

Let Us be from the Pious Ones!

(Translated)

Allah (swt) says:

﴿الم * ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ * الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ * وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ * أُولَئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“Alif-Lam-Mim. This is the Book (the Quran), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are Al-Muttaqun [the pious and righteous persons who fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden) and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)]. Who believe in the Ghaib and perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat), and spend out of what we have provided for them [i.e. give Zakat, spend on themselves, their parents, their children, their wives, etc., and also give charity to the poor and also in Allah's Cause - Jihad, etc.]. And who believe in (the Quran and the Sunnah) which has been sent down (revealed) to you (Muhammad Peace be upon him) and in [the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel), etc.] which were sent down before you and they believe with certainty in the Hereafter. (Resurrection, recompense of their good and bad deeds, Paradise and Hell, etc.). They are on (true) guidance from their Lord, and they are the successful.” (Al-Baqara: 1-5)

The path to become pious is clear and obvious: The Book of Allah (swt) and His Guidance. So, whoever wanted to take on this path needs to embody the character traits of the pious ones, which Allah (swt) showed in the previously mentioned Ayat: the pious ones are those who believe in the Unknown, establish prayers, spend what Allah has given Rizq to them, believe in what was revealed to the Rasuul (saw) and the Messengers who preceded him, and believe in Akhira. Their Lord (swt) said about them that they are on guidance and they are victorious. So why won't the Muslim be pious and the path in front of him to achieve that is clear as his Lord (swt) drew for him as He (swt) drew for him the path to guidance? Why did Allah (swt) specifically mentioned those with praise and His (swt) promise to grant them victory in Jannah in many locations in His Valuable Book?

Allah (swt) responds to those who prefer the Dunya (world) and its pleasures and to those who are deluded with the love of things they covet of women, children, wealth of gold and silver, branded beautiful horses, and well-tilled land. ﴿قُلْ أُوْنِبْتُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ دَلِكُمْ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا﴾ **Say: "Shall I inform you of things far better than those? For Al-Muttaqun (the pious - see V. 2:2) there are Gardens (Paradise) with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. Therein (is their) eternal (home) and Azwajun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives) [i.e. they will have no menses, urine, or stool, etc.], And Allah will be pleased with them. And Allah is All-Seer of the (His) slaves".** [Al-i-Imran: 15] Yes! The pious ones have Heavens which is their eternal abode, and they have from Allah (swt) the pleasing where He never is angry with them ever. What kind of reward will these pious ones receive?! How can a Muslim fall short on this path whilst he is aiming for winning the biggest reward? What are the obstacles which prevent a Muslim from taking this path and become pious?

Iman increases and grows every time we nourish it with obedience. Yet, Iman decreases and withers away if the disease of disobedience has reached man and if he doesn't work or call to the path of his Lord (swt). So, indeed he will drift off from his Creator (swt); his Iman will weaken, and the light on his face will diminish, and he will run towards Dunya and its pleasures where he will consume from it whatever he can. Shaytan has made his deeds glamorous for him so that he goes astray, thus moving away from the Dawah to Allah (swt), abandoning his role, losing the entrusted cause, weakening the hold on the orders of Allah (swt). Imam Ahmad was asked: “When will the servant of Allah (swt) find rest?” He replied: “When he takes his first step into Jannah”.

We have the Rasuul (saw) as the greatest and best example, as he (saw) was the thankful servant who never stopped mentioning Allah (swt), worshipping Him (swt), and calling to His (swt) path, and the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, followed him (saw), thus responding to the call, obeying it with perfection.

Huthayfah, may Allah be pleased with him, was asked about the living dead, and he said: "It is he who doesn't forbid the Munkar (evil) neither with his tongue nor his heart". So the person is dead if he doesn't dedicate his concerns to the Dawah to the Tawheed of Allah (swt), following His (swt) guidance in every small and big thing in his life. He is dead because he didn't make the Dawah the most important cause in his life where he lives and dies for this cause!!

This is the path and that is the method for guidance and piety, and the Muslim ought to hold on to it strongly. He ought to know that the method of truth is full of risks, obstacles, and hardships. In addition to fighting the falsehood and its supporters, the whispers of Shaytan keeps insisting on deluding the Muslims and making them go astray, as Allah (swt) says: "(Iblis) said: **«قَالَ فَبِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لَأَقْعُدَنَّ لَهُمْ صِرَاطَكَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ»** "Because You have sent me astray, surely I will sit in wait against them (human beings) on Your Straight Path." (Al-A'raf: 16), as the soul is inclined to evil, pushing the person to commit evil deeds, making these deeds glamorous for him, steers him away and repels him from doing good deeds.

