

تزكية النفس

SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION RETREAT

THE FOUNDATION
OF ALL WORSHIP
(THE LOVE OF ALLAH)

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Spiritual Purification Retreat / Ramadan 1446

The Foundation of All Worship (The Love of Allāh)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



We spoke about the honor of ‘Ubūdīyyah, and then we spoke about how one starts his path of Ubūdīyyah with knowledge of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Then, we mentioned the ultimate level and state of ‘Ubūdīyyah that we all need to strive for. Then, we mentioned how desperate we are and how we need Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Now, among the most important heart ‘Ibādāt, the head of ‘Ibādah, the foundation of all foundations of ‘Ibādah, and a matter that the Dīn is built upon — this ‘Ibādah is the ‘Ibādah of the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Loving Allāh is one of the most important duties of Īmān, and it’s a key principle of Īmān. It’s the reality, essence, and foundation of ‘Ibādah, Īmān, and Tawhīd. It’s the foundation of all actions of this Dīn. It’s an essential condition of لا إله إلا الله. Without the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, there’s no true Tawhīd, there’s no true Īmān, there’s no guidance, there’s no success. Consider this: If it’s established, as we all know, that a believer is not truly a believer until the Messenger ﷺ is more cherished and more loved to him than his own self, his own child, his own father, and all of humanity — if that’s the case, then reflect on the depth of the love one needs to have for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. The love one holds for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى should surpass the love for water in a situation where an individual experiences an overwhelming thirst; the love he holds for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى should surpass the love for water in such a circumstance. In the weak narration in Sunan At-Tirmidhi,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ وَالْعَمَلَ الَّذِي يُلْغِي حُبَّكَ اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ حُبَّكَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ نَفْسِي وَأَهْلِي وَمِنْ الْمَاءِ الْبَارِدِ

I ask you, Yā Allāh, for Your Love and the love of those who You love and to perform actions that will attain me Your Love. Yā Allāh, make your Love more beloved to me than myself, my family, and cold water.

The Love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى represents the most accessible route to Jannah. The Sahābah رضي الله عنهم expressed immense joy when they realized that the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى would enable them to be with Him in Jannah. They experienced a level of happiness and joy that was unmatched in their lives following their conversion to Islām. Sahīh Al-Bukhāri and Muslim, on the authority of Anas رضي الله عنه, a man asked the Messenger ﷺ, “When is the Day of Judgement?” The Messenger ﷺ said, “What have you prepared for it?” He wanted to teach him a lesson. The man said, “Nothing, except that I love Allāh and His Messenger.” The Messenger ﷺ said,

أَنْتَ مَعَ مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ

You will be with those whom you love.

Anas رضي الله عنه, the narrator of the Hadīth said,

مَا رَأَيْتُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَرِحُوا بِشَيْءٍ بَعْدَ الْإِسْلَامِ مِثْلَ فَرَحِهِمْ بِهَا

After their faith in Islām, nothing brought the Sahābah greater joy (than knowing they will be with those whom they love).

Love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى nourishes the heart and feeds the soul. It brings joy to your heart and brings delight to your eyes. Worshiping Allāh سبحانه وتعالى without the ‘Ibādah of loving Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is like a body with no soul. Without love, a person is like a living dead. Without the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, it’s like a person who’s lost in darkness. Tawhīd cannot be complete without the servant’s love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى should guide and rule all other forms of love, take priority over them, and dominate them. The love of

Allāh سبحانه وتعالى transcends and oversees all other forms of love. Material wealth and various other concerns that we cherish can overwhelm our hearts, and when they do so, they displace our love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Material possessions and other things that we cherish can fill our hearts, and they can fill our hearts so much that they will push out the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. One may possess wealth, children, and all that which he desires without prioritizing the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى in his heart, that person will experience a sense of constriction and unease in his heart, no matter what he has. If one possesses the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, they have lost nothing; and if one has everything, yet lacks the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, then in reality they possess nothing. There's no greater source of joy and fulfillment for those in pursuit of *true* happiness than the love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and the aspiration to earn His Pleasure. This love is the key to the servant's honor and happiness and success in the Dunyā and in the Ākhirah. Those who embrace the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى gain honor in both this Dunyā and in the Ākhirah, because they have a special bond with the One they love. The love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is a Fitrah of the hearts. It's inconceivable for an untainted heart that comprehends the Names and Attributes of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, along with the impact they have on us, and the blessings Allāh bestows upon us, to not develop a profound love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى.

