

العبادات كوسيلة لتقوية الصلة بين العبد و ربه

# **ACTS OF WORSHIP AS A MEANS TO STRENGTHEN THE ATTACHMENT BETWEEN THE SERVANT AND HIS LORD**

**BY**

**ABO-BARA, HATEM ALHAJ**

Key to abbreviations:

Ag: agreed upon (reported by both al-Bukhari and Muslim)

B: al-Bukhari

M: Muslim

A: Ahmad

D: Abu Dawood

T: at-Tirmidhi

N: an-Nasa'ee

Ma: Ibn Majah

G: the group, reported by all the above

H: al-Hakim

Kh: Ibn Khuzaimah

Hib: Ibn Hibban

Ba: al-Baihaqi

Tab1: at-Tabarani in al-Kabeer

Tab2: at-Tabarani in al-Awsat

Tab3: at-Tabarani in al-Sagheer

Auth: Authentic

S: Sound

W: Weak

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It is the greatest loss for any one of us humans to have lived our entire lives without knowing what we created for, and that is the worship of God (Allah).

In the following few pages, I will attempt to address the different issues pertaining to worship ('Ibadah) and will rely on the revelation (Quran & Sunnah) for guidance.

## **WHAT IS THE MEANING OF 'IBADAH (WORSHIP) IN ISLAM?**

It is a comprehensive word that means a state of complete subservience, humility, submission, and subjugation, combined with absolute love, and adoration. Such a combination of feelings should only be directed to one being (God); and would be contradictory with regards to any one other than Him.

'Ibadah can also be defined as a comprehensive name for all the sayings, actions, and abstinences that Allah loves.

## **'IBADAH IS WHAT WE WERE CREATED FOR**

Allah says:

(وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ) (النزيرات:56)

"And We have not created the Jinn and Mankind except to worship Me." [51/56]

He who does not fulfill the mission he was created for has wasted his life! It is quite sad to see people work hard for a future about which they have no assurance they will live to have, while neglecting to work for the certain future of all human beings, which starts from the day we depart from this world.

## **THE FOUR TYPES OF 'IBADAH**

The sayings of the heart

The actions of the heart

The sayings of the body (tongue)

The actions of the body

Now, to have the baseline of Faith below which you are not considered a believer, you have to have the baseline of each one of the aforementioned types and, the more you have the higher you transcend in the ranks of Faith.

In this lecture we will focus on the sayings and actions of the body including the tongue as a means for strengthening the attachment between the servant and his Lord.

## FIRST LET US REFUTE A BLASPHEMOUS ARGUMENT

Some deviant people<sup>1</sup> claimed that the ritual acts of worship are not very important and, they can be dispensed with and, the purity of the heart, goodness of intention, and soundness of conduct are the basis of true faith.

**This argument is incorrect in many ways:**

- If what they say is true, then all these commands by Allah in the Quran are vain, and void of meaning, and, if they claim some were exempted, they need to point out to us where the exceptions are.
- The history of the Prophet and his companions testifies to the opposite of this argument for, they are the best of all generations and, had it been true that someone is not in need for the ritual acts, they would have been the most deserving of such a “station” however, they were the most observant of all the acts of Islam.
- Rationally, that argument lets those who are the most deviant claim to be the most devout of all and, there will be no parameter with which people are judged. (Knowing that we only judge the exterior and, use it as an indication of the interior; and absolute knowledge only belongs to Allah.)
- What will filter through a pot is that which is inside; Huthayfa (one of the companions) said: “If his heart was humble and tranquil his limbs would have been.”
- Those prayers, fasting, and all other actions are the chief means for strengthening man’s attachment to Allah.

( يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ) (البقرة: 183)

”O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that, you may attain piety.” [2/183]

- The prophet said:

“The difference between us and them (non Muslims) is the prayer; he who abandons it had become a disbeliever” (M)

And he didn’t make any exceptions of that rule.

- To say ‘I am pious enough and, I don’t need to do any of these ritual acts to get closer to Allah’ entails praising oneself and, Allah says:

( أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ بِاللَّهِ يَزْعُمُونَ مَن يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظَلِّمُونَ فَتِيلًا ) (النساء: 49)

” Have you not seen those who claim sanctity for themselves? Nay, but, Allah

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<sup>1</sup> Mainly from the sufi tareeqas (paths). That is not saying that all Sufis subscribe to this heresy.

sanctifies whom He wills; and they will not be treated with injustice even equal to a thread in the long slit of a date-stone.” [4/49]

- The Christians who claim their religion is faith based (and not action based) have opened all gates of evil for the followers of the religion. You only need to believe that Jesus died for you, and you are granted salvation. Your past and future sins have been paid for by someone else. With this open invitation to evil, it is not surprising to see their communities drowning in sin, such as illegal sexual behavior, drinking, family breakdown, and yes excessive use of violence within and without their communities. After all, no followers of any religion killed more people than the followers of Christianity<sup>2</sup>.

