When they see him frequenting the *masājīd*, they belittle him and consider that a fault to the extent they poke fun as it has been related to us by those instructing them to pray in the *masājīd*.

When they ask them to pray, they reply in jest, “Go ahead and pray two units [of prayer] on our behalf too”. Indeed if a youth whose heart Allāh has opened in these times of trial, and despite its temptations, he protects himself and his passions, and opposes his desires, then Allāh will fortify his heart.

No doubt, there are many temptations for both old and young. If a person restrains himself then he has opposed his desires. These temptations, either desires or doubts, sometimes can overpower a person and make him unable to resist them. He therefore requires a few things which are necessary for us to briefly discuss.

CHAPTER FIVE

How Can A Youth Resist Temptations?

We have previously referred to temptations and the things that invite and lead towards them. Some invite to fornication, others invite to alcohol. In this manner, various temptations are easily available via movies and magazines and other sensual matters. Likewise, there are many things of desire that are within easy reach—e.g. tobacco, alcohol, drug and their likes. A person with evil intent has the means to attain his aim readily available—e.g. social mobility like aeroplanes, cars and phones etc. These temptations and these factors motivating evil require some resistance.

The following things will assist a youth in resisting these temptations and distractions.

Section One:

Recognising the Harm of Temptations
in the World

It is necessary that we give the person who wishes to protect himself, the opportunity to know the harm that is hidden in committing these sins. When he knows the harm he will refrain from it.

Some of these sins cause harm to one's morals and actions. When this happens it reflects badly on the person. He becomes notorious for being a person of bad character, who indulges in vice; or is a fornicator or homosexual; or allows his wife to roam about freely. In this way he gets a bad reputation among his peers.

Therefore a person must protect himself from getting a bad reputation and distance himself from such accusations. Instead he should have a good reputation, where people speak well of him and praise him for his dedication to worship and religion and for his honour and dignity.

Section Two:

Recognising the Harm of Temptations in
the Hereafter

A person must realise that he may be liable for punishment by committing these worldly sins, even though they were personal urges or people inviting him towards them. Like how Allāh punished many past nations for their sins as Allāh related to us in the Qur'ān, he will also be punished in the Hereafter—the punishment of which is more severe and lasting. Won't such a realisation motivate him to hold on to the truth and distance himself from

falsehood and things that lead to it?

Section Three:

Taking Account of Himself and the Awakening of his Conscience

A person should be aware and have knowledge of the things that Allāh has forbidden, the proofs of which are well known. When he understands these things are forbidden he must ask himself, ‘How can I do something which my Lord has forbidden for me?’

Is Allāh not the one who created us and own us and has forbidden this? If I do this will I not be a sinner?’

Is not the one who commits sin warned of punishment like Allāh has stated:

وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ
نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا

“And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger and transgresses His limits—He will put him into the Fire to abide eternally therein.”

[*al-Nisā'* (4): 14]

When one’s conscience awakens and the individual holds himself to account, he will indeed repent and seek Allāh’s forgiveness not wanting to get involved in these distractions even though he has the urge within himself. In this manner he will gain the ability to resist.

Section Four:
Strength of Faith (*īmān*)

A Muslim must strive to strengthen his faith (*īmān*). It entails belief in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, Resurrection after Death and Predestination. When faith is strengthened, it propels a person towards good actions and guides him to the straight path. He will then distance himself from forbidden things and evil deeds which consist of time consuming and wasteful distractions.

Indeed a person who increases his good actions will strengthen his faith because good deeds strengthen faith. Such action may consist of increasing voluntary prayers (*ṣalawāt*) and other acts of worship, increasing of remembrance (*dhikr*) [of Allāh]. Similarly increasing the recitation of the Qur'ān and pondering over its meanings; and increasing calling towards good and forbidding from evil.

All these good deeds will strengthen faith and when faith is strengthened, factors that prompt one to righteous actions will be strengthened and the factors that prompt one to evil actions will be weakened.

Forbidden actions harden the heart. A hard heart loves sin and strengthens the factors that urge towards it. The factors that urge towards righteous actions are thus weakened. So search for those things that will strengthen the triggers towards righteousness in your heart, and will [simultaneously] weaken the triggers towards disobedience.

