

WHAT IS TO BE DONE AFTER *RAMADHAAN*



The state in which one comes out of *Ramadhaan* is very important, because it pertains to two things:

First: After the great season is over – which abounds with great opportunities for the faithful, so that they would attain forgiveness and emancipation from Hell – those destined to win have won forgiveness, mercy and emancipation from Hell, and started proceeding on the way of Allaah The Almighty, and those destined to lose and fail have lost and failed. However, both parties wonder. As for the former, they ponder: how could one maintain those states he has reached in *Ramadhaan*, and show gratitude to his Lord for what he has received of mercy and forgiveness? If he has achieved nothing and rather comes out with failure (i.e. if he is one of the other party), then, how could he return to his way to Allaah The Almighty once again?

Second: after *Ramadhaan*, the believers continue to receive the favors of Allaah The Almighty successively. He opens for them the days of righteousness and the season of *Hajj*, which is one of the greatest seasons of forgiveness. People in that season are of two kinds: the first are people who have received forgiveness in *Ramadhaan*, and those seasons come as a provision for them to do more acts of obedience, and be able to show gratitude to Allaah The Almighty for what He has opened for them. The other are people who have received nothing in *Ramadhaan*, and those seasons come so that they would join the procession of the followers of the Path of Allaah The Almighty, and be able to make up for the missing acts of obedience. Thus, Allaah The Almighty opens those seasons for both parties, in order to forgive them, bestow mercy upon them, and emancipate them from Hell. With those also, the people of faith would fulfill their longing to visit the House of Allaah The Almighty, in preparation for seeing the Almighty at the appointed time, on the Day the people would stand before the Lord of the Worlds.

This speech then is intended to show the signs characteristic of the followers of the way of Allaah The Almighty, the path the people of faith should take in the known

months, and the illuminating guideposts which aid the followers to stand straight on their way to Allaah The Almighty, in order not to retreat nor deviate.

It should be known that this can only be achieved by seeking the aid of Allaah The Almighty, dependence on His power, reliance on Him, and imploring Him not to leave us to ourselves.

Ultimately, the right is from Allaah The Almighty alone, and the wrong is from us as well as from the devil. May Allaah The Almighty bestow mercy upon the one who presents to us our defects.

The way of the believers after *Ramadhaan*

Chapter One: Signs characteristic of the followers of the way of Allaah The Almighty

Chapter Two: Beginning a new era immediately after *Ramadhaan*

Chapter Three: Uprightness on the way of Allaah The Almighty after *Ramadhaan*

Chapter Four: Seeking the aid of Allaah The Exalted

Chapter One

Characteristic of the followers of the Way of Allaah

- To love Allaah The Almighty
- To remember Allaah The Almighty
- To offer *Qiyaam* (night prayer) regularly
- To hasten to do good things
- To be preoccupied with religion and *Da'wah* (inviting to Islam)
- To abstain from the pleasures this world and prepare for the approach of the Hereafter.

Before *Ramadhaan*, we stood at the crossroads, and mentioned that Allaah The Almighty opened *Ramadhaan*, so that one would attain forgiveness, and the means of emancipation from Hell. Furthermore, the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "*Disgraced is the one who witnesses Ramadhaan without being forgiven! Disgraced and lost is the one who witnesses Ramadhaan without being forgiven! May Allaah keep him far (from Paradise) and admit him to Hell! Say Aameen!*" I then said 'Amen.'" [At-Tabaraani] [Ibn Hibbaan: *Saheeh*]

Thus, people would have no argument against Allaah The Almighty afterwards. If people neglect and give up this opportunity, and neither achieve its means, nor prepare for it, by doing their best to attain forgiveness, then they will have no excuse with Allaah The Almighty. We stood at that point. Allaah The Almighty has opened for the people of faith the month of *Ramadhaan*, in order to liberally grant them forgiveness.

Do you think they have come out with their sins forgiven? Do you think they have come out emancipated from Hell? Do you think they have taken it seriously, and learnt that they will be made to stand and be questioned about it before Allaah The Almighty? Do you think they have come out of *Ramadhaan*, with the traces of

mercy, forgiveness and emancipation from Hell visible on them? Do you think that they, rather, say that this did not take place, and pledged, in the coming *Ramadhaan*, to start from its beginning, do their best, strive their utmost, and continue to do such-and-such? Do you think they have received this opportunity from Allaah The Almighty gladly, seriously and determinedly, and devoted their time, effort, property and health to achieve the means of forgiveness? If they were to sacrifice the entire world and what it contains – along with their lives, efforts, property and time – in order to attain forgiveness, it would not be too much. Do you think they have attained that? Do you think they have come out (of *Ramadhaan*) with the traces of forgiveness, emancipation from Hell and repentance visible on them, and become a new creation, much dearer and nearer to Allaah The Almighty, and swifter to please Him, with humility, submission, approach to the truth and readiness meet Allaah The Exalted?

That is indeed the crossroads. The question to raise today: Have we really followed that way fixed and enjoined by Allaah The Almighty, or have those ways misled us, and those destined to return have returned, those destined to slacken have slackened, and those destined to procrastinate have procrastinated, waiting for the next *Ramadhaan* to come?

One should ask this question, in order to know whether he has really followed the way in which we have stood, or withdrawn from it. That is because he should either move forward towards or turn back from Allaah The Almighty. None stands stagnant in the way to Allaah The Almighty: people either proceed quickly to Him, and compete with each other to obtain His good pleasure, or approach this world, utilize its means, rely on desires and pleasures, and engage themselves in attaining the perishable pleasures (of this world), which they soon will leave after they die. That is the question.

In this case, let us say that the way we choose to follow has signs which one should detect in himself to decide whether he, who has come upon those crossroads, has really proceeded to the way of Allaah The Almighty, and followed His path, with

its traces visible on him, or has not started yet. In this case, he seems to be addressed by the statement of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*: "*Disgraced is the one who witnesses Ramadhaan without being forgiven, may Allaah keep him far (from Paradise) and admit him to Hell! Say Aameen!*" I then said ‘Aameen.’" [At-Tabaraani] [Ibn Hibbaan: Saheeh]

It may be asked: What are the signs of this way?

This way begins with those meanings to be observed in *Ramadhaan*, as regards worship and motivation, and the relationships which should be established between the individual and Allaah The Almighty , between him and his family, between him and his *Ummah* (Muslim nation), and between him and people. He should have undertaken all this in such a way that if he is told, at the moment, that he will (die and) move to Allaah The Almighty, he will have no more to present in this respect. That is, he will have nothing more to sacrifice, neither time, nor property, nor effort to offer. This is because he will have exerted his effort – as much as lies within his capacity – to achieve the means of his salvation, in the same way as anyone may exert his utmost efforts to obtain the means of this world; regardless of the difficulty and suffering he finds in his journey, he will die and leave it.

1- To love Allaah The Almighty:

The first sign of this way is to have love for Allaah The Almighty. When one emerges from *Ramadhaan* with his sins being forgiven for him, this means that he has come out loving his Lord, drawing closer to Him, being attached to Him, relying on Him and confident of what is with Him. His heart is filled with His love, light, remembrance, reassurance about Him, solace with Him, longing and readiness for meeting Him, hastening to obey Him, and sacrificing his property, soul and efforts to attain the good pleasure of Allaah The Almighty.

