

تَزْكِيَةُ النَّفْسِ

SPIRITUAL PURIFICATION RETREAT

ATTAINING INNER PEACE

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Attaining Inner Peace

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



The last talk was pertaining to sweetness in ‘Ibādah, and of course, that not only affects the ‘Ibādah itself, but it affects one's entire life. However, this talk is about bringing inner peace and tranquility into one's entire life. There are many factors to consider when it comes to seeking inner peace and happiness in life from an Islāmic perspective. However, I can summarize the key to achieving inner peace in one word, and that's “Tawhīd”. Tawhīd is the Jannah of this Dunyā. Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله تعالى said,

أهل السعادة هم أهل التوحيد

The people of happiness are the people of Tawhīd.

Those who embrace Tawhīd — and that happiness is for both Dunyā and Ākhirah. The level of your Tawhīd and how strong it is will determine how much peace, comfort, and contentment you will feel in your heart in this Dunyā. It's a Qur'ānic principle.

مَا أَصَابَ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ

No disaster strikes except by permission of Allāh. And whoever believes in Allāh - He will guide his heart.

No calamity befalls anyone except by the will of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ, one who believes. Believes in what? In Tawhīd. What do they get? يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ, Allāh will guide their hearts. Calamities befall everyone, Muslim and Kāfir alike, but there's a specialty for those who believe in Tawhīd. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى

didn't say *"And whoever believes in Tawhīd will be free of trials and hardships."* He didn't say that in this verse nor in any other verse. He said He will rightly guide their hearts. Meaning, in the most difficult times, their hearts will find tranquility and calmness and they will be comforted and reassured, as 'Ikrimah رحمه الله تعالى mentioned. Allāh instills a sense of inner peace and contentment in the hearts of the believers in Tawhīd, and likewise, He closes and constricts the hearts that have no Tawhīd, as if they were climbing up to the sky, as the verse states.

وَمَنْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُ، يُغْلِقْ صَدْرَهُ، ضَيْقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصْعَدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ

and whoever He wants to send astray, He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky.

Through Tawhīd, Allāh سبحانه وتعالى filled the hearts of those who came before us with immense joy in this Dunyā. Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى mentioned that some in the past stated that they felt so much joy in this Dunyā, so much that they believed that if the inhabitants of Jannah experienced a fraction of the joy that they experience in this Dunyā, then the inhabitants of Jannah are living in a state of bliss. These people weren't rich. They definitely faced a lot of challenges in their lives. They lived in poverty and they dealt with tough times. But they found great joy through their strong belief in Tawhīd. Wealth and palaces weren't what made their Dunyā so pleasurable. Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى quotes some of them as saying *"We're living in such pleasure and happiness that if the kings and their heirs knew about it, they would fight us for it with their swords."* With Tawhīd, their hearts danced with joy. Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله تعالى faced a multitude of challenges as we all know. He faced hardships throughout his life. Despite being imprisoned and enduring various trials, he felt as if he was living in a Jannah on this Earth, and that Jannah was in his heart, no one could take it away. Ibn Al-Qayyim recounts that his teacher Ibn Taymiyyah رحمه الله تعالى جميعا told him once, *"What harm can my enemies do to me? What harm can my*

enemies inflict upon me? My Jannah is in my heart.” He’s the one who said, *“In this Dunyā exists a Jannah. Those who don’t enter the Jannah of this Dunyā won’t enter the Jannah of the Ākhirah.”* It’s incredible how Allāh سبحانه وتعالى gives some of his servants a sneak peek of Jannah before they actually meet him. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى opens the doors of Jannah for some in this Dunyā so they can experience its joy, and that motivates them to work hard and chase after the Jannah of the Ākhirah.