We ask Allāh to make our hearts firm upon faith (*īmān*) and to

strengthen our faith in Him and in His promises and threats, to protect us from sin and error and to protect our religion for us. And not to let our hearts go astray after He has guided us to faith and to grant us mercy from Him for He is the One who grants.

We ask Him to protect for us our time in that which is of benefit to us and to reform the Muslim youth, and grant them the ability to see the truth, and return them to Him in a most beautiful manner, and to make them worthy successors of worthy predecessors, and to reform their actions, and make their hearts firm and not let them go astray.

*May Allāh send blessing and peace on our Prophet Muhammad
and on his Family and Companions.*

APPENDIX TWO

Awakening After Heedlessness

My son, do not let your past carelessness make you lose hope of achieving good, for many people have come back to wakefulness after long sleep. Shaikh Abū Ḥākīm¹, may Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him, told me what follows: ‘When I was a child, I spent my time in idle play and did not pay attention to Sacred Knowledge. Then my father Abū ‘Abdullāh, Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him, wanted to talk to me and said: ‘My son, I will not be here for you forever, so take twenty dinārs, open a bread shop and make

¹ The great exemplary scholar Abū Ḥākīm Ibrāhīm ibn Dinār al-Nahruwānī al-Ḥanbalī, one of the Imams of Baghdad, a godly ascetic, who was benevolent and forbearing. He was one of the greatest scholars in the field of inheritance. He established a school by Bab al-Azaj and in which he remained, worshipping Allāh. He preferred to be unknown, and was always content with his condition. He used to earn his bread as a tailor, taking only two coins for a garment. Some individuals attempted to anger him but to no avail, and he would serve the disabled and elderly with a joyful face. His hearing of ḥadīth was correct. He passed away in 556. (al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī: *Siyar al-A‘lām al-Nubulā’*, 20/396. For his biography, refer to: Ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muntaẓam*, 10/201, 202, *Tbail Tabaqāt al-Hanabila*, 1/231-241, *Sbatharāt al-Thabab*, 4/176, *al-Bidāyah wa’l-Nibāyah*, 12/245)

some money.’ I said: ‘What are you saying?’ So he said: ‘Open a cloth shop then.’ I said: ‘How can you say this to me when I’m the son of the judge of judges ‘Abdullāh al-Dāmaghānī²?’ He replied: ‘But I do not see you seeking knowledge.’ I said: ‘Give me a lecture right now.’ He did so and I came forward to busy myself with knowledge. From thereon, I began taking the studying of Sacred Knowledge seriously so Allāh gave me success in that.”

A colleague of Abū Muḥammad al-Halāwānī,³ may Allāh bestow His Mercy upon him, told me the following: ‘My father died when I was twenty one and at that time I was known for being idle. When I went to claim a house I had inherited from its inhabitants, I heard them say: the Mudbir, i.e. *al-Rabīṭ* [he who abandoned the adornment of life] has arrived.’ Having heard this, I said to myself: ‘Is this what they say about me?’ I went to my mother and told her: ‘You will find me in the *masjid* of Shaikh Abū al-Khaṭṭāb⁴ if you

²The profound scholar, the mufti of ‘Iraq, the judge of judges, Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Hasan ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Husawayhi al-Dāmaghānī al-Hanāfī (Dāmaghānī refers to somebody from Dāmaghān which is a big city between al-Ray and Naisabur). Al-Dhahabi said: “He was a person of nobility and great decency and has been compared to judge Abū Yusuf in his times. Among his children were Imams and judges.” He died in 478 and his son, the judge of judges Abū al-Hasan led his funeral prayer. For his biography, refer to: *Tārikh Baghdād*, 3/109, *al-Bidāyah wa’l-Nihāyah*, 12/129, *Shatbarāt al-Thabab*, 3/362, *al-Fawa’id al-Bahiyah*, 182-183, *al-Kāmil*, 10/146, *Siyar al-A‘lām al-Nubulā*, 18/485, *al-Ibar*, 3/292.

