

## Let us Seek the Pleasure of Allah (swt) in Every Action, Fulfilling its Aim as Allah (swt) Commanded

One of the afflictions in our Deen in this time stems from misunderstandings regarding the goal of every action we do, as well as the aim we are to achieve from each action within Dunya. It is an affliction that has given rise to many problems. Some adopt only from Islam that which suits their whims and desires. Some adorn their whims and desires with vague references to Islam. Effected by fatalism, some retreat from the world to perform individual worship, neglecting their duty to raise and provide for families. Some justify lethargy, apathy and laziness on the basis of their Deen. Some undertake actions as rituals alone, almost without purpose. Affected by Western utilitarianism (nafa'iyah), some pursue material benefit avidly, striving hard for earning to the point that their families and spiritual devotion suffer. They even pursue material benefit to the point that it even corrupts their morals and spiritual worship. Some show off in their worships.

Misunderstanding the goal and the aim of action in Islam is an affliction that is like the infestation of termites, eating away at our good actions and bringing us ruin in this life and the Hereafter. It afflicts the young amongst us, the adults amongst us as well as the elderly. It afflicts those of us with education and those with little knowledge. It afflicts those with wealth and those tested with poverty, hardship and debt. It is an affliction that can only be cured by close attention, consideration, reflection, self-accounting and reformation in accordance with the Revelation.

Regarding the goal (ghaayah) for every one of our actions, it is the seeking of the Pleasure (Ridwaan) of Allah (swt) and nothing else. So whether we perform Salah, seek Islamic knowledge, enjoin the good and forbid the evil, rule by Islam, undertake fighting in Jihad in the Path of Allah (swt), save a human life, raise children of tender age that cannot fend for themselves, look after aging, frail and ill parents, become honest in trading, become kindly to animals, trade, cultivate land or undertake industrial production, we do them all whilst seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt). We avert the Wrath of Allah (swt) by following His commands (awaamir) and prohibitions (nawaahee). So we conform in all of our actions to the Revelation, the Noble Quran and the Blessed Sunnah.

Allah (swt) said, **﴿إِنَّمَا كَانَ قَوْلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذَا دُعُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ \* وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَخْشِ اللَّهَ وَيَتَّقْهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ﴾** "The only saying of the believers, when they are called to Allah (His Words, the Qur'an) and His Messenger, to judge between them, is that they say: "We hear and we obey." And such are the prosperous ones (who will live forever in Paradise). And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, fears Allah, and keeps his duty (to Him), such are the successful ones." [Surah An-Noor 24:51-52]. The Muslim has a goal to seek the Pleasure (Ridwaan) of Allah (swt) and not to please his whims and desires, according to what he perceives of worldly benefits. Allah (swt) said, **﴿وَأَنْ أَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِنْ أَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ﴾** "And judge between them 'O Prophet' by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires. And beware, so they do not lure you away from some of what Allah has revealed to you." [Surah al-Maaida 5:49]. So we as Muslims must know, before we act, whether our actions are according to the commands and prohibitions of Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) or whether they contradict them.

It is Allah (swt) Who has created within us natural urges to worship that which is greater than ourselves, earn and profit to secure material wealth and also to raise families, build companionship with spouses, raise children and care for elderly parents. It is Allah (swt) Who has revealed commands and prohibitions to respond to these urges, satisfying them in the best manner possible, giving rise to rounded personalities and the most elevated society that is full of comfort and tranquility.

As for the individual worships, ‘ibaadaat, the Islamic rulings fulfill the spiritual value, achieving the khashiyyah (awe) of Allah (swt) and increasing our taqwah (piety). So regarding the seeking of knowledge, Allah (swt) said, ﴿إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ﴾ **“Of all of Allah’s servants, only the knowledgeable are in awe of Him”** [Surah al-Faatir 35:28]. Abdullah ibn Masud (ra) said, “ليس العلم عن كثرة الحديث، ولكن العلم عن كثرة الخشية” “Knowledge is not the abundance of speech but the abundance of Khashiyyah (awe).” Indeed, the one who studies Islam, in any aspect, sincerely for the sake of Allah (swt) cannot but be humbled before the Wisdom and Guidance of Allah (swt), struck with khashiyyah and raised in taqwa. Regarding the performing of the Siyam (Fasting) of Ramadhan, it is not merely the routine of abstaining from food and drink, it is to increase our taqwa. Allah (swt) said, ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾ **“O believers! Fasting is prescribed for you—as it was for those before you—so perhaps you acquire taqwah of Allah.”** [Surah al-Baqarah 2:183]. Indeed, the one who fasts sincerely for Allah (swt) grows in Taqwa and improves as an obedient servant of Allah (swt), a blessing that is sensed greatly during Ramadhan, amongst its facilities and blessings.