Do you give priority to that over your children, wife, parents, dwellings and the world which you see? It is that about which Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{Beautiful for people is the love of that which they desire - of women and sons, heaped-up sums of gold and silver, fine branded horses, and cattle and tilled land. That is the enjoyment of worldly life, but Allaah has with Him the best return. Say, "Shall I inform you of [something] better than that? For those who fear Allaah will be gardens in the Presence of their Lord beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide eternally, and purified spouses and approval from Allaah. And Allaah is Seeing of [His] servants.}* [Quran 3:14-15]

Do you still give priority to your own soul, offspring, wealth, comfort, sleep, health, children, and wife over Allaah The Almighty? It should be known to you that Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{Say, [O Muhammad], "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allaah and His Messenger and Jihaad in His cause, then wait until Allaah executes His command. And Allaah does not guide the defiantly disobedient people."}* [Quran 9:24]

This is the first meaning: has one come or not come out with it? That is the very state in which the believers should be, who have followed that way. Allaah The Almighty has opened for them all the months of *Ramadhaan*, thereby to test them, and put them to trial, so that those who love Him would be distinguished from those who falsely claim His love and those who are negligent in His love, the obedient from the negligent and lazy, and those who approach Him from those who turn back from Him. That is the beginning of the way to Allaah The Almighty, the crossroads at which we have already stood. Have they really proceeded to Him or turned back on their heels in retreat from Him to this world, competing with each other over it, thereby heedless of the Hereafter, and careless about meeting Allaah The Almighty?

2- To remember Allaah The Almighty:

The second characteristic of those who proceed to Allaah The Almighty is their remembrance of Him. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{So remember Me; I will remember you.}*** [Quran 2:152]

Do you think you have come to persist in the remembrance (of Allaah), in response to the words of Allaah The Almighty (which mean): ***{remember Allaah with much remembrance}*** ?[Quran 33:41]

Do you think you now remember Allaah The Almighty much more, or you have been heedless, distracted and engaged in idle talk, in your dealings, conduct, sleep, movement and stillness? For this reason, Allaah The Almighty Says (in a *Qudsi Hadeeth*): ***"I am the companion of him who remembers Me (more often)."*** [Ad-Daylami with no chain of narrators on the authority of ‘Aa’ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her: *Marfoo*] Has he come to seek solace with that Companion, The Almighty, or console himself and mix with people, approach them and seek solace in their speech at the expense of his solace with his Lord?

Has he taken his Lord as his companion, to speak with Him privately, tell Him his concerns and supplications, invoke Him, sing His praises, raise his hands towards Him, and implore Him? Has it been the state of the followers of the way of Allaah The Almighty? Have they seen this state, which guided them to their station and procession to Allaah The Almighty? Have they been guided to the highest and best of remembrance, the recitation of the Noble Quran, the speech of Allaah The Almighty? Do you think they have approached that speech? No doubt, the Lord Says about them (what means):

- ***{Indeed, those who recite the Book of Allaah and establish prayer and spend [in His cause] out of what We have provided them, secretly and publicly, [can] expect a profit that will never perish.}*** [Quran 35:29]

- *{The believers are only those who, when Allaah Is mentioned, their hearts become fearful, and when His verses are recited to them, it increases them in faith; and upon their Lord they rely.}* [Quran 8:2]

Are the signs of this visible on them? Have the traces of His blessings, mercy, light, guidance and healing been visible on them as He Says (what means): *{Say, "It is, for those who believe, a guidance and cure"}* [Quran: 41-44] thereupon, it is their medicine to lead them to Allaah The Almighty, purify them outwardly and inwardly, cleanse their hearts, tongues, bodies and physical organs in their procession to Allaah The Almighty?

Undoubtedly, this Book is as stated by Allaah The Almighty, who Says (what means):

- *{Allaah has sent down the best statement: a consistent Book wherein is reiteration. The skins shiver therefrom of those who fear their Lord; then their skins and their hearts relax at the remembrance of Allaah . That is the guidance of Allaah by which He guides whom He wills. And one whom Allaah leaves astray - for him there is no guide.}* [Quran 39:23]
- *{And We send down of the Quran that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss.}* [Quran 17:82]

Have they come to weep when reciting and listening to this Quran? *{When the verses of the Most Merciful were recited to them, they fell in prostration and weeping.}* [Quran 19:58]

Do you think you have come to approach this Quran, get accustomed to reciting it, reflect upon its meanings, and abide by its commands and prohibitions? Do you take from it that which contributes to your salvation with Allaah The Almighty, and the rectitude of your heart and body and in your proceeding to Allaah The Almighty, or are you still veiled and remote from Him and negligent?

Has this meaning been realized in those who proceed to Allaah The Almighty, or do they still abandon the Speech of Allaah The Almighty? *{And the Messenger has said, "O my Lord, indeed my people have taken this Quran as [a thing] abandoned."}* [Quran 25:30]

3- To offer *Qiyaam* (night prayer) regularly:

Standing at night (in prayer) is among the signs which show the state of those who love their Lord, approach Him, follow the way to Him, and are about to reach their Beloved, The Exalted, The Almighty, not to be ostentatious, nor negligent.

In *Ramadhaan*, one stood at night (in prayer) to Allaah The Almighty, and behold, after *Ramadhaan*, the traces of this standing would be visible on him in confirmation of the statement of Allaah The Almighty (which means):

- *{They arise from [their] beds; they supplicate their Lord in fear and aspiration, and from what We have provided them, they spend.}* [Quran 32:16]
- *{They are not [all] the same; among the People of the Scripture is a community standing [in obedience], reciting the verses of Allaah during periods of the night and prostrating [in prayer].}* [Quran 3:113]

This seems visible on them in their standing and talking privately to Allaah The Almighty, and taking pleasure in that private talk. No doubt, the private talk with Allaah The Almighty does not belong to this world in so much as to Paradise, for which He has chosen some people.

That is the significance of His statement (which means): *{They used to sleep but little of the night, And in the hours before dawn they would ask forgiveness.}* [Quran 51:17-18] Have they come to that state which is the beginning of the way to Allaah The Almighty or have they been overpowered by sleep, laziness and the comfort of this perishable body? No doubt, were they to trouble this body in the

world, they would be comforted in the Hereafter, and were they to feel comfortable in this world, it would get tired on the Day the people would stand in front of the Lord of the Worlds.

4- To hasten to do good things

Allaah The Almighty reminds them to hasten to other acts of worship Saying (what means): *{Indeed, they used to hasten to good deeds and supplicate Us in hope and fear, and they were to Us humbly submissive.}* [Quran 21:90] Why do you not do the same?

When the following verse was revealed (which means): *{And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous}* [Quran 3:133], the Companions learnt that they were the ones addressed by that verse, and the ones required to hasten. Thereupon they hastened accordingly, and competed with each other to be the first to reach Allaah The Almighty. They spared no effort, no time and no property they could spend for the sake of Allaah The Almighty. In contrast, we refrain from obeying Allaah The Almighty simply to save time, effort and property, for the perishable benefits – desires, lusts, heedlessness and false opportunities – to the end of those corrupt states that prevail over the appearance and hearts of the believers these days.

Why do people not hasten and learn that they should do so because the days of this world are limited, and the life of humankind is but several days, which pass quickly one after the other until he meets Allaah The Almighty?

Allaah The Almighty informed them that they only have a few days in this world before it would come to an end. That is the statement of Allaah The Almighty which we remember more often (which means): *{O you who have believed, fear Allaah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow - and fear Allaah. Indeed, Allaah is acquainted with what you do. And be not like those*

who forgot Allaah, so He made them forget themselves. Those are the defiantly disobedient. } [Quran 59:18-19]

The significance of *{And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow}* is that the closest day on which one may return to Allaah The Almighty is tomorrow, and were there another day closer than tomorrow on which one may return to Allaah The Almighty, of course, He would have mentioned it. It is obligatory for every soul then to look at that with which it will meet Allaah The Almighty and whether this will brighten or blacken its face. Who has looked at his deeds and book to conclude them with something because of which Allaah The Almighty will brighten his face on the day when some faces will be bright and others black?

When Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow}* this means that all souls are required to do so. However, Allaah The Almighty informed the believers that they would not do so perfectly, by talking about every soul (solely), i.e. and let even one soul, from among those souls which claim love for Allaah The Almighty, obedience, approach and monotheism, stand to Allaah The Almighty, and look at what it put forth for tomorrow. This is intended to exhort all souls to stand in front of Allaah The Almighty.

Why should every soul not stand in front of Allaah The Almighty, look at what it has put forth, conclude this day with a righteous deed, and reckon itself for what it has put forth and put back, until when it meets Allaah The Almighty, it will meet Him with nothing due on it, being pleased with Him, and He being pleased with it? That is between one and Allaah The Almighty.

Why does he not hasten to spend? Why does he not hasten to offer his time and effort? Why does he not do what is incumbent upon him as regards seeking beneficial knowledge, doing righteous deeds and proceeding towards Allaah The Almighty? Why does this soul not put forth, as we have already mentioned, that which contributes to its rectitude in the sight of Allaah The Almighty?

5- To be preoccupied with religion and *Da'wah*

The question here is: What have those pious people presented for their *Ummah* (Muslim nation) which has come down to rock bottom? To whom have they left the call to Allaah The Almighty? To whom have they left the plea and taking refuge to Allaah The Almighty with righteous deeds, so that He would remove from the *Ummah* its adversity, and avert poverty and disasters caused by them? Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{And whatever strikes you of disaster - it is for what your hands have earned; but He pardons much.}*** [Quran 42:30] No adversity befalls a people without a sin, and it will not be removed without repentance. What have those presented to invite to Allaah The Almighty with wisdom and good instruction? Have they presented a word to expect its reward with their Lord, and remove adversity from their people? What have they presented? To whom have they left the houses of Allaah The Almighty in their prayers, acts of worship, remembrance of Allaah The Almighty and acquiring knowledge? To whom have they left them?

The other concept addresses the state of what is between one and his family and children. He should encourage them to adhere to religion, guide them to the way of Allaah The Almighty, and take them from the crossroads to the way of Allaah The Almighty which he is following. He should also show his dutifulness and kindness to his parents – which is the culmination of those good deeds mentioned by Allaah The Almighty.

Then, let him move to the state in which he should be with the believers including sincerity and mutual care and cooperation between them ***{And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allaah; indeed, Allaah is severe in penalty.}*** [Quran 5:2] The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: *"The believers, in their mutual affection, mercy and kindness, are like one body, if part of it aches, the whole body shares with it insomnia and fever."* [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim] There should be, between them,

neither hatred, nor discord, nor desertion, nor severance (of relations), nor rancor, nor resentment, nor selfishness. On the contrary, there should be between them generosity, munificence, kindness and righteous deeds. Then, call them to Allaah The Almighty with instruction and good wisdom *{Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best.}* [Quran 16:125] Call them by enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil. That is, to enjoin right with good, and forbid evil with kindness and leniency.

These traces appear on the way of the worshippers, and their light become visible on them in their motion, stillness, speech, outward, inward, acts of worship, approach, remembrance (of Allaah), recitation of the Quran, mosques, dealings, kindness, discarding wrongness, forgetting tragedies and disasters, and excusing and forgiving each other, in the hope that Allaah The Almighty would excuse and forgive them. In this way, they turn into a new creation, worthy of the mercy and forgiveness of Allaah The Almighty, entitled to His blessings and to being removed from the terror of His trial.

6- To abstain from this world, and approach the Hereafter

This soul which follows the way of Allaah The Almighty from among the crossroads should be ready to meet Allaah The Almighty. One will not be ready to meet Allaah The Almighty unless he abstains from this world, approaches the Hereafter, relies on the abode of eternity rather than on the abode of the perishable world, is one of the people of the Hereafter, and hastens to be ready to meet Allaah The Almighty. He should not be one of the people of this world, which they talk about, compete with each other over, raise and honor themselves, and further, become arrogant.

If this world were of any value in the sight of Allaah The Almighty, He would not have made it for the disbelievers, as He Says (what means): *{And if it were not that the people would become one community [of disbelievers], We would have*

made for those who disbelieve in the Most Merciful - for their houses - ceilings and stairways of silver upon which to mount And for their houses - doors and couches [of silver] upon which to recline And gold ornament. But all that is not but the enjoyment of worldly life. And the Hereafter with your Lord is for the righteous.} [Quran 43:33-35] He would have made their houses and stairways, of silver, and their beds of gold, and done for them what one could hardly expect or imagine. However, Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{And the Hereafter with your Lord is for the righteous.}*** That is, for those who follow the way of righteousness that leads them to the mercy of Allaah The Almighty, that is the significance of His statement (which means): ***{But the mercy of your Lord is better than whatever they accumulate.}*** [Quran 43:32]

The mercy of your Lord, O Muslims, is better than what they accumulate, better than that perishable heap of property that you seek to have, thereby you waste your Hereafter and forget your Lord until you are surprised by the angel of death standing by your head, and saying, "Come out, O soul, to Allaah The Almighty." At that time, you will say, "Give me respite for a day, perchance I may repent to Allaah The Almighty and do righteous deeds. Give me respite for (some time as short as even) an hour." Then, it will be said, as stated in the verse (which means): ***{And spend [in the way of Allaah] from what We have provided you before death approaches one of you and he says, "My Lord, if only You would delay me for a brief term so I would give charity and be among the righteous." But never will Allaah delay a soul when its time has come. And Allaah is acquainted with what you do.}*** [Quran 63:10-11]

If those signs are absent, the question will be: what has caused the believers to fall short, neglect (righteous deeds) and come out of *Ramadhaan*, not having progressed on the Way of Allaah The Almighty?

That is because they could not fulfill their covenant with Allaah The Almighty in *Ramadhaan*, due to their weak faith. Were the people of faith to evoke their situation at death, they would surely have hastened to prepare themselves to meet

it. Were they to evoke their situation in the Hereafter, and how they may be punished by Allaah The Almighty and made to be questioned about what they did, they would have grown white-haired, as stated by Allaah The Almighty in His Saying (what means): ***{Then how can you fear, if you disbelieve, a day that will make the children white-haired?}*** [Quran 73:17] Were the believers to evoke the feeling of all this, their state would have drastically changed, and they would have feared so much to the extent of hurtling towards Allaah The Almighty and towards repentance and righteous deeds.

Additionally, were they who hasten and compete with each other over this world to evoke the feeling that their Lord The Almighty knows and sees what they do, they would have felt shy of Allaah The Almighty, unlike their present state. Were they to be certain of, and rely on Him, their state would have changed totally. Yet, they do what they do, feeling no shyness of Allaah The Almighty. They are careless about being in the sight of Allaah The Almighty, of His aversion to them, and about the fact that were Allaah The Almighty to look at them in this very state, it is, most likely, that He would punish them, and cause the earth to swallow them. However, they are careless. Is this true faith?

For this reason, one needs to renew his faith in Allaah The Almighty, his certainty of Allaah The Almighty, his reliance on Allaah The Almighty and his good expectations of Allaah The Almighty. He should renew his faith in the Hereafter, death, meeting Allaah The Almighty, the records, the *Siraat*, the Resurrection, and its relevant distresses and calamities that are beyond the capacity of anyone to endure. Were he to evoke the feeling of any of these, his state would have changed, and he would have turned from pleasure with things other than Allaah The Almighty, play and laziness, to grief and weeping over the state in which he is about to meet Allaah The Almighty.

If this is absent, then the way to Allaah The Almighty is still clear and wide for the believers to follow. The gate of true and sincere repentance is still opened for one to begin traversing on his very day, if not at this hour of his, with a new covenant,

in which he implores Allaah The Almighty, asking Him to endow him with the capability of fulfillment, aid him in it, grant him success on his way, guard him, take his hand, and Help him have access to Him and not ever return from His way.