³ The jurist ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad al-Halāwānī, he was a Legal Jurist and Imam. Al-Munthiri said: “He was a Hanbali scholar and was versed in jurisprudence, Qur’ānic exegesis and ḥadīth.” Ibn Rajab said: “I saw something that was written in his handwriting which indicates that he has authored a major commentary on the differed upon issues. He has also written a forty one volume commentary on the Qur’ān which he has talked about.” For his biography, refer to: Ibn Rajab: *Thail Tabaqāt al-Ḥanabila*, 1/221.

need me.’ I accompanied him and did not leave except for delivering judgments. I then became a judge for a period of time.’ I say: ‘I saw him delivering legal verdicts and debating.’

⁴ The Shaikh, Imām and great God fearing scholar of the Ḥanbalites, Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Maḥfūz ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan al-‘Irāqī al-Kalwadhānī at first, then al-Baghdādī later on (d. 510 AH). Al-Ḥāfiẓ al-Dhahabī said: ‘Abū al-Khaṭṭāb was a fine scholar. He was benevolent, truthful, well mannered and spoke extraordinarily eloquent arabic. He was a smart man who narrated many ḥadīths and studied and recorded ḥadīth as well.’ Ibn Rajab said (*al-Thail*, 1/120): ‘Abū al-Khaṭṭāb was a great jurist who used to focus much on verification of matters. He has checked and investigated numerous matters of jurisprudence and legal theory and differs with the majority view of the Hanbalites in some issues.’ After this he went on to mention many examples of that. For his biography, refer to: *Siyar al-A‘lām al-Nubulā*, 19/348, Ibn al-Jawzī: *al-Muntaẓam*, 9/190-193, *al-Kāmil*, 10/524, *al-Ibar*, 4/21, *Mir‘āt al-Zamān*, 8/41-42, *al-Bidāyah wa’l-Nihāyah*, 12/180, *Thail Tabaqāt al-Ḥanabila*, 1/116-127, *Shatharāt al-Thahab*, 4/27-28.

APPENDIX THREE

Self Discipline

The basic principle is that mankind's nature, disposition is sound and healthy, whereas disease and defects are extraneous. Every child is born upon the *fitrah* (natural disposition), which is further explicated in knowing that discipline is ineffective except in an intellectual, thus it does not benefit a mule, or a wild animal that is looked after while young, and will not leave hunting when it matures. And you know of the famous story, 'Who informed you that your father was a wolf?'

Know that within every human being there exists three capacities: A lingual capacity, a lustful capacity, and an anger capacity. That said, he who Allāh honored by bestowing upon him the love of knowledge should care for perfecting his 'lingual self', by which Allāh favored him over all animals, and with which he shared a common characteristic with angels. He should make this self capacity predominant over the other two capacities. So that it becomes like the rider, his body becomes like the horse, because a rider should be predominant over a horse due to his elevation,

so he is able to lead it wherever he likes and he should be able to slaughter it if he so wishes. Likewise the lingual capacity should be predominant over the other two capacities, using and ceasing to use them as it likes, and whoever is like that truly deserves to be called a human being.

Plato said: “A true human is he whose ‘lingual self’ is stronger than the rest of his other types of selves, because if lustfulness is excessive, a person becomes an animal. If a person releases his *Hawā*, lives an unrestrictive life, then he becomes displaced from his centre, hence he will become worse than an animal, because that is actually the nature of animals, but, in his case, he has contradicted his [humanly] nature. And when the anger capacity is excessive, humans’ traits become as that of wild and beastly animals. Hence, one should tame his inner self by opposing lustfulness, controlling anger and following the lingual capacity, so as he may become like the angels and avoid worshipping lust and anger.”

Section One:

How to Discipline Oneself

Know that discipline of the self is achieved through lenience and moving from one state to another. This should not be done violently but rather leniently, and then he should combine both hope and fear. He strengthens this discipline by keeping good company, leaving bad company, studying the Qur’ān, beneficial stories, thinking about paradise, hell and reading the biographies of wise people and ascetics.

Some of the righteous predecessors would desire a sweet treat, and so they would promise themselves to eat it. If they prayed the night prayer they would allow themselves this reward.

Sufyān al-Thawrī used to eat whatever he desired and then when he woke up in the morning he would say: “The black man has fed his child!” Scholars and exegetes have always been, and continue to be, lenient to the self until they have owned and subjugated it.