The human being is being hit by all these obstacles, and if he does not hold on to the rules of his Deen and gives it the highest priority, he will eventually become weak and fall for disobedience. If the Muslim is occupied at all times with pleasing his Lord (swt), he's not worried about losing money or effort, and Allah (swt) and his Rasuul (saw) are more beloved to him than the Dunya and whatever it encompasses, then he has embarked on the path of piety, overcame the obstacles and hurdles, and worked upon what the Rasuul (saw) said: **«لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ أَكُونَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ وَالِدِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ»** "None of you will have faith till he loves me more than his father, his children and all mankind." and what he (saw) said: **«لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونَ هَوَاهُ تَبَعًا لِمَا جِئْتُ بِهِ»** "None of you [truly] believes until his desires are subservient to that which I have brought." So why do people find it difficult to embark on the path to piety? How can we be amongst those who are pious?!

The Rasuul (saw) said: **«إِنَّ رُوحَ الْقُدْسِ نَفَثَ فِي رُوعِي أَنَّهُ لَنْ تَمُوتَ نَفْسٌ حَتَّىٰ تَسْتَكْمَلَ رِزْقَهَا، فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَجْمَلُوا فِيهِ»** "The Angel Jibrael informed me that no soul will die until it fulfills its Rizq (sustenance), so fear Allah SWT and feel free to ask whatever you like, and do not be tempted by the slowing of Rizq to ask him through disobeying Allah SWT, as whatever Allah SWT has cannot be obtained except through obeying Him SWT."

A lot of people use their seeking of sustenance as an excuse for not working on their Akhira, as life is becoming more difficult and more expensive, and the economical situation and human conditions prevent a person from concentrating in his worship. These conditions push him in some cases to fall in disobedience such as combining prayers and not performing them in a manner loved and pleased by his Lord (swt), taking an interest-based loan in order to build a house or pay off his kids' school fees, and falling short in carrying the "greatest trust", calling people to Islam, re-establishing the ruling of life with Islam as a system ordered by his Creator (swt). He gets busy in seeking sustenance; he wastes most of his time in doing that, and he justifies that with being unable to help or fulfilling the needs of his children. He forgot that his Rizq is guaranteed for him, and that seeking sustenance did not stop the Companions and others from calling people to the path of goodness and mercy. You rather see him running and panting but doesn't do anything substantial to nourish his soul by winning in Dunya and a forgiveness from Allah (swt) in Akhira under the pretext that Allah (swt) knows better about his situation.

Amongst the obstacles which hurdle a Muslim and cause him to go astray from the path of piety is the daily plots of the disbelievers by narrowing his sustenance as unemployment and poverty have increased, and the spreading of corrupt capitalistic concepts which are making him pant in order to gain a bigger share of this Dunya and letting go of winning Akhira. The concepts have flipped upside down, and the Muslim gave up on **«وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ»** "But seek, with that (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter, and forget not your portion

of legal enjoyment in this world, and do good as Allah has been good to you, and seek not mischief in the land. Verily, Allah likes not the Mufsidun (those who commit great crimes and sins, oppressors, tyrants, mischief-makers, corrupts).” [Al-Qasas: 77]. He gave up on this and he justified this by saying that the conditions of this life has become difficult and that there’s no escape from that.

Ibn Al Qayyim said: the Rasuul (saw) gathered in his saying: «فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَجْمَلُوا فِي الطَّلَبِ» **“Fear Allah SWT and feel free to ask whatever you like”**, the benefits of the Dunya and Akhira with their comforts and pleasures, whatever is gained through fearing Allah (swt), achieving the comfort of the heart and the body, leaving the worries, being extremely cautious, working hard, extreme tiredness, perseverance, and hardships in seeking Dunya are not fulfilled except through feeling free to ask whatever you like. Whoever fears Allah (swt) will win the pleasure of the Akhira and its comforts, and the best way to ask for whatever you like is through steering away from holding the worries and concerns of this Dunya.

Other people will give the excuse of their old age and inability to perform good deeds and their obligations of their Deen. Allah (swt) says: «وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ» **“And worship your Lord until there comes unto you the certainty (i.e. death).”** [Al-Hijr: 99]. Also, Hasan Al Basri said: “Allah (swt) never made for a servant a fixed term for good deeds until death reaches him.” The Muslim who fears Allah (swt) in all of his deeds until death reaches him: in his worship, his transactions, and his support for his Deen. Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, said: “Waraqah said to the Rasuul (saw): Whenever I witness your day, I shall grant you the biggest victory.” Even though he was very old and eyesight wearing off, but he wished to participate in it like a strong branch, and be the most useful and helpful.

