

نزك الينفس

SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION RETREAT

ACCEPTING THE DECREE OF ALLAH

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Accepting the Decree of Allāh

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Our topic today is about submission to the Qadā' of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى while being pleased with it. And when we talk about this 'Ibādah, the 'Ibādah of submitting to the Will of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, there's two types. The first is Decrees of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى that can be countered with other decrees. When faced with illness, hunger, thirst, or cold, a person may resist these feelings by countering their discomfort by the Qadr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى — by nourishment with food, by nourishment with water, by covering up from the cold with clothing. When a fire breaks out in someone's home, it's seen as a test from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. One doesn't just let it burn down, instead he should take actions to fight the flame with water, dirt, or other methods to put out what's perceived as a Qadr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. When dealing with illness — that's a Qadr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى — a person doesn't just give in, he uses medication to tackle that disease. It's the duty of an individual to strive against such challenges with the available resources. This is opposing the Decree of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى with a Decree of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and that's proper. When 'Umar رضي الله عنه headed to Ash-Shām, he was informed upon entering Ash-Shām by Abu 'Ubaydah رضي الله عنه that a plague had spread there. 'Umar رضي الله عنه had a Shūrā with some of the Sahābah, and then he chose not to enter that city that was affected by the plague. In Bukhāri and Muslim, Abu 'Ubaydah رضي الله عنه told 'Umar, *"Isn't this fleeing from the Qadr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى?"* And 'Umar رضي الله عنه had Fiqh of the matter. He said, *"Only if someone other than you said that, Abu Ubaydah!"* Meaning, I would have taught that person a lesson if it was someone other than you. 'Umar gave us the principle on this matter, he said,

نفر من قدر الله إلى قدر الله

We flee from the Decree of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى to the Decree of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى.

Both the act of repelling and what's being repelled are ultimately within the Divine Decree of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Now if you take the necessary steps like 'Umar رضي الله عنه did, and something goes wrong, this leads to the second type of submitting to the Qadā' of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, which is the matters that you can't do anything about. This second type of accepting the Qadā' of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى involves situations that happen to a person where they have no control over what happens. When you run out of options, the only thing left to do is to accept what Allāh سبحانه وتعالى destined. Sometimes, we encounter obstacles and circumstances that we simply can't alter. You attempted to get married right away and to start a family, but it didn't pan out. The time is passing and you're getting older. That's like a ship-wrecked person who's in turbulent water, and he's unable to swim or find any means for his rescue. [Or like] someone whose reputation has been tarnished by lies and slander, losses like death, or losses of businesses, or facing prison or being in prison.

When it comes to facing the Qadā' of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, there are different levels in dealing with them. The first one, which is the one we want to avoid, is to despair, complaining, being impatient, not being pleased with Allāh سبحانه وتعالى or the Qadr He chose for you. The second is essential, and that's patience. Sometimes, you just have to be patient because there's no other option. The third is the Mustahabb, it's recommended. It's to find contentment and to accept what happened without holding any grudges. And the best way to deal with it, the fourth way, is to express gratitude to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى in everything He chooses for you. We treat what we see as bad and good alike when it's from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى because we love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. When you truly love Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, you love everything that comes from Him, what's good and what you think is bad. You trust that there is wisdom in what Allāh سبحانه وتعالى has chosen and decided for you, and you submit to Him like a lifeless body before a person who's washing it. Accepting and submitting to Allāh's decree is closely linked with other acts of 'Ibādah. It involves recognizing Allāh سبحانه وتعالى's Authority and Allāh's Judgements in His decisions. It's acknowledging His Fairness and Justice in dealing with us, because we take that from His name, Al-Muqsit. It's crucial to understand and believe that our experiences are guided from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى's Wisdom,

because we learn that from His name Al-Hakīm. We must accept that what happened was meant to happen and that what we missed was never ours; what was missed was something that wasn't going to hit you, and what hit you was not meant to miss you. We recognize that this decree that happened to you was written in Allāh سبحانه وتعالى's Book before the creation even began. The Pen wrote by the Will of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى everything and everything each person will face.

رُفِعَتِ الْأَقْلَامُ وَجَفَّتِ الصُّحُفُ

The pens have been lifted, and the pages have dried.