A neighbour of Mālik ibn Dinār said, “One night I heard him saying to himself, ‘That’s how you should be!’ The next morning I told him, ‘There was no one home with you, so who did you say that to?’ He said, ‘Myself asked me for some bread, it insisted so I restrained it from eating for three days, then I found a dry piece of bread, when I was about to eat it I said, ‘Wait I will get soft bread’ so it [his self] said, ‘I am contented with this.’ So I said, ‘That’s how you should be!’”

Know that if the self knows that you are serious it will also be serious and hardworking, if it knows that you are indolent it will become your master.

A poet said:

A horse rider knows the characteristics of his horse,
so he exhausts it repeatedly, by making it sense fear.

From among the practices of discipline of the self is bringing it to account for every statement, for every action, for every negligence and sin. When its discipline is over, it will appreciate the exhaustion it endured.

Thābit al-Banānī said, “I endured the night for twenty years [by praying] and [then] I delighted in the night for twenty years.”

Abū Yazīd said, “I kept driving myself to my Lord while it cried, until I drove it while it smiled.”

A poet said:

I still laugh and weep every time I look,
until its eye is tainted with my blood

Nevertheless one should not forget the rights of the self, which is giving it its gratifications that do not oppose the object of discipline. For if it is prevented from its aims in general, the heart will become blind, worries will disperse, and the slave will become constrained. And know that the estimation of the self with Allāh, May He be exalted, is greater than the estimation of the acts of worship. This is why He has permitted the breaking of the fast for a traveler; however it is only the people of knowledge who understand this.

APPENDIX FOUR

Knowledge and Action are Intertwined

Be careful of busying yourself with mere worship with no learning, as many ascetics and Šūfis have gone astray due to acting without knowledge.¹

Cover yourself with the two beautiful garments that will not make you famous among the material folks with their classiness,

¹ Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (*Jāmi‘ Bayān al-‘Ilm*, p. 54), al-Khaṭīb (*al-Faqīh wa al-Mutaḥaqiqīh*, 1/19) and Ibn Abī Shaibah (*al-Musannaf*, 13/470) related that ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz said: “Who acts without knowledge harms more than benefits.” Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr (p. 215), Ibn Abī Shaibah (13/499) related also that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said: “Seek knowledge in a way that does not harm your worship, and worship in a way that does not harm your knowledge. Who acts without knowledge harms more than benefits.” The great scholar Ibn al-Qayyim said (*Miftāḥ Dār al-Sa‘ada*, 1/ 82, 83): “A person who acts without knowledge is like someone who travels without a guide, and it is known that a person like this will more likely be destroyed than saved. In any case, even if we’d suppose that he would survive by agreement, his deed would never be considered as something praiseworthy. All men of intellect agree that the case is quite contrary. Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah used to say: “Who abandons the guide strays from the path, and non can be guided with other than that which the Messenger came with.”

nor famous among the ascetics with their ruggedness. Take yourself to account for every glance, word and step you take as you will be asked about all of it.

Those who hear you speak will benefit from your knowledge according to how much you yourself benefit from it. When a preacher doesn't apply his knowledge his exhortation will flow off the hearts' surface like water flows off a rock.²

So, do not ever preach without an intention and do not walk without an intention. Don't even swallow a bite without an intention.³ All of this will become clear to you once you get acquainted with the characteristics of our predecessors.⁴

² Al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī related (*Iqtidā' al-'Ilm al-'Amal*, p. 97) by way of Ja'far from Malik who said: "I read the following from the Torah: 'When a scholar does not act upon his knowledge, his admonishment flows off peoples' hearts like a drop of water flows off a rock'" Ibn al-Jawzī said (*al-Yawāqīt al-Jawzīyyah*, p. 95): "Knowledge and action are twins whose mother is high motivation."

³ You can read about intention and its importance: *Jamī' 'Ulum wa al-Hikam*, p. 20-21.

⁴ All the appendices have been taken from the English translation of the following books, '*Disciplining the Soul*', '*Disturber of the Hearts*' and '*Sincere Counsel to the Seekers of Sacred Knowledge*', all published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers 2011-2012 under the Ibn Jawzī Series.