If those signs appear on anyone, and he feels he has more love and desire to draw closer to Allaah The Almighty, he feels the descent of the mercy of Allaah The Almighty upon him, his abstinence in this world, approach to the Hereafter, and attainment of the forgiveness of Allaah The Almighty, then, the most important trace to be visible on those forgiven by Allaah is their gratitude to Him. The state of those forgiven by Allaah The Almighty changes tremendously after *Ramadhaan*. They experience the trace of freedom from the burdens of sins and misdeeds. The more one gets rid of sins and misdeeds, the closer he comes to obedience, the more inclined his heart becomes to worship, and the more he longs to return to Allaah The Almighty, with his heart sounder and stronger to reject sin, avert heedlessness, and keep far from desires, lusts and mistakes. No doubt, the appearance of the traces of desires, remoteness and heedlessness indicates the non-acceptance (of deeds). For this reason, the traces of forgiveness should be visible on the believers in these days, who have to think about the case of gratitude, which requires great effort from them to attain.

CHAPTER TWO

BEGINNING OF A NEW COVENANT IMMEDIATELY AFTER *RAMADHAAN*

All the people should begin a new covenant with Allaah The Almighty: *{And he who fulfills that which he has promised Allaah - He will give him a great reward.}* [Quran 48:10]

The way to fulfill the promise to Allaah The Almighty

- 1- Not to follow the advice of the devil: to put things off and begin in the coming *Ramadhaan*
- 2- To beware of conceit about the worship of *Ramadhaan*
- 3- To hasten to begin from the night of 'Eed
- 4- To long for obedience, and this includes:
 - To stand (in prayer) on the night of 'Eed
 - To hasten to observe the six fasts of *Shawwaal*

Begin from today a new covenant with your Lord:

Let the new covenant be the first thing to do just after *Ramadhaan*, i.e. the last covenant with Allaah The Almighty, in which there is faith, and the feeling of the closeness to Allaah The Almighty, giving priority to love for Allaah The Almighty, fear of meeting Him in the Hereafter, and standing in front of Allaah The Almighty. All of this would fill one's heart with fear, lead him to work, prevent him from sinning, and hasten, with him, to Allaah The Almighty.

Thus, everyone should strive to have a new beginning this year just after *Ramadhaan*, namely from this hour: the negligent, the indulgent, the regretful, the weepers, the recipients of mercy, the forgiven, and so on. All should begin from this very hour. The former (the negligent) should begin with repentance and

seeking forgiveness, and the latter (recipients of mercy and forgiveness) should begin with gratitude for those acts of worship, and the mercy that Allaah The Almighty has aided them to attain in those days. In doing so, perchance they would be among those about whom Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{And they will approach one another, inquiring of each other. They will say, 'Indeed, we were previously among our people fearful [of displeasing Allaah]. So Allaah conferred favor upon us and protected us from the punishment of the scorching Fire.}*** [Quran 52:25-27] , when they were in a state of fearfulness of meeting Allaah The Almighty, the Hereafter, their reckoning, raising and resurrection, terrors and distresses about which Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{On the Day a man will flee from his brother And his mother and his father And his wife and his children, For every man, that Day, will be a matter adequate for him.}*** [Quran 80:34-37]

Why do people not think about that new covenant with Allaah The Almighty? Would that they should begin by looking at themselves, their families and children, the relations between them and their fellows, and the state of their *Ummah*, bearing their responsibility, and preparing an answer to the meeting of Allaah The Almighty who Says (what means): ***{And [mention] the Day He will call them and say, "What did you answer the messengers?"}*** [Quran 28:65]

As for the winners whose deeds are accepted, their covenant is gratitude to Allaah The Almighty for His mercy that He has sent down upon them, and His forgiveness that He has conferred upon them, knowing that were they to spend all their life to be grateful, this would be of no significance in comparison with it. On the other hand, the lost ones whose deeds are rejected should begin to ask forgiveness of Allaah The Almighty, and fulfill their promise to Him. I mean the promise that they have not fulfilled in *Ramadhaan*, which contributed to their loss. It should be known to all people that ***{And he who fulfills that which he has promised Allaah - He will give him a great reward.}*** [Quran 48:10] This is what they should think about.

Whoever fulfills his covenant and promise to Allaah The Almighty expects the great reward from Allaah The Exalted, The Almighty.

On the other hand, whoever promises Allaah The Almighty to obey Him and then turns back from that, his penalty is to have a seal of hypocrisy placed on his heart. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{And among them are those who made a covenant with Allaah , [saying], "If He should give us from His bounty, we will surely spend in charity, and we will surely be among the righteous." But when he gave them from His bounty, they were stingy with it and turned away while they refused. So He penalized them with hypocrisy in their hearts until the Day they will meet Him - because they failed Allaah in what they promised Him and because they [habitually] used to lie.}* [Quran 9:75-77]

It is true that the verse was revealed in relation to the hypocrites. However, it also addresses the believers who have something thereof, since the relation of the true believer with Allaah The Almighty is not like this, i.e. to promise Him and then fail in his promise again and again until a seal of hypocrisy is placed on his heart before he meets Allaah The Almighty in this state. It is not right to take the words of Allaah The Almighty in jest. On the contrary, you should hold on to the Book with strength, and give up frivolities, keeping in mind the statement of Allaah The Almighty (which means): *{So leave them to converse vainly and amuse themselves until they meet their Day which they are promised.}* [Quran 43:83]

You should fear to promise Allaah The Almighty and then fail in your promise, lest a seal of hypocrisy is placed on your heart until you meet Him, taking that fear as an impetus to drive you in your journey to Allaah The Almighty.

The way to fulfill your covenant with Allaah The Almighty

The first thing one who decides to fulfill his covenant with Allaah The Almighty should beware of, is the attack launched by the devil against the people of faith after *Ramadhaan*. The devils are always set free at the end of *Ramadhaan*. When it is the night of 'Eed, the devils are released from their fetters, and their main

concern is to corrupt the worshippers' acts of worship that they have offered in *Ramadhaan*. From that night on, throughout the nights of 'Eed, the work of the devils does not touch the perpetrators of misdeeds and sins, in so much as it addresses those who have performed their worship in *Ramadhaan*, in order to corrupt their good deeds, and return with them to their previous state of negligence, indulgence, lack of worship, distaste for obedience, and abstention from approaching Allaah The Almighty. For this reason, you would seldom find the state of worshippers after *Ramadhaan* as good as it was during it, due to the devil's whispers to corrupt the good deeds and dealings done in *Ramadhaan*. The ways by means of which the devil whispers differ according to the different states of the believers after *Ramadhaan*. In any case, his main concern is to prevent man from standing, striving against himself, and doing his best to proceed on the Way of Allaah, as shown below:

1- Do not follow the devil's advice: to put off making a new start to the coming *Ramadhaan*. The devil comes to a party of the believers, and gives them (false) promises and hopes, saying, *'Ramadhaan has passed and you have received no forgiveness nor mercy, nor have you done the righteous deeds you liked to do, nor have you fulfilled what is due on you in Ramadhaan, nor have you done so-and-so. Now, you have come out of Ramadhaan, and I do not think that anyone of you could expect to be forgiven by Allaah, or be emancipated from Hell. Who is the one who has done righteous deeds whereby he would be emancipated from Hell? Who is the one who has righteous deeds that cause him to receive forgiveness? Who is the one who has done such-and-such?'*

He keeps whispering thus, until he brings about despair in their hearts and convincing them that this is their real state. He alleges that at the end of *Ramadhaan*, they had already promised Allaah The Almighty that when this *Ramadhaan* would come, they would get ready from the first day, spend their efforts and time, perform prayer, stand (at night in prayer), stay in *I'tikaaf*, give in charity, and do such-and-such good deeds, under the claim that the previous

months of *Ramadhaan* were sufficient, in which they evoked no feeling of forgiveness, repentance, or of emancipation from Hell – and then *Ramadhaan* has come, and was over, and they have remained the same as they were at the previous times. This is indeed the argument of the devil. It is a correct argument in a sense: that is, you have really come out of *Ramadhaan*, and done nothing: so, let me advise you, and that is the advice of the devil, to decide once again and promise Allaah The Almighty to be, in the coming *Ramadhaan*, better than you have been in that month of *Ramadhaan*. That is his promise, the promise of the devil that he gives to the believers in those days.