Those who accept the Will of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will find peace and contentment. Those who resist it, like the first category, will be discontent.

The essence of this introduction revolves around the question of *“How can we embrace the Decree of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى with joy and thank Him for it?”* First of all, you need to understand Tawhīd, and especially the names and qualities of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, like the names I just mentioned, Al-Hakīm and Al-Muqsit, or Al-'Alīm, Al-Latīf, Ar-Rahmān, Ar-Rahīm, Al-'Azīz, and Ar-Ra'ūf. These names foster a sense of tranquility and contentment and positive expectations of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. His wisdom governs all that He creates and commands, and He is gentle, Al-Latīf, with his believing servants. It's through his kindness that He may allow a believer to face challenges and trials, yet within these difficulties lie blessings and goodness, and ultimately a favorable outcome. If someone truly understands their Lord and has knowledge of His names and Attributes, they will realize that the things that they dislike and the hardships that they face contain benefits and advantages that they can't fully comprehend. In fact, as Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى said, *“The good that comes from what a person dislikes is greater than the good that comes from what they like.”* Most of the benefits for our souls come

from things that we find unpleasant, just as most of the harm, destruction, and downfall come from things that we love.

Ridā of the Qadr, our topic, is an ‘Ibādah that refers to being at peace in your heart and feeling calm during trials. Being happy about what has befallen you from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, even if it’s perceived as something bad. It’s about being grateful and not wishing for things to be any different. It’s wholeheartedly accepting Allāh سبحانه وتعالى’s choices for you in this life. A lot of people find this challenging, and that’s why Ulamā’ refute if this status that we’re talking about is Wājib or Mustahabb. Is Ridā of what happened and submitting to what happened Mustahabb or Wājib? The correct opinion is that it’s Sunnah, because it’s difficult to attain this high status, and there’s no proof that it’s Wājib. But what matters here for us is that being pleased with what has befallen us and submitting to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, that’s something that is among the highest levels of Īmān and Ihsān, and that’s what we’re trying to attain. Taslīm and submission helps one find peace, and it puts one at ease and away from suffering. You won’t need to take tranquilizers. It’s like a spiritual relaxer when we say Taslīm to the Qadā’ of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, you’re really saying, “Put me where you want Yā Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. I’m with You on this and everything else You do, I’m happy with it.” It’s about willingly surrendering to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, because you know that His plans for you are way better than anything you could choose for your own self. You make Du‘ā and entrust Allāh سبحانه وتعالى with yourself and accept and submit to what He does with you. Among the Ad’iyah of the Messenger ﷺ that we all know,

اللَّهُمَّ رَحْمَتَكَ أَرْجُو فَلَا تَكِلْنِي إِلَى نَفْسِي طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، وَأَصْلَحْ لِي شَأْنِي كُلَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ

O Allah, I hope for Your mercy. Do not leave me to myself even for the blinking of an eye (i.e. a moment). Correct all of my affairs for me. There is none worthy of worship but You.

Another one,

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ أَصْلِحْ لِيْ شَأْنِيْ كُلَّهُ وَلَا تَكِلْنِيْ إِلَى نَفْسِيْ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ

*O Ever-Living One, O Eternal One, by Your mercy I call on You to set right all my affairs.
Do not place me in charge of my soul even for the blinking of an eye (i.e. a moment).*

In some narrations, it's mentioned as one of the Adhkār for the morning and evening. Every morning and evening you're entrusting Allāh سبحانه وتعالى with yourself, so you accept what Allāh سبحانه وتعالى does. You're saying, "Yā Allāh, don't leave me to my own fate, not even for the blink of an eye." You're saying "Yā Allāh, don't leave me to get lost. Don't abandon me, even for a split second or even for a moment. Don't let me handle my own affairs for even the briefest, shortest period of time." You're telling Allāh, "Yā Allāh I cannot bear to be left alone, not even for the slightest fraction of time." You're entrusting Allāh سبحانه وتعالى with yourself, because you know His decisions for you are better than your own decisions for your own self. If Allāh سبحانه وتعالى leaves you to your own self, He leaves you to weakness, He leaves you to disaster, He leaves you to failure. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى leaving you to yourself means that you will destroy yourself. When you entrust yourself to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, you accept what Allāh سبحانه وتعالى does. Full submission to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, like a lifeless body before someone washing it, as we just said. The peak of submission is to tell Allāh, "Yā Allāh, I'm not only patient, and I'm not only thankful, I'm wholeheartedly with Your decision, I don't want it any other way. My passion, Yā Allāh, is what You decree. Loss of life, loss of fortune, loss of a job — I wholeheartedly accept it, Yā Allāh."