This is the stance of the Muslim; he never rests from working anything to achieve the pleasure of his Lord (swt). He is not stopped by the obstacles, and he is not slowed down by the difficulties. Anas said that Abu Talha Al-Ansari read Surat At-Tawba, so when he reached the Ayah: «انْفِرُوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالًا» **“March forth, whether you are light (being healthy, young and wealthy) or heavy (being ill, old and poor).”** [At-Tawba: 41], he said: I see that our Lord (swt) will call upon us all to be involved in military action, so prepare me for that. So his children said: may Allah have mercy upon you, you fought with the Rasuul (saw) until he (saw) died, with Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, until he died, also with Omar, may Allah be pleased with him. So, we shall invade on your behave, but he refused and they prepared him and he set into the sea but he died, but they couldn’t find an island to bury him except after seven days, and he never changed when he was buried.

Whoever wants and seeks Dunya will forget and be unaware of the Akhira, and whoever wanted Akhira and was eager for the reward, he would leave the Dunya and he would not care for it or its pleasures. Perhaps Ibn Al Qayyim has an insight about this matter as he clarifies this point very well as he said: “It is essential to accept the reality that if something is placed then it’s opposite must be absent, as something will exist on the condition that it’s opposite ceases to exist. Accordingly, the same occurs with the elite and the influential people, even with the beliefs and wills. If the heart is steadfast in its beliefs in falsehood and likes it, there will be no place for believing in and loving the truth. Also, if the tongue is busy in saying useless things, its owner would not be able to say things which are useful until the tongue stops from speaking falsehood. The emotions as well; if they are busy with anything else other than worship, they would not be able to be busy with worship until they stop doing the opposite. Even the heart which is busy in loving other than Allah (swt) and His Will and being eager to meet Him (swt) and seek comfort in Him, it can’t be busy with loving Allah (swt), His Will, and His love, and be eager to meet Him except by being empty from what keeps him clinging to anything other than Him (swt).

My brothers in Islam: We ought to solely busy ourselves and have only one concern: obeying Allah (swt), loving Him, being eager to enter His Jannah by doing what pleases Him, steering away from what angers Him, and overcome ourselves so that we lead it in a way that Allah (swt) and His Rasuul (saw) like: «لَا يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يَكُونَ هَوَاهُ تَبِعاً لِمَا جِئْتُ بِهِ» **“None of you [truly] believes until his desires are subservient to that which I have brought.”** Malik ibn Dinar reported: The chests of the believers are boiling with good deeds, and the chests of the immoral people are boiling with immoral deeds, and Allah (swt) sees your concerns, so pay attention to what you’re concerned about, may Allah have mercy on you.

So let us see what our concerns in this Dunya are: Gathering money? Marrying? Attaining a position? A house to live in so we build it as if we're going to be immortal in this perishable Dunya? Children who make us forget the Akhira in a manner that they become our only concern and their doings are our biggest concern? Imam Malik said: "The amount of sorrow you have for this Dunya is proportional to the amount of concern for Akhira that will exit your heart, and the amount of sorrow you have for the Akhira is proportional to the amount of concern for Dunya that will exit your heart. So, which sorrow – O sister – do you choose?"

Why have we become competitive in this Dunya and its pleasures but we don't do that with the Akhira and its rewards? Why have our feelings become weak about our responsibilities towards our Deen and in purifying ourselves from the anger of Allah (swt) and His punishment? Why have these feelings given up and started relying on obstacles, difficulties, and the conditions of life? Why have we given up on competing in good deeds and acts of worship, as Allah (swt) says: ﴿وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَافِسُونَ﴾ **"The last thereof (that wine) will be the smell of musk, and for this let (all) those strive who want to strive (i.e. hasten earnestly to the obedience of Allah)."** [Al-Mutaffifin: 26]? Why have we become slower even though our Lord and Protector says: ﴿وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ **"And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for Al-Muttaqun (the pious)."** [Ali-i-Imran: 133]? Then, why don't we embark on the path of the pious ones?

The path of piety is full with thorns, and those who embark this path must avoid these thorns and if they prick them, they must remain patient and keep going on the path of piety even if their feet bleed – haven't the feet of the beloved Rasuul (saw) bled?! Therefore, they must insist and remain steadfast without caring about the plots of the enemies or the hypocrisy of their relatives. They must overcome their inner temptations and steer away from standing by them and going after their whispers.

Al Walid ibn Mazeed: I heard Al-Awzaii saying: "The believer talks little and works much. The hypocrite works little and talks much."

Thus, we must work without caring about those who sat down. We shall get out of their way, and we should support those whose concern was obeying Allah (swt) and calling to His Deen.