The devil advises them today to get ready for the coming *Ramadhaan*, Allaah willing; leave this (*Ramadhaan*), and, Allaah willing, the coming *Ramadhaan*, you will be better, and promise Allaah The Almighty that; and beware lest you would not fulfill your promise. You should fulfill your promise. This is the devil who instructs you. It is true. We have promised Allaah The Almighty in those days to get ready, Allaah willing, in the coming *Ramadhaan*. Is it not so?

So, let the believer be careful then of this advice, and let him know that the devil seeks to cut him off the way.

He has cut him off today, and will stand against him tomorrow

Of course, the devil will not come to him the next day to say to him: *'You are a kind man. I cut you off from the Way of Allaah yesterday, and today you have promised your Lord. So, go, Allaah willing, and obey your Lord, and complete your way to Him!'*

No! But he will say to him, *'O fool! I deceived you yesterday, and gave you false hopes of today and tomorrow. I have really deceived you, and today is like yesterday, and tomorrow will be like today, and so on.'*

He does with him the same as he did the last *Ramadhaan*, and all the months of *Ramadhaan* before it. Every *Ramadhaan* comes upon him, he says to him, when he fails to achieve the means of forgiveness and gratitude, and the traces of the light

of the acts of worship do not appear on him: Allaah willing, next *Ramadhaan*, you will begin.

Next *Ramadhaan*, he says to him: O heedless one! Do you imagine I will leave you to worship your Lord? No! Just as I did with you last year, I will do with you this year.

Now, you have come to know your answer to the statement of the devil to you: '*Allaah willing, next year, you will be better*'. That is, you should say to him: '*It may be that this play we are doing, the hesitation, and the carelessness with which we treat the words of Allaah The Almighty, and the words of the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, will be the reason why the gate of repentance is closed.*'

It may be that you will live to the coming day, as you lived the last time. Nevertheless, who can make you know that Allaah The Almighty will keep the gate of repentance and forgiveness open for you?

Consider! The Lord is looking at you, in the hope that you would come to Him, while being in a bad state with regard to Allaah The Almighty. It may be that when you are in this very state, He closes the gate of repentance against you. Such being the case, you will find that gate closed by Allaah The Almighty in your face. Then, who would let you know that if you live, the Gate of Allaah The Almighty will remain open for you, and will not be closed in your face because of your evil deeds, hesitation, play, failure in your promise with Allaah The Almighty, and abstention from fulfilling your covenant with Him?

2- Beware of conceit about the worship in *Ramadhaan*:

One may say: I have come out of *Ramadhaan* and was able to successfully perform righteous deeds, and done such-and-such good deeds. It is said to him: The devil has come to you this time to reassure you about your righteous deeds. The devil, in fact, has come to dissemble him, saying to him: No! You are not like anyone else.

You have striven your utmost, performed fasts, stood (at night in prayer) – to the end of those aspects of striving which he claims for himself.

Those are other false impressions made by the devil, intended thereby to stop him from working and continuing his procession towards Allaah The Almighty, and make this poor man, who has this vision, believe himself doing Allaah The Almighty a favor, giving too much weight to his work, and thinking he has done great things. We have already mentioned the *Hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, which ruins this false impression made by the devil: *"None of you shall enter Paradise because of his deeds." They said, 'Not even you (O Messenger of Allaah)?' He said: 'Not even me, unless Allaah The Almighty encompasses me with His mercy.'"* [Muslim]

If the devil comes to say, *'You have fasted, stood (at night in prayer), and done such-and-such'*, then, you should say to him: *No, all of this should not prevent me from continuing the journey towards Allaah The Almighty, to get ready, and to give thanks to Allaah.* Even if he says to you: *You have done such-and-such, and prayed such-and-such, you should say to him, 'Then, I need to give thanks to Allaah The Almighty, submit to Him, and save time and effort to obey Him.'* Let him spend all those favors granted to him by Allaah The Almighty, to please Him, out of gratitude to Him.

These are other false impressions invented against the righteous believers; who come out of *Ramadhaan*, having obtained something of piety as Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you that you may become righteous}* [Quran 2:183]

Let them beware of those devilish whispers, by seeing themselves having done something, although they have done nothing at all, for (what they do) is only out of the bounty of Allaah The Almighty. Let one also fear lest making much of one's deeds should cause him to be one of those driven away and rejected by Allaah The

Almighty; and this should be a beginning once again to negligence in those rights, in those acts of worship, and in those mercies he has obtained in *Ramadhaan*.

However, if they do anything, they will need to give thanks; and if they are made successful to give thanks, they will need to give thanks for such gratitude. That is because gratitude is a favor from Allaah The Almighty which you could hardly do (alone). Allaah The Almighty never enables all people to give thanks. If you are made successful to give thanks, it will be a great favor for which you need to give thanks, and so on until you fail to give thanks.

3- To hasten to begin from the night of *'Eed*:

The attempt to fulfill the promise requires you to return to your Lord in those days, and begin your covenant from the night of *'Eed* – that is to fulfill your promise to Allaah The Almighty.

The most important days on which one should fulfill his promise, after *Ramadhaan*, are the first days of *Shawwaal*. Let no one think that the days of *'Eed* are days of indulgence. They should never be a cause of remoteness, negligence, indulgence, and leaving the good states in which one has been. That is an indication that those good states had such a strong trace in the heart of the man. If one loves and approaches his Lord, it becomes difficult for him to cease to proceed on His way. How could he abandon that love? That is like death in his sight; and his example is like the fish when it comes out of water. It indicates that he has been attached to his Lord, in truth, and under all circumstances, would never abstain from Him, nor neglect His right, nor give priority to love for anything over his love for Him, nor could he be estranged from Him.

On the contrary, his Lord, as we have already mentioned, is his friend, object of remembrance, beloved, and companion, as He Says (in a *Qudsi Hadeeth*): "*I am the companion of the one who remembers Me.*" Since his Lord is his companion, in *Thikr*, worship and so on, he then will be estranged from anyone else, and dislike to mix with anyone else. Even if he mixes with anyone else, he should do so just to have the advantage which returns upon his heart with soundness, rather than with

anything that may divert his heart from remembrance and worship (of Allaah). The traces of that mixing are seen well in our states; if one likes to stand at night (in prayer), he could not do that, because of his hardheartedness, and the heaviness of this mixing upon the heart, not to mention heedlessness.

One may sit to speak with his companions, or go to visit so-and-so, or do one of the worldly deeds, with determination to stand at night (in prayer), or recite his daily portion of the Quran, or do any act of worship. However, after this mixing, his heart weakens, and he cannot stand (at night in prayer), nor worship nor recite the Quran, and further says: Tomorrow, Allaah willing, I will try once again. That is different from the state of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

Let us consider the state of the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, which was quite different from ours these days, and how he never wearied of worshipping his Lord. His deeds were regular; and he used to say: "*The deed that is the dearest to Allaah is that done regularly.*" [Muslim] His deeds in *Ramadhaan* were not different from his deeds at any other time. His deeds were constantly regular; and if *Ramadhaan* came, as one of the seasons of great forgiveness, he would strive more and more, in order to attain, as we have mentioned, the Night of *Al-Qadr*, obtain the prize of the Lord, and receive those benefits and advantages on those days where one approaches his Lord, and during the last ten days, those acts of worship would be increased to receive those mercies. For this reason, it is due on one to be in this very state in those days, i.e. the state of longing for worship.