## THE COMPREHENSIVENESS OF 'IBADAH IN ISLAM

Each one of the religions prior to Islam was meant to address a certain people at a certain time. However, Islam came to address all people at all times since the commencement of the revelation and until the day of return to Allah. Thus, Islam came very comprehensive to create harmony between the body and the soul, this life and the one to come, man's obligations and rights, the individual and the society, etc.; in other words, Islam is the practical ideal. Here are some examples:

عن أبي ذر عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال " في بضع أحدكم صدقة" قالوا يا رسول أيأتي أحدنا شهوته ويكون له فيه أجر فقال " أرايتم لو وضعها في الحرام أكان عليه فيه وزر" قالوا نعم فقال " فكنذك إذا وضعها في الحلال كان له أجر" م

Narrated Abu Dharr that the Prophet said: "It will be counted as a charity for you when you have sex with your wife. They said oh messenger of Allah! One of us would fulfill his desire and be rewarded? He said: what do you think had he fulfilled it illegally, would he be punished? They said yes and, he said: likewise, if he fulfills it in a wholesome way, he shall be rewarded" (M)

عن أنس بن مالك قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم " ان قامت الساعة وبيد أحدكم فسيلة فان استطاع ان لا تقوم حتى يغرسها فليغرس" حم  
Narrated Anas ibn Malik that the Prophet said: "If the hour comes and one of you has a sprout in his hand, let him plant it if he can." (A. S)

عن أبي هريرة عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال " الساعي على الأرملة والمسكين كالمجاهد في سبيل الله وأحسبه قال وكالقائم لا يفتر وكالصائم لا يفطر" ق

Narrated Abu-Hurairah that the prophet said: "He who works to provide for the widowed and the poor is like a Mujahid in the cause of Allah. -And I think He said- and that who stands in prayers without boredom, and that who fasts indefinitely." (Ag)

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<sup>2</sup> The thirty million African slaves killed across the Atlantic during the era of slavery; the sixty million killed during world war two; the fifty million natives of north America who were wiped out by the white "Christian" man; the hundreds of thousand of Japanese massacred by the atomic bombs; the hundreds of thousands of Jews, Muslims, Pagans and "heretics killed during the crusades, and much more, are only some of the atrocities committed by the followers of Christianity.

## THE TWO CONDITIONS FOR MAKING THE 'IBADAH VALID

### 1- Sincerity

For Allah is the most self-sufficient and, he does not need your Ibadah; it is the sincerity of your heart that will please him, He said:

(وَمَا أَمْرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ) (البينة:5)

And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah, with sincerity and straight-forwardness and perfectly perform the prayers and give alms, and that is the right religion. [98/5]

And here is a clarification from the Prophet

عن أبي أمامة قال جاء رجل إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال أرأيت رجلا غزا يلتمس الأجر والذكر ما له فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لاشيء ثم قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم " إن الله لا يقبل إلا ما كان خالصا وابتغى به وجهه " ن

Narrated Abu-Omamah that a man came to the Prophet and asked: What do you think of a man who went to a battle seeking the reward (from Allah) and fame, what will he get? The Prophet then said: Nothing Allah does not accept an action save it be sincere, and only for the sake of His Face. (Meaning for His pleasure) (N. Auth)

### 2- Authenticity

Which means that the action has to be one that is prescribed by Allah and his Prophet. For, God has completed our Deen prior to the departure of the Prophet who did not leave any good, but He enjoined us to it, or bad, but He warned us from it.

(حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخَنزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِيُغَيَّرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَالْمُنْتَهَفَةُ وَالْمَوْفُودَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَّةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ ذَلِكَ فِسْقُ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَحْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ) (المائدة:3)

Forbidden to you (for food) are: the dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allah, and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by goring and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal unless, you are able to slaughter it (before its death) and that which is sacrificed (slaughtered) on stone altars. (Forbidden) also is to use arrows seeking luck or decision; (all) that is disobedience of Allah. This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of (defeating) your religion; so fear them not, but, fear Me. This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. But as for him who is forced by severe hunger, with no inclination to sin then surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. [5/3]

That is why the Prophet (in an attempt to warn us from innovations) said:

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها قالت قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم "من أحدث في أمرنا هذا ما ليس فيه فهو رد" ق

Narrated by Aisha that the Prophet said: "He who invents in that matter of ours that is not from it shall have it rejected" (Agreed upon)

Moreover, Allah tells us that those who let others than Allah prescribe for them what to do and what not, which includes what to worship Allah with, and the nature of the acts of worship, number, location, time, or associations, those who would do that have ascribed to Allah partners. Whether these are their teachers or rulers or any one else. Allah said:

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنْ بِهِ اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةُ الْفَصْلِ لَفُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ  
What! have they partners (in godhead), who have established for them some religion without the permission of God? Had it not been for the Decree of Judgment, the matter would have been decided between them (at once). But verily the Wrong-doers will have a grievous Penalty. 042.021

You have to worship Allah with knowledge and clarity. Verify the source of information. If you were told something is good, make sure it is evidence based. No one can tell what Allah likes or dislikes but him, through the revelation, that is al-Quran and the Sunnah.

## IMPORTANT ADVICE WITH REGARDS TO 'IBADAH

### 1-Hasten to Allah

There is no time to waste

Beware of “I will” and “I shall“

Allah said:

( وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ) (آل عمران:133)

And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord, and a Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious. [3/133]

The Prophet said

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لرجل وهو يعظه " اغتتم خمسا قبل خمس شبابك قبل هرمك وصحتك قبل سقمك وغناك قبل فقرك وفراغك قبل شغلك وحياتك قبل موتك" الحاكم

“Take advantage of five before five: Your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before you become occupied, and your life before your death.”

**“ Be in this life like a stranger or a traveler.”**

### 2-Take what Allah has prescribed for you with strength

Allah said:

( وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ) (البقرة:63)

"Take what We have given you with strength." [2 /63]

### 3-Be consistent

عن عائشة رضي الله عنها أن امرأة من بني أسد كانت تدخل عليها فنكروا اجتهادها في العبادة فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إن أحب الأعمال إلى الله أدومها وإن قل حم/626 و معناه في الصحيحين (ما دووم عليه و إن قل)

Narrated Aisha that the Prophet said: “The most beloved deeds by Allah are the consistent ones, even if they were few” (A)

#### 4- Prioritize

For Allah made some deeds better than some.

This also depends on the person, time, and the situation. For instance, if a Muslim asked you for help, helping him at that time may be better than all other mustahab (preferable) deeds.

عن ابن عباس قال رسول الله لأن أمشي مع أخ مسلم في حاجة إلى جانب القرية أحب إلي من أن أعتكف شهرا في مسجدي  
الفردوس لأبي شجاع الهمداني و له شاهد عند الطبراني

Narrated ibn Abbas that the Prophet said: "Walking with a Muslim brother to run an errand for him is more likeable to me than making I'tikaf for a month in my Masjid"

## GOOD DEEDS WILL GET YOU CLOSER TO ALLAH

Allah says:

( وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَشَدَّ ثَبَاتًا ) (النساء: 66)

“ But had they done what they were exhorted to (do), it would have been better for them; and would have strengthened/stabilized their (Faith)” [4/66]

عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إن الله قال "من عادى لي وليا فقد آذنته بالحرب وما تقرب إلي عبدي بشيء أحب إلي مما افترضت عليه وما يزال عبدي يتقرب إلي بالنوافل حتى أحبه فإذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به وبصره الذي يبصر به ويده التي يبطش بها ورجله التي يمشي بها وإن سألني لأعطينه ولئن استعاذني لأعيذنه وما ترددت عن شيء أنا فاعله ترددي عن نفس المؤمن يكره الموت وأنا أكره مساءته" خ

Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Apostle said, "Allah said: "Whoever harms a Waley of mine (Waley is a friend or a supporter) I will declare war against him. And my servant has not drawn closer to me with anything more beloved to me than what I made obligatory on him (Fareedah). And he continues to draw closer to me with Nawafil (The preferable non-obligatory deeds) until I love him; And when I love him I become his hearing with which he hears, and his sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he strikes, and his leg with which he walks, and if he asks Me, I will give him, and, if he seeks refuge in me, I will protect him and, I do not hesitate to do anything as I hesitate to take the soul of the believer for, he hates death and, I hate to sadden him."