The love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى varies based on one's Īmān, and you love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى by learning about Him.

وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَاهِرَةً وَبَاطِنَةً

and [He] amply bestowed upon you His favors, [both] apparent and unapparent?

وَمَا بِكُمْ مِّنْ نِّعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ

And whatever you have of favor - it is from Allāh.

If we attempt to enumerate all of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى's Blessings, we would find it an impossible task. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى informed us that counting all His Blessings is beyond our capabilities and it's truly unfeasible. In Sūrat An-Nahl and Sūrat Ibrāhīm, two times,

وَأِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

And if you should count the favors of Allāh, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.

And in the other one,

وَأِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا ۚ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ

And if you should count the favor [i.e., blessings] of Allāh, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, mankind is [generally] most unjust and ungrateful.

It's impossible to truly understand Allāh سبحانه وتعالى without developing a profound love for Him. Although individuals may hold esteemed positions, such as professors, nuclear scientists, and physicians, they may lack knowledge of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, so they are, in reality, ignorant.

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ

They know what is apparent of the worldly life, but they, of the Hereafter, are unaware.

Sometimes when you receive a gift or you get assistance during a difficult time, something as simple as maybe someone stopping on the highway to help you change a flat tire, it can make you feel like you owe that person something for the rest of your life. Imagine what Allāh سبحانه وتعالى has given you. Bakr Al-Muzani, a Tābi'ī said, *"Son of Ādam, if you wish to understand the extent of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى's blessings upon you, then simply close your eyes."* How can one not hold love for the One who has granted him abundant blessings? What others provide is in reality a Ni'mah from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Recognizing and realizing that all that you have received is from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is in and of itself a blessing which you should express gratitude for. Your thanking and glorifying of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى for the favors He granted you constitutes yet another blessing which you need to be thankful for. The 'Abbāsi poet Mahmūd Al-Warrāq said,

شُكْرُ الْإِلَهِ نِعْمَةٌ مُوجِبَةٌ لِشُكْرِهِ

The expression of gratitude towards Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is in and of itself a blessing that warrants recognition and appreciation.

When one reaches a profound level of love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, it becomes evident that what Allāh سبحانه وتعالى takes away from him is in fact a blessing He bestowed upon him. When He removes, for example, wealth or health or a spouse or subjects you to some type of hardship, it's a blessing that He's granting you, a higher rank that you're attaining, or a benefit that you don't know about that you're receiving. He deprived you of something to give you something better.

وَأَتَّكُم مِّنْ كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ

They love them as they love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى.

But they love their idols *like* they love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and they were Mushrikīn for loving them like they love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Imagine if someone loves something *more* than he loves Allāh or if he loves something aside and totally apart from loving Allāh سبحانه وتعالى as he should love Allāh.

تَاللّٰهِ اِنْ كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِيْنٍ

By Allāh, we were indeed in manifest error

اِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

When we equated you with the Lord of the worlds.

They made their false gods equal to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى in their love towards them.

A weak or diminished love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى can result in committing sins, along with experiencing various other heart ailments, anxiety, and trials in life. Love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is a remedy for all the ailments of the heart, and without it, life would be filled with worries and pain. Increasing and strengthening the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى motivates one towards obedience. Boosting and deepening the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى acts as a powerful motivator for following His Commands and refraining from the Harām. It inspires individuals to put in their best effort. This is what the early believers strove for and it's where genuine devotees commit themselves. A person will only give up what they love and desire for something else they love even more. They will choose to let go of the weaker love in favor of the stronger love. That's why the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى

needs to be at its peak. When you truly love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, you're easily able to follow the Commands of Allāh تعالى سبحانه and you're easily able to refrain from the Harām and from the desires that you have. Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى said, *"Love of Allāh تعالى سبحانه can be likened to a tree that's firmly rooted in the heart of every believer. When that tree is nourished with the water of sincerity and adherence to the teachings of the Messenger ﷺ, it yields various fruits to the believers at all times."* The love of Allāh تعالى سبحانه will let you endure the difficulties of this life with a smile on your face and contentment in your heart. The reason why the Sahābah رضي الله عنهم and the righteous people throughout history were so eager to sacrifice their limbs, wealth, lives, and souls was their deep love for Allāh تعالى سبحانه — and of course it's combined with fear from Him as well. The dismemberment of limbs transformed into a source of joy when it was for the love of Allāh تعالى سبحانه. Who would boast and make poems about severed limbs while his limbs are actually being severed if it wasn't for the love of Allāh تعالى سبحانه?