4- To long for worship

After *Ramadhaan*, one should long for worship, whether he has come out after *Ramadhaan* as accepted, rejected, disappointed, lost, or in the same previous state before *Ramadhaan*, with neither standing (at night in prayer) nor (recitation of) Quran nor remembrance (of Allaah). In this case, everyone should entertain the feeling of longing for worship, for standing at the gate of Allaah The Almighty, for the sweetness of faith, for attachment to and approaching Allaah The Almighty, for

reassurance about and reliance on Allaah The Almighty. Those are the signs of love for and approach to Allaah The Almighty, which show that the states of the believers are like the state of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, they are always connected with Allaah The Almighty.

Those states should only be affected by what increases them in love, affection and longing for Allaah The Almighty, and for worshipping Him, feeling the sweetness of obedience and worship, remembrance and reliance (on Allaah The Almighty). Of course, one likes that his good state with Allaah The Almighty would survive, continue and increase (in strength), in which his heart feels constantly firm on the way of Allaah The Almighty, that it approaches the Hereafter and abstains from this world, that it likes to prepare to meet Allaah The Almighty, and hasten to depart to Him.

Those meanings enlighten the heart, and motivate one to strive (against oneself) and not to leave the gate of Allaah The Almighty regardless of his being a loser or negligent. He is inspired to strive regardless of his bad states that lead him to this world, children, property and living, and all other similar occupations which result in forgetfulness, heedlessness, and failure to fulfill what he has promised Allaah The Almighty, i.e. to remain in the good state in which he was in *Ramadhaan*.

So, one should long for obedience and worship, like to return to it, and be tranquil with those meanings, due to their good consequences. We, more often, hear that the righteous predecessors used to supplicate Allaah The Almighty for six months to accept (their deeds in) *Ramadhaan*, and a further six months to enable them to reach the coming *Ramadhaan*. They, thus, seemed to be attached to this approach to Allaah The Almighty. Whoever is in this state after *Ramadhaan*, and, at the same time, grows sad and grief-stricken whenever he returns to his previous bad states, indulgence, heedlessness, forgetfulness of promises with Allaah The Almighty, abstention from obedience and worship, and sleep from standing (at night in prayer) and striving (against oneself), then, two important things will be expected:

The first is to persist in standing at the gate of Allaah The Almighty, so that He would open for him the gates of obedience and worship once again, reward him for those good intentions, and approach to Allaah The Almighty.

The other is to attain what he has not attained in *Ramadhaan*. That is, to be pardoned (by Allaah). That is why they used to say continuously, "*O Allaah! Provide us with wellbeing, and pardon us*" for many days after *Ramadhaan*, thereby expecting the pardon of their Lord.

If he is not forgiven by the end of *Ramadhaan*, by virtue of fasting, standing (at night in prayer) and the Night of *Al-Qadr*, and all the other gates of forgiveness and emancipation from Hell, then, by virtue of the longing for obedience and worship, gratitude and grief over what passed, and beginning to fulfill his covenant with Allaah The Almighty, He may forgive him and open for him the gates of obedience and forgiveness.

Although the days of forgiveness and pardon may have passed away, one's attachment to them, reliance on them, grief over missing them, and beseeching his Lord The Almighty to open for him the gate of those acts of worship, and feeling their sweetness and returning to them, being accompanied by those good states, could cause Allaah The Almighty to pardon him, forgive him, emancipate him from Hell, prepare for him the way of the right direction once again, open for him the way to Him, take his hand to Him and strengthen him to endure those states.

Two important things to be done again by such a person:

- To start standing at night (in prayer) from the *'Eed* night:

The first step on the way which indicates that longing is to stand at night (in prayer) beginning from the *'Eed* night, regardless of such obstacles as one's spouse, property, children, visits, going and returning, eating and drinking. Those obstacles are not specific to this day only. They always cause one to turn back on his heels, and have their evil effects afterwards.

- To observe six fasts consecutively just after the day of *'Eed*:

This was shown by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, in his statement: *"The one who fasts **Ramadhaan**, and six of **Shawwaal** seems to have fasted perpetually."* [Muslim] Doing so indicates that he does not weary of fasting and that he longs for the days of *Ramadhaan*. Let him be careful, lest the devil comes to tell him: Would you observe six fasts of *Shawwaal* consecutively? This is indeed too much. Fast only Monday and Thursday! Fast a day and leave a day; or leave fasting on the days you will visit or be visited by your family and people. The devil then continues to whisper to him until he makes him leave that determination and abscond from this concern with worship and obedience, with the result that he would slacken and indulge, and *Shawwaal* would pass away without finishing those six fasts, saying: Tomorrow will be the first of *Thul-Qa'dah*, in order to relieve himself of those days. Such fasting and standing are the best manifestations of this deed.

We have already referred to the fact that a sign of a good deed being accepted is to be guided to do another good deed, and a sign of a good deed being rejected is to commit a misdeed after it. This is the implication of Ibn Rajab's statement in his *Lataa'if Al-Ma'aarif*, *"What could be worse than a misdeed committed after a good deed, which blights it! And what could be better than a good deed done after a misdeed to efface it! And the best of all is a good deed to be done after a good deed, to increase it, and bless its reward with Allaah The Almighty."*

One then needs to have this concept well-established in his mind, that is, to be guided to do a good deed after a good deed. That is to begin to fulfill his covenant with Allaah The Almighty. To be made successful to do a good deed means that if it is standing (at night in prayer), and one is made successful to keep standing (at night in prayer) after *Ramadhaan*, it indicates the acceptance of standing from him in *Ramadhaan*; and if it is fasting, and he is made successful to keep fasting after *Ramadhaan*, it indicates the acceptance of his fast; and the same applies to one's being made successful to give in charity, persist in *Thikr*, recite the Quran regularly in full, and approach it and reflect upon its meanings.

We have learnt how the believers come out in the state of meditation; how they fulfill their covenant with Allaah The Almighty once again; how they make a new beginning with Allaah The Almighty, the beginning to follow a right course on the journey to Allaah The Almighty; how they adhere to the obedience and worship of Allaah once again, and approach the Hereafter, abstain from this world, and learn how to be with Allaah The Almighty in a state in which they neither hesitate, nor retract, and to be, with Allaah The Almighty, in the best state expected by a believer, and to have longing for it with Allaah The Almighty. This means that one should not be like the evil slave, who fulfills once, retracts once, repents once, turns on his heels once, obeys once and disobeys once. Of course, if your child is in such a state, you will not approve of him. If the one serving you is in such a state as to obey you once and disobey you once, come late once, slacken once, and come on time once, then, in the end, you would dismiss him.