In the acts of ‘ibaadaat (ritual worships), through the commands of Allah (swt), we must achieve the spiritual value and nothing else. Riyaa` is when one intends to gain the people’s pleasure through the ‘ibaadaat, when what is required is the drawing close to Allah (swt). It is from the actions of the heart and not the actions of the tongue or the limbs. So in the case of riyaa`, instead of doing the action for the sake of drawing close to Allah (swt), it is done for the sake of people. If the aim of the action is shared between Allah (swt) and the people then this act of drawing close to Allah is Haraam, inviting the Wrath of Allah (swt) upon us! Allah (swt) said, ﴿الَّذِينَ هُمْ يُرَاءُونَ﴾ **“Those who do good deeds only to be seen (of men).”** [Surah al-Ma’un 107:6]. Imam at-Tabari commented on this ayah, “الذين هم يراءون الناس بصلاتهم إذا صلوا، لأنهم لا يصلون رغبة في ثواب، ولا رهبة من عقاب، وإنما يصلونها ليراهم المؤمنون فيظنونهم منهم” “Those who make Salah so that people see them when they pray, because they do not pray with a desire for a reward, nor a fear of punishment, instead they perform Salah so that the believers see them and they think about them.” The Prophet (saw) said in the hadith of Jandab reported by al-Bukhari, «مَنْ سَمِعَ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ بِهِ وَمَنْ يُرَائِي يُرَائِي اللَّهُ بِهِ» **“If anyone works to make people hear him, Allah will make people hear him and if anybody works so that people will see him, Allah will make people see him alone.”** [Bukhari].

So let us be mindful of our Salah in the masjid, for it is only to increase our Taqwah, for RasulAllah (saw) said, «يُخْشِفُ رَبُّنَا عَنْ سَاقِهِ فَيَسْجُدُ لَهُ كُلُّ مُؤْمِنٍ وَمُؤْمِنَةٍ، وَيَبْقَى مَنْ كَانَ يَسْجُدُ فِي الدُّنْيَا رِئَاءً» **“Our Lord Allah will lay bare His Shin, and then all the Believers, men and women will prostrate themselves before Him, but there will remain those who used to prostrate in the world for showing off and for gaining good reputation. Such people will try to prostrate (on the Day of Judgment) but their backs will be as stiff as if it is one bone (a single vertebra).”** [Bukhari]. Let us make Tahajjud without even our spouses or children knowing to put a thick border between Riyaa` and us. Let us be mindful in the ‘ibaadah of seeking the knowledge, for it is to build awe of Allah (swt) alone, not to build our egos in debate through showing off. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «مَنْ طَلَبَ الْعِلْمَ لِيَمَارِي بِهِ السُّفَهَاءَ أَوْ لِيُبَاهِيَ بِهِ الْعُلَمَاءَ أَوْ لِيَصْرِفَ وُجُوهَ النَّاسِ إِلَيْهِ فَهُوَ فِي النَّارِ» **“Whoever**

**seeks knowledge in order to argue with the foolish, or to show off before the scholars, or to attract people's attention, will be in Hell.**" [Ibn Majah]. Let us be mindful in the 'ibaadah of Hajj, for it is to draw closer to Allah (swt) alone and not for us to boast and brag about, as if it is a badge of piety. The Messenger of Allah (saw) performed Hajj on an old saddle, wearing a cloak that was worth four Dirham or less. Then he (saw) said, «اللَّهُمَّ حِجَّةً لَا رِيَاءَ فِيهَا وَلَا سُمْعَةً» **"O Allah, a Hajj in which there is no riyaa' nor reputation sought."** [Ibn Majah]. So let our armies fight seeking the Pleasure of Allah (swt), regardless of worldly benefits. A man came to the Prophet (saw) and asked, "A man fights for war booty; another fights for fame and a third fights for showing off; which of them fights in Allah's Cause?" The Prophet (saw) said, «مَنْ قَاتَلَ لِنَكُونِ كَلِمَةَ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا فَهُوَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ» **"He who fights that Allah's Word (i.e. Islam) should be superior, fights in Allah's Cause."** [Bukhari].