(B, Volume 8, Book 76, Number 509)"

## In fact that is what worship is all about: your purification and elevation in Iman (faith) and Taqwa (piety)

For Allah will not benefit from your worship, He said:

عن أبي ذر عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فيما روى عن الله تبارك وتعالى أنه قال يا عبادي إني حرمت الظلم على نفسي وجعلته بينكم محرما فلا تظالموا يا عبادي كلكم ضال إلا من هديته فاستهدوني أهدكم يا عبادي كلكم جائع إلا من أطعمته فاستطعموني أطعمكم يا عبادي كلكم عار إلا من كسوته فاستكسوني أكسكم يا عبادي إنكم تخطنون بالليل والنهار وأنا أغفر الذنوب جميعا فاستغفروني أغفر لكم يا عبادي إنكم لن تبلغوا ضري فتضروني ولن تبلغوا نفعي فتنفعوني يا عبادي لو أن أولكم وآخركم وإنسكم وجنكم كانوا على أتقى قلب رجل واحد منكم ما زاد ذلك في ملكي شيئا يا عبادي لو أن أولكم وآخركم وإنسكم وجنكم كانوا على أفجر قلب رجل واحد ما نقص ذلك من ملكي شيئا يا عبادي لو أن أولكم وآخركم وإنسكم وجنكم قاموا في صعيد واحد فسألوني فأعطيت كل إنسان مسألته ما نقص ذلك مما عندي إلا كما ينقص المخيط إذا أدخل البحر يا عبادي إنما هي أعمالكم أحصيها لكم ثم أوفيتكم إياها فمن وجد خيرا فليحمد الله ومن ذلك فلا يلومن إلا نفسه قال سعيد كان أبو إدريس الخولاني إذا حدث بهذا الحديث جثا على ركبتيه

"O my servants! I have made unlawful oppression upon myself and I have made it unlawful between you. So do not oppress each other. O my servants! All of you are astray except the ones whom I have guided, so seek my guidance and I will guide you. O my servants! All of you are naked except those of you whom I have clothed, so seek clothing from me and I will clothe you. O my

servants! All of you are hungry except those of you whom I have fed, seek food from me and I will feed you. O my servants! You make errors in the night and in the day and I forgive all sins. Seek forgiveness from me and I will forgive you. **O my servants! You will never be able to harm Me and you will never be able to benefit Me. O my servants! If the first of you and the last of you and the jinn from among you and the men from among you, were to fear Allah as the best among you, that would not increase in My Majesty/Mastership any.** O my servants! If the first of you and the last of you and the jinn among you and the men among you, were to perform the worst forms of crimes, that will not decrease from My Majesty/Mastership any. O my servants! If the first of you and the last of you, the jinn of you and the men of you, were to stand on one side and ask Me, I will give each one of you what you ask and still this will not decrease from My Majesty/Mastership; as if you dip a needle into the ocean." (M)

So when Fasting was prescribed for you, it was to bring you closer (i.e., closer to Allah), Allah said:

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ) (البقرة: 183)

O you who believe Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may attain piety [2/183]

And when you make Hajj and slaughter the sacrifice it is that you may get closer to Allah. Allah said:

(لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومَهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤها وَلَكِن يُنَالُهُ التَّقْوَىٰ مِنكُم كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرَهَا لَكُمْ لِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَيَسِّرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ) (الحج: 37)

**It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah but, it is piety from you that reaches Him.** Thus, have We made them subject to you that you may magnify Allah for His Guidance to you. And give glad tidings to the good doers [22/37]

And when you give charity it is to get closer, Allah said:

(خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلَاتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ) (التوبة: 103)

”Take alms from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it, and invoke Allah for them. Verily! Your invocations are a source of tranquility for them; and Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower.” [9/103]

