

Ramadan Immersion



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Waheed

Sabr

Ali RA: **“Don’t be afraid of anything except your own sins and don’t have hope in anything aside from Allah”**

- We often fear worldly issues like climate change, nuclear war etc. While it's important to remain aware of them, we must not let these distractions overshadow what we should truly fear — our own sins.
- In a worldly sense, your sins play a significant role in the outcomes we face and the experiences we encounter in our daily lives.
 - The sins we commit affect the barakah in our life
 - I.e. lack of rain, birds being deprived of sustenance due to the sins of the community
 - The downpour of blessings is reliant upon the deeds what we have in our life and where there are sins, there might tightness in that downpour of blessings
- Abdullah ibn Abbas RA: For every sin, there are five negative effects that a person experiences in this life
 - **There’s a darkness that hovers above this person**
 - People feel distanced from this person, and by extension, this person doesn’t like interacting with people of goodness (darkness in their heart)
 - **The heart losing its power because the body is overwhelming it**

- The natural state of the heart is that it has the light of the Ruh (soul), which is created from the Noor of Allah
- The heart is the extension of the Ruh → Ruh brings the light to the heart → heart provides to the rest of the body
- The heart becomes darkened/covered by the sins of the body and limbs, causing the soul to be dominated by the body
- As believers, our hope is that the soul is dominating the body as the soul works in accordance with Allah's commandments (purity). That's why when we're fasting, we're following the demand of the soul so it is easier to do good.
- **Allah brings tightness in the rizq (provisions) of this person**
 - Rizq: family, energy, output of good, blessings, anything that brings ease to our lives etc.
 - The same home that used to feel big enough now feels small
 - Allah says in Surah Tawbah: إِذَا ضَاقَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ
 - The earth feels tight on them despite its vastness
 - For some people, their situations may appear tight but in reality, they feel so vast → leads to contentment
 - Those who always feel tight may start living in spite of people and at times, of Allah because they feel suppressed
- **Becoming spiritually lethargic**
 - I.e. No motivation to pray, to read Quran or do any good
 - A child's heart, by default, is closer to the fitrah (natural disposition), which is pure and inclined towards goodness. As we grow older, we become drawn to different influences and motivations → fitrah begins to lose its voice. This is often the result of having a lack of spiritual intake that gives the soul the sustenance that it needs to drive us forward
- **Causes those close to us to dislike us**
 - People who are pure would want to distance themselves from us

- The effects of sins also extends to the akhira → we will all be afraid on the Day of Judgement (DoJ) because of our sins, hadith mention people drowning in sweat

“...and don't have hope in anything aside from Allah”

- The fear is in the sins, the hope is in Allah's forgiveness
- Allah is the Most Forgiving
 - People may cancel us or support us, but a believer finds stability in the most stable source of motivation and support which is Allah
 - The shifts of this world is clear proof that nothing/no one remains the same
 - People will change how they treat you and we also treat people based upon our potential benefit from them
 - The reality is we struggle with good character when we are not the beneficiary
- Essentially, don't have big hopes in people
 - This doesn't mean we don't let people rely on us or treat people nicely → primary source of hope should always be Allah
- Whoever relies upon people, their wealth or their intellect alone, will be led astray
 - Qarun was from the family of Musa and technically a believer but his wealth was the cause of his destruction
 - Iblis fell astray because he relied on his intellect alone

A person who doesn't know should never feel shy from asking

- A sign of a person who is knowledgeable: continues to ask questions until he learns
 - Ask good questions → something that directly benefits the subject that you're learning
- A sign of a person who lacks knowledge: unable to ask questions or unwilling to admit "I don't know."
 - Imam Malik was known for saying "I don't know"