APPENDIX FIVE

Seeking Allāh's Help

The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said, “When you seek aid, turn to Allāh.” After ordering us to safeguard Allāh and to know Him in times of ease - this being the very essence of worship, he directed us to ask Allāh Alone and to invoke Him: “Du‘ā is worship,” as is mentioned in the ḥadīth of Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr, and after stating this, the Prophet (ﷺ) recited,

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

“Your Lord says, ‘Call on Me and I will answer you.’”¹

This was recorded by the authors of the Four Sunans.²

¹ *Ghāfir* (40): 60

² Abū Dāwūd #1479, Tirmidhī #2969-3247-3372, Nasā’ī, *al-Kubrā* #11464, ibn Mājah #3828

Tirmidhī said it was ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ. Nawawī, *al-Adbkār*, pg. 478 said its isnād was ṣaḥīḥ, ibn Ḥajr, *Fath*, vol. 1, pg. 64 said that its isnād was jayyid, ibn Ḥibbān #2396 ruled it ṣaḥīḥ as did Ḥākim #1902 with Dhahabī agreeing. Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhib* #1627 said it was ṣaḥīḥ.

After all this, he directed us to seek the aid of Allāh Alone, and this is derived from His saying,

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾

“You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help.”³

This verse lays out a comprehensive principle and it is said that the essential message of all revealed scripture revolves around it.

There are two benefits in seeking the aid of Allāh Alone:

1) The servant does not have the strength to perform actions of obedience without Allāh’s help.

2) There is none who can aid him in the betterment of his worldly and religious life except for Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent. Whoever Allāh helps is truly aided and whoever Allāh forsakes is truly forsaken.

The authentic ḥadīth mentions that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, “Be desirous of all that would benefit you and seek Allāh’s aid and do not despair.”⁴

He (ﷺ) would say in his sermons, and teach his Companions to say, “All praise is due to Allāh, we ask for His aid and seek His guidance....”⁵

³ *al-Fāṭihah* (1): 5

⁴ Muslim #2664 on the authority of Abū Hurayrah.

⁵ Shāfi’ī, *Musnad*, vol. 1, pg. 147 on the authority of ibn ‘Abbās with a ḍa’if jiddan isnād.

The sermon, without the words, “seek His guidance,” is recorded by Muslim.

He ordered Mu'ādh to never leave saying, "O Allāh! Aid me in remembering You, being grateful to You and making good my worship of You" at the end of every prayer.⁶

One of his (ﷺ) supplications was, "My Lord! Aid me and do not aid others against me!"⁷

The supplication of Qunūt which was employed by 'Umar and others mentioned, "O Allāh! We seek Your aid!"⁸

A famous narration mentions that, after striking the sea to make it split, Mūsā ('alayhis-salām) said, 'O Allāh! To You belongs all praise, to You does one complain, You are the One whose aid is sought, and to You does one turn for relief, in You does one place his trust, and there is no might or motion except with You.'⁹

The servant is in need of seeking Allāh's aid in performing the prescribed and abandoning the proscribed, and in bearing the

⁶ Aḥmad #22119-22126, Abū Dāwūd #1522, Nasā'ī #1304 and 'Amal al-Yawm wa'l-Laylah #109

Nawawī, *al-Adhkār*, pg. 103, *al-Kbulāṣah*, vol. 1, pg. 468, *Riyāḍ* #389-1430 said that the isnād was ṣaḥīḥ, as did ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah*, vol. 7, pg. 97. Ibn 'Allān, *al-Futūḥāt al-Rabbāniyyah*, vol. 3, pg. 55 quotes ibn Ḥajr saying it was ṣaḥīḥ. Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Targhib* #1596 said it was ṣaḥīḥ as did Arna'ūt.

⁷ Aḥmad #1997, Abū Dāwūd #1510-1511, Tirmidhī #3551

Tirmidhī said it was ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ. It was ruled ṣaḥīḥ by ibn Ḥibbān #948 and Ḥākim #1910 with Dhahabī agreeing. Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Tirmidhī* ruled it ṣaḥīḥ and Arna'ūt said the isnād was ṣaḥīḥ.

⁸ Ṭaḥāwī, *Ma'āni al-Āthār*, vol. 1, pg. 250 with a jayyid isnād.

⁹ Ṭabarānī, *al-Awsaṭ*, *al-Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of ibn Mas'ūd.