Hammad ibn Salama said: "We never visited Suleiman At-Taymi at an hour of worship to Allah except that we found him worshipping. If it was an hour of prayer we would find him praying, and if it was not we would find him either in Wudu, visiting a sick person, participating in a funeral, or sitting in a Masjid. We would regard him as someone who cannot disobey Allah." That's how we should be, living by the rules of Allah (swt) in every aspect of our lives no matter how trivial or crucial it is so that we come closer to Him (swt). We obey Him (swt), and fear Him (swt) more, thus walking steadily upon the path of the pious ones.

In addition, we should not wait for a reward or thanks from people as our work is for the sake of Allah (swt). We seek His (swt) pleasing and ask Him (swt) to accept it all for His (swt) sake: ﴿إِنَّمَا نَطْعُمُكُمْ لَوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا﴾ **"We feed you seeking Allah's Countenance only. We wish for no reward, nor thanks from you."** [Al-Insan: 9]. As such, "everything done not for His (swt) sake will diminish" as said by Ar-Rabii ibn Khaytham.

Whoever wants to embark this path must remain steadfast and patient without caring who disagrees with him, does not get weakened by any of the many temptations, and is not stopped by any difficulty or calamity. Ibn Al-Qayyim said: "Whenever the servant sees that his forelock and that of others are all in the Hands of Allah (swt), He (swt) alone misguides whoever He (swt) wishes, he will no longer be afraid of people, beg from them, or revere them as landlords. They are rather weak and subdued servants; those who are ordering around are just like others, and those who are managing others are just like others. So whoever witnesses such sight will automatically have his deficiency and need for his Lord an essential matter for him, and whenever people witness this, he won't need them anymore, and he won't attach his hopes and pleas to them. Thus, his Tawheed, his reliance, and his servitude will be corrected, and that's why Hud told his people: ﴿إِنِّي تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ مَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ آخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾ **"I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord! There is not a moving (living) creature but**

He has grasp of its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on the Straight Path (the truth).” [Hud: 56]

He walks with full confidence in the promise of Allah (swt) and His (swt) mercy, as he is not worried if the fulfillment of this promise is delayed, as this is dependent on The Creator alone. All he has to do is keep persisting on asking The Most Merciful, The Most Beneficent, and not be despair from that, rather to haste in every second to pray to Him (swt) and ask from Him (swt) the guidance and content: ﴿وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ * عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ﴾ **“And my guidance cannot come except from Allah, in Him I trust and unto Him I repent.”** [Hud: 88]. He does not rest in his work nor does he rest in striving to achieve the pleasure of his Lord (swt). Some of the old companions of Omar ibn Abdul Aiziz said: “Would you make yourself available for us?” He replied: “Where is the availability? It has long gone as there’s none except with Allah.”

This is the habit of the Companions and the Khulafaa, and this is what the Muslims today ought to do – as the rules of Allah have been suspended on earth, and now he has to struggle against the tide of common corrupt concepts which have been spread the disbelievers amongst the Muslim Ummah after they destroyed its structure and state which protect the Islamic rules and the Muslims against the enemies, and they support its members to help themselves in leading them along the correct path until they embark it. Based on this, he must work relentlessly as “there is no rest after today” after he became aware of his wrong reality which he needs to change. Ibn Taymiyyah said: “A lot of people when they see the falsehood, or a lot of changes in the conditions of Islam, feel compassionate, weary, and wail just like the people inflicted with calamities do but he is prohibited from doing so. He is rather ordered to be patient, have reliance, and stay steadfast on the Deen of Islam, and to believe in Allah (swt) and be with the believers and those who do good, and the good end is for the ones who are pious. Those who get back fired by their sins must remain patient, as the promise of Allah is Haqq, and he should repent for his sin, and thank his Lord day and night.” This is so that he and others are not replaced with another group of people: ﴿مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى﴾ **“[...] Whoever from among you turns back from his religion (Islam), Allah will bring a people whom He will love and they will love Him; humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers, fighting in the Way of Allah, and never afraid of the blame of the blamers. [...].”** [Al-Ma’ida: 54].

Ibn Al Qayyim said: The one who is asking powers from Allah and in Akhira, but rather in every knowledge, manufacture and kingship, where he becomes a ruler in those areas and become a role model, then he must be fearless and courageous, governing over his weakness, invincible under the ruling of his imagination, ascetic in everything except the basics, loving what he’s aiming for, knowing the path which leads him to it and those which will stop him from reaching it. Also, he must be daring in his efforts, strongly steadfast, nothing steers him away from his quest even the blame of the blamers or their admonitions. He must also be very quiet, always thinking, impartial towards the pleasure of commendations or the pain of slander, always ready to do what he needs to do in order to support himself, does not get put off by objections, his motto is patience and his comfort is tiredness.

Oh Allah use us in attaining victory for Your Deen, aid us in obeying You and worshipping You in the best of manners, and write for us to be amongst the good and pious servants, Ameen.

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