As for the ruled, let them account the ruler to draw close to Allah (swt), in awe of Him (swt) alone, without hesitation or reservation through fear of man, for the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «أَفْضَلُ الْجِهَادِ كَلِمَةٌ عَدْلٍ عِنْدَ سُلْطَانٍ جَائِرٍ» **"The best of jihad is a just word spoken to an unjust ruler."** [Abu Dawood]. Indeed, it is the awe of Allah (swt) alone that allows the one who accounts to overcome the awe of those wielding power, standing before the cruelest of tyrants. Allah (swt) said, «أَتَخَشَوْنَهُمْ فَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَوْهُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ» **"Are you in awe of them? Allah is more deserving of your awe, if you are believers."** [Surah at-Tawbah 9:13]. As for the ruler, let him grow closer to Allah (swt) through ruling by all that He (swt) has revealed. He must not let himself down, inviting the anger of Allah (swt) by neglecting Islam through love of the trappings of power and status. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «إِنَّ أَحَبَّ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَأَدْنَاهُمْ مِنْهُ مَجْلِسًا إِمَامٌ عَادِلٌ وَأَبْغَضُ النَّاسِ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَأَبْعَدُهُمْ مِنْهُ مَجْلِسًا إِمَامٌ جَائِرٌ» **"Indeed, the most beloved of people to Allah on the Day of Judgment, and the nearest to Him in the status is the just Imam. And the most hated of people to Allah and the furthest from Him in status is the oppressive Imam."** [Tirmidhi]. Let the ruler draw close to Allah (swt) by adhering to the truth, implementing it, instead of abandoning the truth in his desire to please the people. Aisha (ra) said, I heard the Messenger of Allah (saw) say, «مَنْ التَّمَسَّ رِضَاءَ اللَّهِ بِسَخَطِ النَّاسِ كَفَاهُ اللَّهُ مُؤْنَةَ النَّاسِ وَمَنْ التَّمَسَّ رِضَاءَ النَّاسِ بِسَخَطِ اللَّهِ وَكَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى النَّاسِ» **"Whoever seeks Allah's pleasure by the people's wrath, Allah will suffice him from the people. And whoever seeks the people's pleasure by Allah's wrath, Allah will entrust him to the people."** [Tirmidhi]

Such care for the spiritual value makes the Muslim personality an elevated personality, who draws close to Allah (swt) and is mindful of obeying Him (swt). Such a Muslim is not swayed by those inviting to misguidance. Such care for the spiritual value makes the Islamic society an elevated society, where there is an atmosphere of the remembrance of Allah (swt), praising Him (swt) and seeking His Pleasure. It is far from the secular society, which suffers under the black void of a spiritual vacuum.

As for the economic transactions, whilst our goal is the pleasure of Allah (swt) through implementing the commands of Allah (swt), we secure the material value, which is the material profit and the material earning. Our Deen, Islam, is not a secular religion, which gave guidance for individual worship alone, it is a complete code of life, governing all of our affairs. So when hiring, Islam orders us to establish the earning. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «إِذَا اسْتَأْجَرْتَ أَجِيرًا فَأَعْلِمْهُ أَجْرَهُ» **"When you hire a worker, tell him of his wages."** [an-Nisaa'i]. Indeed, the hiring of the worker is for the goal of seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt). It necessitates fulfilling the aim of the action, which is the material value, in this case, the wage. So, the hiring is not without a purpose or in vain. The worker must be paid his due; otherwise, Allah (swt) will contend on his behalf. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «قَالَ اللَّهُ ثَلَاثَةٌ أَنَا خَصْمُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ رَجُلٌ أَعْطَى بِي ثُمَّ عَدَرَ وَرَجُلٌ بَاعَ حُرًّا فَأَكَلَ ثَمَنَهُ وَرَجُلٌ اسْتَأْجَرَ أَجِيرًا فَاسْتَوْفَى مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُعْطِ أَجْرَهُ» **"Allah, the Exalted, says, 'I will contend on the Day of Resurrection against three**