Some say, "I made Du'ā for this matter, and the opposite happened!" That's a whole other topic, but it overlaps slightly with this topic, so I'll answer it briefly with a statement from Muhammad Ibn 'Ali. He said,

ندعو الله فيما نحب ، فإذا وقع ما نكره ، لم نخالف الله فيما أحب

We invoke Allāh تعالى سبحانه to attain matters that we love. When we're faced with circumstances we dislike, we do not oppose Allāh تعالى سبحانه in that which He loves.

This topic of submitting to the will of Allāh تعالى سبحانه is such an important act of 'Ibādah so much that the Messenger ﷺ emphasized it and taught it to us when we go to sleep.

اللَّهُمَّ أَسَلْتُ نَفْسِي إِلَيْكَ، وَوَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِي إِلَيْكَ، وَفَوَّضْتُ أَمْرِي إِلَيْكَ، وَأَلْجَأْتُ ظَهْرِي إِلَيْكَ، رَغْبَةً
وَرَهْبَةً إِلَيْكَ، لَا مَلْجَأَ وَلَا مَنْجَا مِنْكَ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ

O Allah! I have surrendered myself over to you and have turned my face towards You, and leave all my affairs to You and depend on You and put my trust in You expecting Your reward and fearing Your punishment. There is neither fleeing from You nor refuge but with You.

“Yā Allāh, I submit myself to you.” That’s what you’re supposed to say when you go to sleep. This is our ‘Ibādah today. It relieves stress, it saves you from overthinking. In the last ‘Ibādah, solitude with Allāh تعالى سبحانه, I said it’s an ‘Ibādah that brings you blessings from ways you don’t perceive, and I mentioned examples of what took place in the Mihrāb, and with this ‘Ibādah, the Taslīm and Ridā to the Qadā’ of Allāh تعالى سبحانه, I’ll say the same, with examples. When you surrender to Allāh and submit to Him, extraordinary blessings will flow into your life from ways you never expected. Everything that starts with submission ends with a great reward and a return. In the well-known story of Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, we all know it, when he was about to sacrifice his son, notice the moment when he experienced relief. Relief doesn’t come with improperly resisting or objecting to the Qadr of Allāh تعالى سبحانه. Relief comes with submission.

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ

And when they had both submitted and he put him down upon his forehead.

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا, Taslīm, our topic! When both father and son submitted themselves to the will of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, relief came in a way he didn't imagine, Allāh سبحانه spared his son.

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ

And when they had both submitted and he put him down upon his forehead.

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَنْ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ

We called to him, "O Ibrāhīm,

قَدْ صَدَّقْتَ الرُّؤْيَا إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

You have fulfilled the vision." Indeed, We thus reward the doers of good.

Don't think it's only for Ibrāhīm عليه السلام alone,

إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

We thus reward the doers of good.

It emphasized that it's not only for Ibrāhīm and his son. It's for everyone who submits like him. The reward for Yūsuf عليه السلام for submitting to the will of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى was authority in this land.

وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّأَ لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ نُصِيبُ بِرَحْمَتِنَا مَنْ نَشَاءُ

And thus We established Yūsuf in the land to settle therein wherever he willed. We touch with Our mercy whom We will,

Like the verses about Ibrāhīm عليه السلام, at the end Allāh سبحانه وتعالى said,

وَلَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

And We do not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good.

Don't get the impression it's only for Yūsuf, he gets what he got. It's everyone who follows in his footsteps. Your submission to Allāh and to the will of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is the gate to ease.