وَلَسْتُ أَبَالِي حِينَ أُقْتَلُ مُسْلِمًا... عَلَى أَيِّ شَيْءٍ كَانَ لِلَّهِ مَصْرَعِي

When I am being martyred as a Muslim, I do not care in what way I receive my death for Allāh's Sake,

وذلك في ذات الإله وإن يشأ... يبارك على أوصال شلو ممزع

For that is for the sake of Allāh's very Self; and if He will, He will bestow His Blessings upon the torn pieces of my body.

When the Sahābah gave up their time and wealth and lives and went through pain and struggles on this path, do you honestly believe they didn't love their wives and children? They did! But they understood that loving Allāh تعالى سبحانه is

the most important love, so they sacrificed everything for that love. They understood that the love of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى governs *all* love. The discomfort of swollen feet endured from standing for hours at night in ‘Ibādah to Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى was overshadowed by the profound love they had for Allāh. The discomfort of hunger and thirst that’s experienced during fasting and in Ramadān transforms into a source of joy due to the love of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Abu Muhammad ‘Abdullāh Ibn Muhammad Ibn Al-‘Abbās Al-Makki Al-Fākihi and also Ibn Al-Jawzi in Sifat As-Safwā related on the authority of ‘Abd Al-‘Azīz Ibn Abi Rawād that a woman left Khurasān. She left Khurasān and she headed towards Makkah and she kept asking on the way,

أَيْنَ بَيْتَ رَبِّي؟

Where’s my Lord's House?

Imagine the difficulties she endured on a journey from Khurasān to Makkah — look at the map — but her mind was focused on the love of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, so it made the journey seem as if she’s going from her house to her neighbor's house, and she kept saying أَيْنَ بَيْتَ رَبِّي؟ They told her, “*You’ll see your Lord’s House very soon.*” Once they entered Al-Masjid Al-Harām in Makkah, they said, “*That’s your Lord’s House.*” She began to say,

بَيْتَ رَبِّي، بَيْتَ رَبِّي!

My Lord’s House! My Lord’s House!

She leaned against the Ka’bah and placed her cheek on the Ka’bah and continued to cry until she died. Her love and longing for her Lord consumed her. If that’s her deep desire and love for the House of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, can you imagine how deep her love for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is and for seeing Him in Jannah?

The essence of sweetness and joy, whether in acts of worship or in Īmān or in life as a whole, is absent without the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Ibn Al-Qayyim said in Ad-Dā’ wad-Dawā’,

من أحب شيئاً غير الله عذب به

Whoever attaches his heart to other than Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, he will be punished, he will suffer.

One who loves in Harām, one who loves anything other than Allāh like he’s supposed to love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى or more than he loves Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, he will inevitably suffer because of it. Love that competes with the love of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will cause you pain. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will make you suffer because of that love. You love your child like you’re supposed to love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى or more? He will grow to be a disobedient son, a punishment for you in the Dunyā and in the Ākhirah. People who love money and wealth, and they love them, they *truly* love them like they love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى or more, and then they deny Allāh سبحانه وتعالى’s obligation regarding that, on the Day of Judgement they will suffer because of this. There are many Āyāt and Ahādīth on that. They will also suffer in this life. They will experience stress, sadness, and frustration while trying to acquire that wealth. When they finally obtain it and they think, “*Now we got the wealth, we can relax*”, their worry only grows and their anxiety only deepens. They constantly strive for more and they will never feel satisfied. They will always feel like they haven’t achieved anything. They believe they always have a long way to go to gather more and more wealth. They live in fear and in anxiety about

losing their wealth or that something may happen to it, and that causes them to be constantly on edge. If they lose some of the wealth or they face a setback, they become overwhelmed with distress and dissatisfaction. And similar to that are those who suffer from the pain of forbidden love, the Harām love, they're among the most miserable and burdened individuals that you can see. If their beloved one is far away, they'll experience deep sorrow that's hard to describe. Their longing and yearning can leave them in a pitiful state. If their beloved is close to them, they still feel anxiety and sadness. They fear separation, they fear distance, they fear betrayal, the thought of losing their love can be overwhelming because separation is inevitable — it's going to happen either through death, betrayal, jealousy, or simply growing tired of each other. So among the most miserable people are those who love in Harām. They're miserable even if love itself is sweet. They're crying and sad all the time because of fear of parting or they're consumed by feuding and longing for that person.

وصلی اللہ علی سیدنا محمد وعلی آلہ وصحبہ وسلم