CHAPTER THREE

TO STAND STRAIGHT ON THE WAY OF ALLAAH AFTER RAMADHAAN

1- To fight the battle of gratitude:

- a- To stand (at night in prayer)
- b- To recite a fixed daily portion of the Quran
- c- To remember Allaah The Almighty

2- To give preference to the Hereafter over this world:

- a- To have short hopes in this world
- b- To hasten to do righteous deeds

3- To realize the signs of having love for Allaah:

- a- To give priority to love for Allaah The Almighty and His Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, over all beloved things
- b- To dislike the sins that Allaah The Almighty dislikes
- c- To be addicted to the Speech of Allaah The Almighty
- d- To grieve over missing your share from Allaah The Almighty
- e- To have love for and humble yourself towards the believers

To stand steadfast on the way of Allaah The Almighty after *Ramadhaan*

Since one knows now that the new promise he is to give to Allaah The Almighty is to begin to proceed towards Allaah The Almighty, and how he would fulfill this promise just after *Ramadhaan*, without delay or procrastination, the question to raise now is:

How could one proceed constantly towards Allaah The Almighty? How could he be firm in his response to the command of Allaah The Almighty, and the command of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*? How could he realize the concepts of striving (against himself)? How could this lead him to Allaah The

Almighty, and make him firm on His way? How could he stand steadfast and firm on his journey towards Allaah The Almighty?

No doubt, *Ramadhaan* has not come so that you would be a worshipper of Allaah The Almighty only in it and after it return to your previous way of remoteness, laziness and heedlessness. But *Ramadhaan*, where the devils are chained and the gates of mercy are opened, should be an aid to the people of faith to have access to the Way of Allaah. Once they come out of *Ramadhaan*, they should stand straight on the way, constantly and regularly, and race each other in this way until they meet Allaah The Almighty. That is the way of the worshippers and those who love Allaah.

You now have to choose the state in which you should be: that is, to race in the way and love of Allaah The Almighty. We have mentioned some of the states of the Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, and how they raced in their deeds, how they raced in standing (at night in prayer), in spending their property and soul for the sake of Allaah The Almighty. Each of them did his best to be the first among the martyrs in the way of Allaah The Almighty, the first to offer the whole of his property to Allaah The Almighty, the first to stand at night (in prayer) regularly to Allaah The Almighty, the first to give in charity, remember (Allaah The Almighty), recite the Quran, seek knowledge, and attend the assemblies of remembrance: in sum, he sought how he would precede others to all of this.

When he learnt that Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): **{Race}** [Quran 57:21] he knew that he was the addressee, being required to be the first in it rather than to be sluggish and slow-moving, who has no sense to this issue, nor does it concern, pain or aggrieve him even in the least, nor does it stimulate him to weep and have a longing for Allaah The Almighty, to be the first to carry out hastily the commands of Allaah The Almighty. That is the issue on which one should meditate.

The present issue is: How to make steady progress on the way of Allaah The Almighty; how to race on the way of Allaah The Almighty; how to keep firm on His way until one reaches Him.

1- To fight the battle of gratitude:

Having been guided to obedience, worship, righteous deeds, acts of worship and emancipation from Hell, you came out with love for Allaah The Almighty who made you enabled you to do so successfully. He conferred upon you out of His mercy, bounty, generosity and forgiveness, at the time you see the wicked, dissolute, and disbelievers far from Allaah, and ignorant of His way, and how He neglected and abandoned them. Instead, He chose and selected you in order to be one of His devotees, one of His elite and those selected by Him, who approach Him, pray to Him, exalt Him, stand (at night in prayer) to Him, fast for His sake, and hasten to Him in doing good things. However, you leave all those favors, fall short of giving thanks for them, do not fulfill what is due on you, engage yourself in the perishable and transient world, and do not care about their Grantor who honored you with them.

That is why to give thanks to Allaah The Almighty is the first step required from the one who likes to stand straight on His way, because gratitude for the favors has, at least, two merits:

The first is that gratitude affirms the favor you have taken from Allaah The Almighty, and by gratitude, the favors increase in confirmation of the statement of Allaah The Almighty (which means): *{And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely Increase you [in favor].}* [Quran 14:7] It is a great favor to be made successful to proceed on the way of Allaah The Almighty, the gratitude for which affirms it, and racing in this way increases it. The denial of favors blights and removes them. That is indeed out of ingratitude, because He Says (what means): *{And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe.' }* [Quran 14:7]

This indicates that ingratitude is the denial of those favors. He informs people that the favors opened for them by Allaah The Almighty will be taken from them. We have mentioned that Allaah The Almighty opens the favors for man, gives and grants him, honors him, amends his affairs as he likes from Allaah The Almighty, and gives him again and again. He does this in expectation for His slave to give Him thanks for that; and yet, He receives from His slave nothing but the denial of those favors, which he does not deserve. Then, the blessing of those favors is blighted, and the slave returns to his previous conditions, if not worse.

Furthermore, gratitude for those favors increases them. For this reason, after *Ramadhaan*, one is in dire need of it, because Allaah The Almighty made a mention of its significance in His Saying (what means): ***{And few of My servants are grateful.}*** [Quran 34:13]

It seems as if the devil learnt that, as shown from his story in the verse (which means): ***{[Satan] said, "Because You have put me in error, I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path. Then I will come to them from before them and from behind them and on their right and on their left, and You will not find most of them grateful [to You]."}}*** [Quran 7:16-17]

Gratitude then is one of the most important affairs which the devil does his best to corrupt for the believers, so that none among the people of faith would be grateful to Allaah The Almighty. For this reason, he stands in wait for them, and cuts them off this way as stated by Allaah The Almighty in His Saying (what means): ***{[Satan] said, "Because You have put me in error, I will surely sit in wait for them on Your straight path.}"}*** [Quran 7:16]

That is, once *Ramadhaan* is over in which they have begun to proceed on the Way of Allaah The Almighty, he stands across this way, so that no one could pass.

But some pass. Who are they?

It is only the grateful ones who pass, about whom Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{And few of My servants are grateful.}*** [Quran 34:13] It is those who

keep firm on gratitude, for which they spend what may make firm and increase the favor from Allaah The Almighty.

For this reason, after *Ramadhaan*, the believers need to be careful lest the 'Eed, mutual visits, eating and drinking, and any possible thing may impede gratitude, make the heart heedless, and further weaken the faith and worship which one had during *Ramadhaan*. Even if after *Ramadhaan*, one enjoys mutual visits, eating and drinking, and so on, he should be attentive and fulfill the promise he gave to Allaah The Almighty, by sustaining the deeds of faith and obedience.

The other merit is that the continuation of the deeds of faith and obedience after *Ramadhaan* indicates that they have been accepted in *Ramadhaan*. No doubt, if one, after *Ramadhaan*, is made successful to worship, and guarded to do it, it indicates that he is in the care of Allaah The Almighty, and that Allaah The Almighty guarded him, made him successful, and accepted his acts of worship. If ones acts of worship are accepted in *Ramadhaan*, the indication of their acceptance is to be made successful to worship after that. But if they are not accepted in *Ramadhaan*, the indication of rejection and deprivation is to be deprived of them after *Ramadhaan* once again.

The deeds of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, were regular. That is, his deeds were at the same level whether in *Sha'baan*, *Ramadhaan*, or at any other time, except that whenever it was the seasons of forgiveness, he would strive more. That is why the believer, during those days, is in a fight with the devil.

The battle of gratitude:

This battle requires one to strictly guard the promise he gave to Allaah The Almighty: to persist in his fasting, remembrance (of Allaah), recitation of the Quran, and to sustain the same good manners of spending, striving, sense of the close departure to the Hereafter and abstinence in this world. He should approach his Lord with full devotion, love, attachment, and imploring Him to guard him, make him successful, and not to leave him weary in those days. If he continues, for

a long time, in the state of remoteness from worship, weariness, and slackness of his previous determination, by no means would he be able to return to it once again!

We have already mentioned in a Prophetic *Hadeeth*, that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "*Disgraced and a loser is the one who witnesses Ramadhaan without being forgiven.*" [At-Tabaraani] [Al-Albaani: *Saheeh*]

If he came out with forgiveness in *Ramadhaan*, then, forgiveness, as we have already mentioned, would be the first thing for which gratitude is required. If he attained emancipation from Hell, and the mercy of being forgiven, then, the traces of this gratitude should, inevitably, be visible on him. I mean those traces that the devil seeks to corrupt in him, until he leads the believers to deviate from the way of Allaah The Almighty. What are those traces?