ليعلم المبتلي أن إستسلامه للأقدار، هو أول منافذ الفرج

Islām is submission, if you're missing out on this 'Ibādah, you're missing out on the essence and meaning of Islām — submission to the orders and commands of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and submission to the Qadā' and Qadr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Sometimes we just have to accept that there are things that we can't understand except by this 'Ibādah of submitting to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. Trusting in Allāh سبحانه

وَتَعَالَى's Plan and submitting to Him helps keep our minds from going crazy with worry about what might happen next. Constantly waiting for an uncertain future can be stressful, but finding peace in entrusting Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and accepting Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى's Will brings comfort and calmness to the hearts and minds.

Let me break this down in a more practical way for everyone to understand. If you're faced with challenges or you dislike something that happened to you, something that happened in your life or you're going through something you dislike, if you had the ability to alter your fate and to see the Ghayb, you wouldn't choose anything different. You couldn't choose something better. If you choose something else, you'd end up picking something that will harm you. That's because Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى's Plans for you are always the best option. Trying to change it, if you could, would ultimately be harmful for yourself.

لو كشف لك الغيب، ما اخترت إلا ما اختاره الله لك

As a believer, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has crafted the perfect path for you filled with happiness for your Dunyā and Ākhirah. Regardless of what you're feeling inside, getting angry and letting it consume you, that will not alter Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى's Plans, so why put yourself through that pain? Make Du'ā, and keep it your slogan in this life to say قَدَّرَ اللَّهُ وَمَا شَاءَ فَعَلَ, and always keep ripe on your tongue لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ, and that will change your life. With Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, things are different. What Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى takes away from you as a believer who submits to Him is in reality something He's giving you. He may give you, as a believer, like He gives to everyone else, because He loves you. But when He does take from you as a believer who submits, it's a form of giving as well. In order to really submit to the will of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, your view of this Dunyā and this life has to change. It needs formatting. Don't let this vanishing Dunyā get to you, no matter what happens. You won't be around in a hundred years. Neither will you kids. Maybe even your grandkids may not be around. Eventually you're going to be forgotten. Who ever prays for their grandfather by name nowadays? And if some do, who

remembers their great-grandfathers and makes Du'ā for them by name? They're practically forgotten. My father came to this country in the early 60's, and we still live in the same neighborhood that we lived in back then, and I remember many of the neighbors back then, when I was four and five years old. It used to be mainly senior citizens. None of them are around today. One time, I saw my neighbor take out a wheelchair and put it in the trash when I was four or five years old. I went and took it, and I started playing with it. My dad told me that his father had passed away, who used to use that, and that's why they got rid of the wheelchair. The son eventually took over the house as the father wanted. He grew old and passed away too. The house changed hands approximately three or four times after that. That house, which may have caused so much stress for the original owner who worked hard for it, and he worked hard to leave it for his son, now it's no longer in the family, just like many other houses. Some of those houses may have even been leveled. That's just an example. The job, it's not going to last forever. You're going to retire or get fired or leave it one way or another. The car that you're driving, it's going to get outdated and be in a junkyard in a few short years. This is the reality of life. The things we stress over don't last. We worry about temporary things and forget about what truly matters, so why not focus on what lasts forever, our Ākhirah? If we make our main concern the Ākhirah, then all the worries about this fleeting Dunyā will seem insignificant. If you're looking for something to stress about, then think about the moments that you've missed without doing good deeds in this Dunyā, the moments you spent idly without any Ibādah. That's what you should be concerned about. Some people wake up and go to bed and the only actions they have to show in between those times are sins, والعياذ بالله. They should really think about what good deeds they've done for Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and for Islām during that time. That's what should occupy one's mind and that's what should concern him. If you really feel like crying, let it be over a sin you committed. If you want to feel happy, feel joy over an 'Ibādah that you've done, because that's what really counts in the tens or hundreds or even thousands of years that we may spend in the grave and what comes after that in the eternal life, in the Ākhirah. Trust and submit to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى in your Dunyā matters, but make your focus, your concern, and your worry the Ākhirah, and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى will make your heart peaceful and rich in

this Dunyā. He will settle and organize your affairs in this Dunyā and He will make you content. Your provision and worldly gains will come with ease and without any doubt when you make your Ākhirah your goal, and that will put your mind at ease and peace.

وصلی اللہ علی سیدنا محمد وعلی آلہ وصحبہ وسلم