## • **The best 'Ibadah (from Madarij as-Salekeen, by Ibn al-Qayem)**

- فصل ثم أهل مقام إياك نعبد لهم في أفضل العبادة وأنفعها وأحقها بالإيثار والتخصيص أربع طرق فهم في ذلك أربعة أصناف
- The people of “Only You do we worship. And only You do we seek help from” are four types with regards to the best ibadah and most worthy,
  - الصنف الأول عندهم أنفع العبادات وأفضلها أشقها على النفوس وأصعبها قالوا لأنه أبعد الأشياء عن هواها وهو حقيقة التعبد. قالوا والأجر على قدر المشقة ورووا حديثا لا أصل له أفضل الأعمال أحمرها أي أصعبها وأشقها .....
- The first type, for them the best ibadah is the hardest.....
  - الصنف الثاني قالوا أفضل العبادات التجرد والزهد في الدنيا والتقلل منها غاية الإمكان واطراح الإهتمام بها وعدم الإكتراث بكل ما هو منها.....
- The second type, for them the best ibadah is asceticism and having disregard for the enjoyments of this life.....
  - الصنف الثالث رأوا أن أنفع العبادات وأفضلها ما كان فيه نفع متعد فرأوه أفضل من ذي النفع القاصر فرأوا خدمة الفقراء والإشتغال بمصالح الناس وقضاء حوائجهم ومساعدتهم بالمال والجاه

والنفع أفضل فتصدوا له وعملوا عليه واحتجوا بقول النبي الخلق كلهم عيال الله وأحبهم إليه أنفعهم لعياله /ح/ رواه أبو يعلى

واحتجوا بأن عمل العابد قاصر على نفسه وعمل النافع متعدد إلى الغير وأين أحدهما من الآخر قالوا ولهذا كان فضل العالم على العابد كفضل القمر على سائر الكواكب قالوا وقد قال رسول الله لعلي بن أبي طالب رضي الله عنه لأن يهدي الله بك رجلاً واحداً خير لك من حمر النعم /ح/ وهذا التفضيل إنما هو للنفع المتعدي واحتجوا بقوله من دعا إلى هدى كان له من الأجر مثل أجور من اتبعه من غير أن ينقص من أجورهم شيء /ح/ واحتجوا بقوله إن الله وملائكته يصلون على معلمي الناس الخير /ح/ ويقولون إن العالم ليستغفر له من في السموات ومن في الأرض حتى الحيتان في البحر والنملة في جحرها /ح/

واحتجوا بأن صاحب العبادة إذا مات انقطع عمله وصاحب النفع لا ينقطع عمله ما دام نفعه الذي نسب إليه واحتجوا بأن الأنبياء إنما بعثوا بالإحسان إلى الخلق وهدايتهم ونفعهم في معاشهم ومعادهم لم يبعثوا بالخلوات والإنقطاع عن الناس والترهب ولهذا أنكر النبي على أولئك النفر الذين هموا بالإنقطاع للتعبد وترك مخالطة الناس ورأى هؤلاء التفرق في أمر الله ونفع عباده والإحسان إليهم أفضل من الجمعية عليه بدون ذلك

- The third type, for them, the best ibadah is that most beneficial for others.....they felt helping the poor and taking care of people's needs and supporting them with money and status is better than the deeds of benefit only to the doer....they said, that is why the superiority of the scholar over the devout worshiper is like the superiority of the [light of] the moon over the other stars.

• الصنف الرابع قالوا إن أفضل العبادة العمل على مرضاة الرب في كل وقت بما هو مقتضى ذلك الوقت ووظيفته فأفضل العبادات في وقت الجهاد وإن آل إلى ترك الأوراد من صلاة الليل وصيام النهار بل ومن ترك إتمام صلاة الفرض كما في حالة الأمن والأفضل في وقت حضور الضيف مثلاً القيام بحقه والاشتغال به عن الورد المستحب وكذلك في أداء حق الزوجة والأهل

والأفضل في أوقات السحر الاشتغال بالصلاة والقرآن والدعاء والذكر والاستغفار والأفضل في وقت استرشاد الطالب وتعليم الجاهل الإقبال على تعليمه والاشتغال به..... والأفضل في وقت مرض أخيك المسلم أو موته عيادته وحضور جنازته وتشجيعه وتقديم ذلك على خلوتك وجميعتك. والأفضل في وقت نزول النوازل وأداة الناس لك أداء واجب الصبر مع خلطتك بهم دون الهرب منهم فإن المؤمن الذي يخالط الناس ليصبر على أذاهم أفضل من الذي لا يخالطهم ولا يؤذونه. والأفضل خلطتهم في الخير فهي خير من اعتزالهم فيه واعتزالهم في الشر فهو أفضل من خلطتهم فيه فإن علم أنه إذا خالطهم أزاله أو قلله فخلطتهم حينئذ أفضل من اعتزالهم فالأفضل في كل وقت وحال إثارة مرضاة الله في ذلك الوقت والحال والاشتغال بواجب ذلك الوقت ووظيفته ومقتضاه وهؤلاء هم أهل التعبد المطلق والأصناف قبلهم أهل التعبد المقيد فمتى خرج أحدهم عن النوع الذي تعلق به من العبادة وفارقه يرى نفسه كأنه قد نقص وترك عبادته فهو يعبد الله على وجه واحد وصاحب التعبد المطلق ليس له غرض في تعبده بعينه يؤثره على غيره بل غرضه تتبع مرضاة الله تعالى أين كانت