Tawhīd is what infuses joy into the most challenging moments of life. How? Let me give a closer example — closer to home — so no one will say these are men who were in the past and they’re different. Our family — my family — faces, and we continue to face, challenges that only Allāh سبحانه وتعالى knows about and only He can alleviate. Some of it is public, but most of it not many know about. My father, may Allāh give him a long life full of deeds, maintained a sense of joy throughout every single one of our trials, whether it was imprisonment or threats or raids or trials or losses of lives or illnesses. All throughout them and in the midst of them, he remained one of the happiest people, if not the happiest person you can see. His resilient spirit and his cheerful disposition remained unwavering — always in strong spirit, always in a cheerful demeanor, اللهم بارك له. In the midst of his struggles, he had a wide open heart worrying about helping others and giving Da’wah to others. The initial government search or raid, which was more than two decades ago, it was very surprising, shocking, and unexpected, and it was followed by a series of dozens upon dozens of other raids throughout the years. During raids, during trials, solitary confinement, prison cells, illnesses, and various other hardships, he remained completely unphased. This is not my observation, but rather one can ask the thousands who visit or visited him, or those who studied and study under him, or those who communicate with him. Most, if not all of them, are familiar with his renowned statement that he tells everyone about being the happiest man alive on this planet. He shares this sentiment with everyone. And by Allāh the Creator of the seven heavens, he genuinely actually feels this happiness. He entered the Jannah of this Dunyā Insha’Allāh, and may Allāh سبحانه وتعالى grant him the Jannah of the Ākhirah. In happy and in sad times, his face has the brightness of delight, may

Allāh سبحانه وتعالى grant him the نضرة النعيم of the Ākhirah as well. Do you think he or those of the past who felt this way don't have or didn't have difficulties? I know many people who lost a loved one and they were traumatized for life. I know many who didn't get a battalion breaking down their doors at 6 am dozens of times, but rather they got a simple visit by an agent, and they were traumatized and changed their entire life. These people were talking about feeling joyful through their Tawhīd. They feel Jannah on this Earth despite the hardship that they faced, and despite the lack of luxury and comfort in their lives. When I would be distressed, and I mentioned this more than ten years ago, seeing him and hearing his words would lift my spirits and it would turn anxiety into relief, strength, certainty, and peace. In the most difficult times in prison, in the prison cell, he would tell me,

وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ الْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُ

And to Allāh belong the unseen [aspects] of the heavens and the earth and to Him will be returned the matter, all of it...

"To Allāh belongs the Ghayb (the Unseen) in the heavens and in the earth and to Him returns..." He would ask me, *"Half of the affairs? One-third of the affairs?"* I would obviously correct his intentional mistake and say, *"كُلُّهُ! All of it! All the affairs return to Allāh!"* The verse has grammatical linguistic affirmations to emphasize that *all* affairs return to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. So put your trust in Allāh! That's Tawhīd. Allāh said to Him returns all the affairs, *كُلُّهُ!* Turn to the One Who all of the affairs return to and be happy with what He decrees. When I used to brainstorm and reflect on the oppression and consider the violations of what contradicts their own, cursed, flawed laws, he would advise me to take it easy. He would say, *"Don't think about anything, relax! وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ (Had it not been Allāh's will, they wouldn't have done it)!"* When there were trials and dates and

judgments coming up, he would always remind us that the judgment is not in anyone's hands. It's not in any human hands, the judgment is from Allāh.

وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا مُعَقَّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ

And Allāh judges, there is none to put back His Judgement.

His decision is the one that can't be replaced or appealed or repealed or intercepted or reversed or stopped. The point of mentioning my father is to point out that what provided him with joy and comfort during hardships was Tawhīd. What he imparted to me to achieve that same comfort was Tawhīd. When he says, وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ لَا مُعَقَّبَ، وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ مَا فَعَلُوهُ، وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُ الْأَمْرُ كُلُّهُ، لِحُكْمِهِ — those are among the so many verses and proofs on the Power of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and the Qualities of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, among other Tawhīdic aspects that bring comfort and serenity to an individual's heart.