Dawood]. We are mindful in our dealing with our siblings and offspring, whether male or female. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «مَنْ كَانَ لَهُ ثَلَاثُ بَنَاتٍ أَوْ ثَلَاثُ أَخَوَاتٍ أَوْ ابْنَتَانِ أَوْ أُخْتَانِ فَأَحْسَنَ، وَصَحِبْتَهُنَّ وَاتَّقَى اللَّهَ فِيهِنَّ فَلَهُ الْجَنَّةُ» **“Whoever has three daughters, or three sisters, or two daughters, or two sisters and he keeps good company with them and fears Allah regarding them, then Paradise is for him.”** [Tirmidhi]. Islam enjoined on the offspring to be caring towards parents at any age and in any illness. Abu Huraira (ra) reported that a person said: Allah's Messenger, who amongst the people is most deserving of my good treatment? The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «أُمُّكَ ثُمَّ أُمُّكَ ثُمَّ أَبُوكَ ثُمَّ أَدْنَاكَ أَدْنَاكَ» **“Your mother, again your mother, again your mother, then your father, then your nearest relatives according to the order (of nearness).”** [Muslim] We are to be mindful in maintaining the ties of kinship, enquiring of the relatives and taking care of their needs as much as we can. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ، فَلَمَّا فَرَّغَ مِنْهُ قَامَتِ الرَّحِمُ فَأَخَذَتْ بِحَقْوِ الرَّحْمَنِ فَقَالَ لَهَا مَهْ. قَالَتْ هَذَا مَقَامُ الْعَائِدِ بِكَ مِنَ الْفَطِيئَةِ. قَالَ أَلَا تَرْضَيْنَ أَنْ أَصِلَ مِنْ وَصْلِكَ وَأَقْطَعِ مَنْ قَطَعَكَ. قَالَتْ بَلَى يَا رَبِّ. قَالَ فَذَاكَ لَكَ» **“Allah created His creation, and when He had finished it, the womb, got up and caught hold of Allah whereupon Allah said, "What is the matter?" On that, it said, 'I seek refuge with you from those who sever the ties of kith and kin.' On that Allah said, 'Will you be satisfied if I bestow My favors on him who keeps your ties, and withhold My favors from him who severs your ties?' On that it said, 'Yes, O my Lord!' Then Allah said, 'That is for you.’”** [Al-Bukhari] The Prophet (saw) said, «لَيْسَ الْوَأَصِلُ بِالْمُكَافِي وَلَكِنَّ الْوَأَصِلَ الَّذِي إِذَا قَطَعَتْ رَحِمَهُ وَصَلَهَا» **“The person who perfectly maintains the ties of kinship is not the one who does it because he gets recompensed, but the one who truly maintains the bonds of kinship is the one who persists in doing so even though the latter has severed the ties of kinship with him.”** [Al-Bukhari].

Through adhering to the Islamic laws regarding families and relatives, we are not personalities that just seek to make trade, profit and earnings. Our familial and collective tendency becomes strong rather than being overwhelmed by individualism. We must be mindful of obeying Allah (swt) in all matters, granting humanity, our neighborhood and our family, their due by pursuing the Shariah actions that yield the humanitarian value. The Muslims care beyond themselves to those around them, giving up their right to others before demanding theirs. The relationship between the husband and wife is not that of two individuals battling for their mutual rights, but a shared partnership where they are sources of comfort and love for each other. Parenthood is not regarded as an incursion on individual aspirations, but an opportunity to raise a child in goodness and care. Elderly parents are not regarded as inconveniences, but a chance to gain blessings from Allah (swt). Thus, the Islamic society has the family unit as its fortress, unlike the secular society, where ties of relation and care for the human being are in woeful disregard.