- The fourth type, for them, the best ibadah is working to attain the pleasure of the lord at each time by that which is the requirement of that particular time, and its most suitable function. So, the best ibadah during the time of jihad is jihad, even if it leads to foregoing some of one's routine night prayers or fasting, even if it leads to shortening the mandatory prayers. And the best ibadah upon the arrival of a guest is to host them, and doing

that even at the expense of some routine preferable works....and the best ibadah during the latter part of the night is keeping occupied with prayers, reading of the Quran, supplication.....and the best ibadah when approached by a student of knowledge who inquires about the sacred knowledge is to teach him.....and the best ibadah during the sickness of your Muslim brother is to visit him....and if he died to attend his funeral.....

And those are the true people of the worship that is absolute [in devotion], and the types before them are the people of restricted worship, whenever one of them gets out of his selected acts of worship he feels that he is incomplete...so they worship Allah in one way. However, the people of absolute worship do not have any biased interest in a particular type of worship that they favor over others, but all they seek is the pleasure of Allah wherever it is.

• فمدار تعبده عليها فهو لا يزال متنقلا في منازل العبودية كلما رفعت له منزلة عمل على سيره إليها واشتغل بها حتى تلوح له منزلة أخرى فهذا دأبه في السير حتى ينتهي سيره فإن رأيت العلماء رأيتهم وإن رأيت العباد رأيتهم وإن رأيت المجاهدين رأيتهم وإن رأيت الذاكرين رأيتهم معهم وإن رأيت المتصدقين المحسنين رأيتهم معهم وإن رأيت أرباب الجمعية وعكوف القلب على الله رأيتهم معهم فهذا هو العبد المطلق الذي لم تملكه الرسوم ولم تقيدته القيود ولم يكن عمله على مراد نفسه وما فيه لذتها وراحتها من العبادات بل هو على مراد ربه ولو كانت راحة نفسه ولذتها في سواه فهذا هو المتحقق ب إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين حقا القائم بهما صدقا ملبسه ما تهيأ ومأكله ما تيسر واشتغاله بما أمر الله به في كل وقت وبوقته ومجلسه حيث انتهى به المكان ووجده خاليا لا تملكه إشارة ولا يتعبده قيد ولا يستولي عليه رسم حر مجرد دائر مع الأمر حيث دار يدين بدين الأمر أني توجهت ركائبه ويدور معه حيث استقلت مضاربه يأنس به كل محق ويستوحش منه كل مبطل كالغيث حيث وقع نفع وكانخلة لا يسقط ورقها وكلها منفعة حتى شوكتها وهو موضع الغلظة منه على المخالفين لأمر الله والغضب إذا انتهكت محارم الله فهو لله وبالله ومع الله قد صحب الله بلا خلق وصحب الناس بلا نفس بل إذا كان مع الله عزل الخلائق عن البين وتخلي عنهم وإذا كان مع خلقه عزل نفسه من الوسط وتخلي عنها فواها له ما أغربه بين الناس وما أشد وحشته منهم وما أعظم أنسه بالله وفرحه به وطمانينته وسكونه إليه والله المستعان وعيه التكلان

- ....so, they keep on moving from one station of servitude to the next, whenever a station is presented to them they walk to it, and stay busy with it until another function appears, and so on throughout their journey until they reach their destination. So, if you search for the scholars you will find them with them; and if you look for the mujahedeen, they will be with them, and with those who remember Allah often; and with those who give charity; and those who devote themselves and hearts for Allah. And that is the absolute worshiper who was not bound by people's expectations of his status or restricted by any restraints. And their work was not for the pleasure or interest of their souls in certain worships where they find comfort.....they are in the company of Allah without any regard for people, and when they are in the company of people they will have no regard for the self. Whenever they are with Allah they eliminate the people from being between them and him, and whenever they are with his creations they eliminate their `selves` from being in the middle and forsake them. How great are they; and how strange amongst the people are they, and how isolated they feel with them, and how great is their comfort in the company of Allah, and rejoice in it. And how

great is their serenity and security with him. Allah is the one sought for help and upon him is the reliance.