One of the scholars from the past came across a man who seemed very troubled, he seemed very worried. The Shaykh said, *"I'm going to ask you three questions on Tawhīd. Answer them."* The man said, *"Go ahead."* The Shaykh asked, *"Is there anything in this universe that happens without Allāh's will?"* The man said, *"Absolutely not."* He's teaching him Tawhīd. It brings comfort and joy to know and believe that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is in control of everything and that no one can help or harm without Allāh سبحانه وتعالى's Will. The lessons that the Messenger ﷺ shared with his young cousin while he was still a young boy, are uplifting. They bring happiness and comfort to every believer in Tawhīd, regardless of their struggles, and most importantly they strengthen one's Īmān. He taught young Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنهما Tawhīd, to be mindful of Allāh سبحانه and Allāh will protect him. He said Be mindful of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and you will find Him in front of you. He taught him that if the nations, if the world, if the globe were to gather in order to benefit you, it would not benefit you except with

that which Allāh سبحانه وتعالى had already prescribed for you. And if the world, the globe with all their might and power, were to gather to harm you, they will not harm you except with what Allāh سبحانه وتعالى had already prescribed for you. If a marriage doesn't go through, if it's loss of wealth you're struggling with, if it's a promotion you didn't get, an illness, death of a loved one, or threats of harm that you're going through, remember what he taught Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنهما. And he taught him that what passes you by — whatever you failed to attain — wasn't going to befall you, and what has befallen you wasn't going to pass you by. He taught him that success and victory come through patience.

The scholar then asked a second question on Tawhīd. He said, *“Can anything that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى has decreed for your provision be taken away?”* The man said “No.” That's Tawhīd! Part of Tawhīd is to believe that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is the Provider and that a person's sustenance is determined before they were on this earth, before they were in their mother's womb.

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ

And in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised.

No one can take it away.

The scholar then asked the third question, *“Is it possible for your lifespan to be reduced by even a single moment than what has already been decreed by Allāh سبحانه وتعالى?”* The man said, *“Absolutely not.”* Lifespans and destinies are under the control of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. When the time comes for someone to leave this Dunyā, there's nothing they can do to stay, no matter how hard they try.

وَلَنْ يُؤَخِّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهَا

But never will Allāh delay a soul when its time has come.

Allāh will not delay a soul when its time has come. If it's not their time yet, the person won't die, regardless of the challenges or danger that they encounter or the situations they find themselves in, and the examples on that are plenty from the past and the present. The Shaykh was trying to teach him that if nothing happens but by the Will of Allāh, if no one can increase or decrease your provision and your life but Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, why would you be worried? He told that individual, “Now tell me, explain to me, why are you worried?!” The point is, the stronger a Muslim's Tawhīd is, the stronger their trust in Allāh is, the more peace they will feel in their heart.

Islām teaches other secondary factors that contribute to achieving joy and inner peace in this Dunyā, however, I highlighted the fundamental and most significant one, which is Tawhīd. We can explore other factors in the future, Inshā'Allāh. I started with a promise from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى,

وَمَنْ يُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ قَلْبَهُ

And whoever believes in Allāh - He will guide his heart.

And I'll leave you with another promise.

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً

Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer — We will surely cause him to live a good life...

Whoever does good **وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ**, while he believes — believes in what? Believes in Tawhīd! **فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً**, a promise from Allāh to those who meet those stipulated conditions. **وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ**, — Tawhīd is a fundamental principle and condition. What does he get? **حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً**. He would be blessed with a happy life, inner peace, contentment, provision, and everything else good. **حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً** is for a Muwahhid who believes in Tawhīd. The Qur'an instills a sense of peace in the heart of the believer in Tawhīd that cannot be shaken by the people of the globe. The Qur'an wants the believer in Tawhīd to be optimistic and content in every situation, no matter how bad it gets. Believing in Tawhīd means to keep at the forefront of your mind that if Allāh **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالٰى** is with you, never worry who or what is against you. **حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً**, that's in this Dunyā, because the next portion of this verse pertains to the reward in the Ākhirah.

وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

And We will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter] according to the best of what they used to do.

والله أعلم, we'll conclude with this.

وصلی اللہ علی سیدنا محمد وعلی آلہ وصحبہ وسلم