Forgiveness

- If you hear someone say something about you that angers you, just forgive it
- Hadith on Sha'ban: The Prophet ﷺ said there are two people who are not forgiven – those who commit shirk and those who harbour hate in their heart
 - In Ramadan, our goal should be to secure the mercy of Allah but to open that door, we must remove these two things
 - When we forgive people, we're forgiving ourselves because Allah forgives us
 - Not applicable to abnormal situations i.e. oppression
 - Oppression vs inconvenience: the tendency to make it synonymous
- Reflect on how many of Allah's rights we have taken away and how many of His rules we have broken, yet we hope He continues to forgive us
 - So for the smaller, mundane things people have done to us, we should be able to forgive them
- Sabr is the ability to restrain oneself and remain silent, which is a form of forgiveness

Umar RA: "Whoever fears Allah in their life will never be afflicted by His anger"

- Fear → a deterrent from sin and a motivation to seek forgiveness
- The fear of Allah will protect us from the anger of Allah and they will do their best to not do anything that will make him unhappy

If it was not for the Day of Judgement, life as you see it would be very different

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِمْ مَا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۖ
If Allah were to punish people 'immediately' for their wrongdoing, He would not have left a single living being on earth. But He delays them for an appointed term.

- If Allah were to nitpick our sins, we wouldn't have a single blessing left in our life. If we were looking at haram, Allah would punish us by removing our eyesight but Allah lets us live with it, as there is a day for it.
- Allah is not negligent or unaware of what the oppressors are doing. If it were not for the DoJ, they would not get away with their oppression → their time will come and we will be a witness to their punishment
- The delay is also a blessing, as it gives us time to turn towards and repent

Be precise in where you put your energy, don't misuse it

- Biggest way people misuse their energy is focusing on other people's mistakes/flaws
- Occupy yourself with correcting your own mistakes
 - If you see a flaw in someone, reflect on whether you have that same flaw
 - i.e. you see people backbiting → do you backbite when you're with your people? Oppressors → are you oppressing someone in your day to day life?
- An 'ayb (flaw) is sufficient for a person if it clarifies something within themselves
 - If a person sees a flaw, does it clarify the flaw within themselves?
- There are people whose flaws are hidden from them
 - They are critical of flaws in other people and harm them unknowingly (distancing themselves, speaking about it to others etc.), while not realizing they have the same flaws
- When you know you have that flaw, you become empathetic
- On giving advice: we don't have the authority to give someone advice if we don't love them. Correcting one another is founded upon having love for one another. If you don't love them, just make dua for them
 - As a recipient, just accept the advice if good. Don't be critical of the advice.

Intellect

- For the cause of your religion, use your intellect
 - Stop overplanning
 - Tie your camel, but don't suffocate it
 - The greatest way to use your intellect is to plan to the point that you need to tie your camel, rely upon Allah for the rest

Ali RA: "Don't ever become too excited over comfort/wealth and don't become despondent over a lack of blessings"

- Don't let the difficulty put you in such grief that it paralyzes you
- Don't become too arrogant about your situation either
- The process of melting gold to purify it → the difficulty is like that fire, it purifies us to turn towards Allah
- You will not be able to reach the points of life that you wish to reach, except by giving up that which you love and desire at this moment at times
 - I.e. you don't be able to get to where you need to without giving up aspects of life which you like to have → a person cannot be healthy if they don't leave certain foods, cannot be happy if they don't leave certain sins
 - The cause of regression are the desires we can't let go of
 - In part of a hadith, the Prophet ﷺ says: "...Leave that which is Haram and you will be the best of worshipers..."
 - Even if the desires are halal, reflect on whether you need it? Do you always need to have it?
 - You will never reach the destination of your hopes except by being patient upon that which you don't like → i.e. holding yourself back when you have the opportunity to talk back to a parent, holding yourself back from doing haram etc.

- Growth in our religion has always been placed within leaving, not adding. For example:
 - Shahada → starts with negation, leaving everything and affirming Allah
 - Salah → leaving what you are doing, bodily movements/tongue is limited
 - Sawm → leaving food/drink
 - Zakat → leaving wealth
 - Hajj → leaving the comfort of our homes
- The deen is reliant on us to leave certain aspects of our life so we can grow towards Allah
- Main goal: Control the desires