## **SOME OF THE DEEDS MOST BELOVED TO ALLAH**

First of all, the Muslim must commit to perfecting all the mandatory acts of worship. Thereafter, each one may find certain acts of worship which he likes the most and make them his way to getting closer to the pleasure of Allah.

The companions were keen to draw closer to Allah so; they used to ask the Prophet about the means for accomplishing that goal.

Here are some of the Prophet's answers: (Note: The answers will vary according to the person and the situation)

### Dhikr

عن معاذ بن جبل قال سألت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أي الأعمال أحب إلى الله قال أن تموت ولسانك رطب من ذكر الله  
ابن حبان و الطبراني وغيرهما

Narrated mu'ath ibn Jabal, I asked the Messenger of Allah, which of the deeds is more beloved to Allah, He said: "to die while your tongue is wet with the remembrance of Allah." (Hib, Tab1, and others)

### Praying on time, being good to parents, and Jihad

عن عبد الله قال سألت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أي الأعمال أحب إلى الله قال الصلاة على وقتها قلت ثم أي قال ثم بر الوالدين قلت ثم أي قال ثم  
الجهاد في سبيل الله قال حدثني بهن ولو استزدته لزداني خ

Narrated Abdullah (Ibn Mas'ood), "I asked the Messenger of Allah, which of the deeds are more beloved to Allah? He said: 'praying on time' then I asked and which is next? He said: 'Kindness to parents', then I asked, and which is next? He said: 'Al-Jihad in the cause of Allah' and, if I asked him for more, he would have given me more." (B)

### Devote all of your worship to Allah, be good to your kin and ordain good and forbid bad.

وعن رجل من خثعم قال أتيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو في نفر من أصحابه فقلت أنت الذي تزعم أنك رسول الله قال نعم قال قلت يا رسول الله أي الأعمال أحب إلى الله قال الإيمان بالله قال قلت يا رسول الله ثم ما قال ثم صلة الرحم قال قلت يا رسول الله ثم ما قال ثم الأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر قال قلت يا رسول الله أي الأعمال أبغض إلى الله قال الإشراف بالله قال قلت يا رسول الله ثم ما قال ثم قطيعة الرحم قال قلت يا رسول الله ثم ما قال ثم الأمر بالمنكر والنهي عن المعروف رواه أبو يعلى بإسناد جيد (الترغيب و الترهييب)

And reported after a man from Khath'am, who said, "I came to the Prophet and, he was amongst his companions and, I said, 'you are the one who claims to be the messenger of God?' He said: 'Yes'. I said, 'Oh Messenger of Allah, which of the deeds is more beloved to Allah?' He said: 'Faith in Allah'. I said, 'oh Messenger of Allah, which is next?' He said: 'Kindness to the kin'. I said, 'Oh Messenger of Allah, which is next?' He said, 'Ordaining good and forbidding bad'."

### Be good to your Muslim brother, help him with his needs, pay off his debt, and bring happiness to his heart.

### Control your anger and rage.

عن ابن عمر أن رجلا جاء إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال يا رسول الله أي الناس أحب إلى الله وأي الأعمال أحب إلى الله فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أحب الناس إلى الله تعالى أنفعهم للناس وأحب الأعمال إلى الله تعالى سرور تدخله على مسلم أو تكشف عنه كربة أو تقضي عنه ديناً أو تطرد عنه جوعاً ولأن أمشي مع أخي في حاجة أحب إلي من أن اعتكف في هذا المسجد يعني مسجد المدينة شهراً ومن كف غضبه ستر الله عورته ومن كظم غيظه ولو شاء أن يمضيه أمضاه ملأ الله قلبه رجاء يوم القيامة ومن مشى مع أخيه في حاجة حتى تتهيأ له أثيب الله قدمه يوم تتعقد الأقدام المعجم الكبير

Narrated Ibn Omar that a man came to the Prophet and said: oh Messenger of Allah, which of the people is more beloved to Allah? and which of the deeds is? The Messenger of Allah said: “The most beloved of people to Allah are those who are most beneficial/helpful to the people, and the most beloved deeds to Allah The most High is to bring happiness to a Muslim, or ease his hardship, or to pay off his debt for him, or to end his hunger. And it is more beloved to me to walk with a brother of mine (in Islam), to run an errand for him than to make I’tikaf (abiding in a place) in this Masjid (in reference to the Masjid of Al-Madinah) for a month. And he who controls his anger, Allah will cover his shortcomings, and he who suppresses his rage despite being capable of taking it out (against his opponent), Allah will fill his heart with hope on the day of judgment, and he who walks with his brother to run an errand for him until it is done Allah will make his feet stable on the day when feet will be paralyzed. (At-Tabarani)