As for acquiring morals, the Shariah rulings regarding morals are undertaken for the goal of earning the pleasure of Allah (swt). Islam commands us to achieve the moral value, such as being characterized by honesty and trustworthiness. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «إِنَّ مِنْ خَيْرِكُمْ أَحْسَنَكُمْ أَخْلَاقًا» **“The best amongst you are those who have the best manners and character.”** [Bukhari]. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «أَكْثَرُ مَا يُدْخِلُ الْجَنَّةَ تَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَحُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ» **“The fear of Allah and good morals (AkhlAQ) are the two major characteristics which lead to Paradise.”** [At-Tirmidhi]. So we are honest because Allah (swt) has ordered us to be honest and we are trustworthy because Allah (swt) has ordered the keeping of trusts (Amaanah). We do not engage in morals because of any material benefit, such that people buy from us or they elect us to office. This is what distinguishes the honesty of the one who seeks to please Allah (swt) from the one who seeks to please himself. The former is true honesty because Allah (swt) has ordered us to be honest, while the latter is honesty for the sake of a benefit, based on the corrupt Western philosophy of utilitarianism. Honesty is not a policy; it is a command by the Creator of the Worlds that we must undertake. We will be

honest even when there is material gain somewhere else. We obey the commands of Allah (swt) to be moral until we achieve the moral value, which is being characterized by honesty. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصِّدْقِ فَإِنَّ الصِّدْقَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْبِرِّ وَإِنَّ الْبِرَّ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَمَا يَزَالُ الرَّجُلُ يَصْدُقُ وَيَتَحَرَّى الصِّدْقَ حَتَّى يُكْتَبَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ صِدِّيقًا وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْكَذِبُ فَإِنَّ الْكَذِبَ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْفُجُورِ وَإِنَّ الْفُجُورَ يَهْدِي إِلَى النَّارِ» **“Abide by truthfulness, for indeed truthfulness leads to righteousness. And indeed righteousness leads to Paradise. A man continues telling the truth and tries hard to tell the truth until he is recorded with Allah as a truthful person. Refrain from falsehood, for indeed falsehood leads to wickedness, and wickedness leads to the Fire. A slave (of Allah) continues lying and tries hard to lie, until he is recorded with Allah as a liar.”** [At-Tirmidhi]. So the trader will be honest in trade even if it leads to material loss, such as when he reports the defect in the goods or informs the one who is not aware of the market rates and similar.

Through obeying Allah (swt) the acquisition of moral value ensures Muslims are elevated personalities, adorned by the many morals that the Revelation invokes. Muslims are honest and not deceitful. Muslims are generous and not miserly. They are gentle and they are not harsh. They are cheerful and not miserable and complaining. They think well of the believers and are not skeptical and doubting. Their pursuit of morals is for the pleasure of Allah (swt) and not for the sake of morals in themselves, so their pursuit is constant and without disturbance. Their pursuit is for the reward from Allah (swt) and not for material benefit or praise from the people, so there is no hypocrisy or double standards in their pursuit. Thus, they all become part of a society which is full of generosity, honesty, tranquility and trust, a society which is a pleasure to live in.

Indeed the Deen of Islam produces well rounded personalities and a perfectly balanced society. The Islamic era is thirteen hundred years of testimony to Islam’s superior arrangement of human beings. Islam produced legions of outstanding personalities and a society filled with compassion, tranquility, spiritual devotion, vibrant industry and prosperity. At a time that the Islamic Ummah has risen from the abyss of its decline, awaiting the imminent return of the Khilafah, let us each be mindful of our every action, ensuring its perfection, fulfilling its value, for the pleasure of Allah (swt). Indeed, it is not long before we see the day wherein each and every action will be seen, no matter how small, on a day that any weight of good will be a great relief on the scales. Allah (swt) said, ﴿فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا﴾ **“And whosoever does an atom’s weight of good, will see it on that day.”** [TMQ Surah al-Zalzala 99:7]. Allah (swt) said, ﴿وَمَنْ حَقَّتْ مَوْزِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ﴾ **“But those whose scale is light, they will have doomed themselves, staying in Hell forever.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Mu'minoon 23: 103].

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