Haythamī, vol. 10, pg. 183 said, 'Its isnād contains narrators I do not know.'

tripling circumstances with a decree of patience. Ya‘qūb (*‘alayhis-salām*) said,

فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَى مَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

“...but beauty lies in showing patience and it is Allāh alone who is my Help in the face of what you describe.”¹⁰

It is for this reason that ‘Ā’ishah said this same statement in the incident of the Lie and Allāh cleared her of the false accusation.

Mūsā said to his people,

أَسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَصْبِرُوا

“So seek help in Allāh and be patient.”¹¹

Allāh said to his Prophet (ﷺ),

قَالَ
رَبِّ أَحْكُم بِالْحَقِّ وَرَبُّنَا الرَّحْمَنُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَى مَا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

“Say: ‘Lord, judge with truth! Our Lord is the All-Merciful and the One whose help is sought in the face of what you describe!’”¹²

When the Prophet (ﷺ) gave ‘Uthmān the good news that he would enter Paradise after going through tribulation, he said,

¹⁰ *Yūsuf* (12): 18

¹¹ *al-A‘rāf* (7): 128

¹² *al-Anbiyā’* (21): 112

“Allāh’s aid is sought!”¹³ When they entered on ‘Uthmān and beat him, with blood pouring down his body, he was saying, ‘None has the right to be worshipped save You, Glory be to You, I have been one of the wrong-doers. O Allāh! I take refuge with You against them, I seek Your aid in all my affairs, and I ask You for the patience to bear what You have tested me with!’

It is reported on the authority of Abū Ṭalḥah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said in one of his battles when encountering the enemy, “O Master of the Day of Judgment, it is You we worship and Your aid we seek!” Abū Ṭalḥah said, ‘I saw the men falling down in fits!’¹⁴ This was recorded by Abū’l-Shaykh al-Aṣbahānī.

The servant is in need of seeking Allāh’s aid in acquiring good in his religious and worldly life as Zubayr said in his final advice to his son, ‘Abdullāh, asking him to pay off his debts, ‘If you are unable, seek the help of my Master.’ He asked, ‘Father, who is your master?’ He replied, ‘Allāh.’ He said, ‘Whenever I found it difficult to pay off his debts, I said, “Master of Zubayr, pay off his debt!” and it would be paid off.’

In the first sermon that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) delivered off the pulpit he said, ‘The Arabs are like a long suffering camel¹⁵ whose muzzle I have taken hold of, I will take it across the

¹³ Muslim #2403

¹⁴ Ṭabarānī, *al-Awsaṭ* #8163 and ibn al-Sunnī, ‘*Amal al-Yawm wa’l-Laylah*’ #334 Haythamī, vol. 5, pg. 328 said that its isnād contained ‘Abdu’l-Salām ibn Hāshim who is ḍa’if. It was ruled ḍa’if by Albānī, *al-Da’if* #5105

¹⁵ i.e. it endures any pain it faces and does what it has to do.

great plain and I seek the aid of Allāh in doing so.’

The servant will also need Allāh’s help to get him through the terrors of the Day of Rising: from the point of his death onwards.

When Khālīd ibn al-Walīd was on his death bed, one of the men around him said, ‘It is something terribly hard,’ i.e. death. Khalid said, ‘Certainly! But I seek the aid of Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent.’

When ‘Āmir ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Zubayr was on his death bed, he cried and said, ‘I am only crying at (losing) the heat of the day and the coolness of the standing,’ i.e. fasting during the day and praying by night. He said, ‘I seek Allāh’s aid in bearing this fatal injury of mine.’

One of the early people said, ‘My Lord! I am amazed at how someone who knows You could hope in another! I am amazed at how someone who knows You could seek help from another.’

al-Ḥasan wrote to ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz, may Allāh have mercy on him, ‘Do not seek the aid of any besides Allāh or Allāh may leave you to him.’

One of them said, ‘Seek the aid of Allāh, seek His aid for He is the best of those whose aid is sought.’¹⁶

¹⁶ All appendices are taken from the monumental work, *Nūru’l-Iqtibās fī Mishkāt Waṣīyyah al-Nabī li’bn ‘Abbās*, which has been published by Dār as-Sunnah Publishers 2009, Birmingham, United Kingdom under the title, *The Legacy of the Prophet (ﷺ) - An explanation of his advice to ibn ‘Abbās (radīy>Allāhu ‘anhu)* by al-Ḥāfiẓ ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī.

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