### Prayers, Zakat, Fasting, Hajj, Mustahab Fasting and Charity, Night Prayers, Jihad, Control your tongue.

عن معاذ بن جبل قال كنت مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم في سفر فأصبحت يوماً قريباً منه ونحن نسير فقلت يا نبي الله أخبرني بعمل يدخلني الجنة ويباعدني من النار قال لقد سألت عن عظيم وإنه ليسير على من يسره الله عليه تعبد الله ولا تشرك به شيئاً وتقيم الصلاة وتؤتي الزكاة وتصوم رمضان وتحج البيت ثم قال ألا أدلك على أبواب الخير الصوم جنة والصدقة تطفى الخطيئة وصلاة الرجل في جوف الليل ثم قرأ قوله تعالى تتجافى جنوبهم عن المضاجع حتى بلغ يعملون ثم قال ألا أخبرك برأس الأمر وعموده وذروة سنامه فقلت بلى يا رسول الله قال رأس الأمر وعموده وذروة سنامه الجهاد ثم قال ألا أخبرك بملاك ذلك كله فقلت له بلى يا نبي الله فأخذ بلسانه فقال كف عليك هذا فقلت يا رسول الله وإنا لمؤاخذون بما نتكلم به فقال ثكلتك أمك يا معاذ وهل يكب الناس على وجوههم في النار أو قال على مناخرهم إلا حصائد ألسنتهم أحمد و آخرون

Narrated by Mu’ath ibn Jabal: “I was traveling with the Prophet and, I was close to him while we are walking then, I asked him, ‘Oh Prophet of Allah, tell me of a deed that will enter me Paradise and keep me away from the Hell?’ He said, ‘You have asked about a great matter but, it is easy for those whom Allah will make it easy for; worship Allah and do not associate partners with him, perfectly perform the prayers, give Zakat (obligatory donations), fast the month of Ramadan and make pilgrimage to the House (Al-Kaaba).’ And then he said, ‘Should I tell you about the gates of goodness! Fasting is a protection (from Allah’s punishment), Charity puts off the sins, and a man’s Prayer in the middle of the night’ and, then He recited the saying of Allah the Most High “تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ Their sides forsake their beds” until he reached” يعملون that which they do”, and, then he said, ‘Should I tell you of the head of the matter [meaning the Deen], its pillar, and its peak?’ I said, ‘Yes, oh Messenger of Allah.’ He said, ‘The head of the matter and its pillar is the prayers and, its peak is al-jihad,’ and, then he said, ‘should I tell you of the MALAK [the string that holds all the beads together] of the matter?’ I said, ‘Yes, oh Messenger of God.’ So, he held his tongue and said, ‘Control that.’ Then I said, ‘Oh Messenger of Allah, shall we be accounted for what we say?’ He said, ‘May your mother loose you Mu’ath! [Note: the phrase is not interpreted literally], and would anything befall the people in the Hell but the earnings of their tongues.’” (Reported by Ahmad and others)

### Control your tongue and be good to your neighbors

عن أنس بن مالك قال قال رسول الله لا يستقيم إيمان عبد حتى يستقيم قلبه ولا يستقيم قلبه حتى يستقيم لسانه ولا يدخل رجل الجنة لا يأمن جاره بوائقه حم  
On the authority of Anas, the Prophet said: "The faith of a servant is not put right until his heart is put right and, his heart is not put right until his tongue is put right and, the man whose neighbor does not feel safe from his harm, shall not enter Paradise."

(Reported by Ahmad)

### Reciting the book of Allah with contemplation

( وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ وَرَتَّلْنَاهُ تَرْتِيلًا ) (الفرقان: 32)

“And those who disbelieve say, ‘Why is not the Qur’aan revealed to him all at once?’ Thus (it is sent down in parts), that We may strengthen your heart thereby. And We have revealed it to you gradually, in stages.” [25/32]

Know that it is only Allah who guides and misguides and- as He said - all peoples’ hearts are between two of his fingers so, ask him with humbleness, and humility, and, with certainty that without his help and favor you will perish.

( رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ ) (آل عمران: 8)

**“Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate (from the truth) after You have guided us...”[3/8]**