Traces of gratitude:

a- Offering voluntary night prayer:

Offering voluntary night prayer is the first trace the devil endeavors to corrupt for the believers, in order to take them out of the way of gratitude. If the devil succeeds to corrupt this standing for you at night (in prayer), and your fixed portion of the Quran to be recited regularly, his problem with you will end, and he will be relieved of you, because he would know that you would have no power to resist that. If one's night is good with Allaah The Almighty, this, without doubt, will return with good during his day, which will be good accordingly. The same is true of worship: the devil puts obstacles in the way of man during those days so that he would move away from acts of worship and acts of obedience, relieve himself of some of them, procrastinate in some of them, postpone some of them,

and leave some of them and so on until he comes down to the lowest level and returns to his old ways once again.

After *Ramadhaan*, one is afflicted by schizophrenia, and reversion to his previous bad ways, as manifested in the abandonment of standing at night (in prayer). The devil first thinks of making him sleep the whole night, and causing him not to stand once again (in prayer) to Allaah The Almighty. When it is night, he says (to himself), *"I will sleep only a little and then I will get up to stand (in prayer) before dawn."* This is one of the devilish machinations that we always succumb to. However, such a person neither stands nor prays. This is why, it is of great significance to fulfill the promise to Allaah The Almighty as shown in the *Hadeeth* narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, in which he said, *"My beloved (the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) advised me to do three (things), which I should never give up as long as I survive: to perform the Witr Prayer before I go to bed, to observe three fasts monthly, and to perform the Dhuha Prayer."* [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

The one who is careful, keen on, and watchful of his Hereafter, loves and approaches his Lord The Almighty, and likes to offer acts of obedience continuously and regularly. Nothing prevents from his Beloved The Almighty; he is always attached to Him, draws closer to Him, and loves Him, so much that his soul would perish if he is kept away from approaching and loving Him. He is aided by his good reliance on Him. The good example for him to follow in this respect is the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and his noble state. He used to show gratitude, recite (the Quran), fast, stand (at night in prayer) and give in charity, not only in *Ramadhaan*, as if the Lord of *Ramadhaan* is not the same Lord of all months. It is the deed that is done regularly which is the dearest to Allaah The Almighty.

Let man be careful of this point, because it is related to his fulfillment of the new promise with Allaah The Almighty. Giving up standing (at night in prayer) is the first calamity that afflicts one in his heart and deeds, and causes him to fail in his

pledge with Allaah The Almighty. Why has he relapsed after *Ramadhaan*, and not been helped to stand (at night in prayer)? What do you think he did? What is the reason that in *Ramadhaan*, he stood, performed *Tahajjud* (voluntary night prayer) and spent the whole night in prayer and after that he did not do so? What did he do which caused Allaah The Almighty to deprive him of that? Verily, standing at night (in prayer), and the pleasure of talking privately to the Lord belong to the deeds and happiness of Paradise, rather than of this world. The world has its happiness whose petitioners seek to attain in this life. But standing at night (in prayer), the pleasure of talking privately to and approaching Allaah The Almighty, singing His praises, supplicating and love do not belong to this world's happiness, bliss and pleasure, in so much as to the pleasure and the happiness of the Hereafter and Paradise.

This gift is given by Allaah The Almighty only to those whom He loves and makes stand in front of Him. The question to raise then is: Why did He make them stand only in *Ramadhaan*? Was their standing false in *Ramadhaan*? Did they stand in *Ramadhaan* without love and approach to Allaah The Almighty? Did they stand in *Ramadhaan* only because of the presence of people, and after it, when they became alone with their Lord, they lost the reason for that, as regards their love for, attachment and approach to their Lord, or the feeling of the near coming of the Hereafter, and the close departure to Allaah The Almighty? Do they not have confidence in the merits of standing at night (in prayer) and approaching it that were mentioned by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*?

Reflection upon those concepts is the first step to remove these calamities. No doubt, the removal of these calamities will contribute to the solution of most problems. The solution is that which we have already mentioned to be done in *Ramadhaan*. Do you remember what we said in this issue? "*If I am to attend another scene with the Messenger of Allaah, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, Allaah will see what I will do.*" [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim] It is the way one should fulfill his promise with Allaah. Let him say, "*Now, this calamity has occurred after Ramadhaan. I should then fulfill the pledge.*" Thus, he has to fulfill his promise

with Allaah The Almighty, to show his Lord The Almighty what he is going to do in this case of striving against himself. He must get accustomed to longing for and standing in front of Allaah The Almighty, making his principle, in this time, not to sleep until he performs the *Witr* Prayer, and stand (at night in prayer) as he used to do in front of Allaah The Almighty. Thereby, he would feel the return to Allaah The Almighty, the sweetness of faith and his being one of those who stand at night (in prayer) to Allaah The Almighty, who spend their nights with their Lord in private talk, supplication, remembrance of, and approach to Allaah The Almighty, as referred to by Him in His statement (which means):

- ***{They arise from [their] beds; they supplicate their Lord in fear and aspiration, and from what We have provided them, they spend.}*** [Quran 32:16]
- ***{They used to sleep but little of the night.}*** [Quran 51:17]

If this aspect of his life is righteous after *Ramadhaan*, all of his states will become righteous accordingly, because the one whose night is good, no doubt, his day is good accordingly; and he, whose day is good, the traces of this are reflected on his night; and one's bad night indicates his bad day, as pointed out by scholars.

Undoubtedly, it is your concern how to fulfill your promise: "*Allaah will see what I am going to do. I will not sleep this night.*" Let nothing prevent you from standing after the '*Ishaa*' Prayer, to guard your night. Of course, you will receive the devil's whispers on your right, left, front and back, in order to cut you off; and you will encounter obstacles. The devil will say to you after the '*Ishaa*' Prayer, "*You have an appointment or a visit to pay; you have such-and-such things to do*", and so on until he wastes your night. He will whisper to you to delay the standing (in prayer) until a short time before dawn, where you could get up and try to pray. Thus, the night will be lost, followed by many nights, one after the other, until one slackens and finds himself in this bad state. In the end, he will weep for what he has missed, if there is an opportunity to weep, because he will come to such a stage in which there will be no weeping, because the heart will be harsh, the eyes dry, and he will no longer be able to feel his great loss. So, let his principle and standard be,

"*Allaah will see what I am going to do.*" Let him not sleep until he finishes his fixed portion of the night prayer that he regularly offers.

b- The Quran

Since giving up the Quran always accompanies abstention from standing at night (in prayer), it is the next trace of gratitude that the devil seeks to corrupt for the people of faith.

Those are the severe calamities that one feels after *Ramadhaan*: that is to be distracted from the Quran and weary to recite his portion of the Quran that he regularly recites, and his relationship with it is about to be severed day after day. If he recites something thereof today, he may not be able to do the same tomorrow, and so on. Thus, the second point to repair, which is related to the heart and deeds, is the issue of the Quran.

You should recite your portion of the Quran, at night or during the day. Never ever leave it. Let no day come upon you until you recite your daily portion of the Quran, meditate on your deeds, and how to fulfill your promise with Allaah The Almighty. One should recite his regular portion of the Quran, and recite on the current day what he missed yesterday.

If one fails to show his Lord what he is going to do in the standing at night (in prayer), he should show Him what he is going to do in His Quran and speech. That is one of the greatest ways to amend the heart, the mind, the brain, the body and time. Let him say, "*Allaah The Almighty will see what I am going to do in the Quran.*" Let him, during his night and day, as long as he is free, be bound to finish the Book of Allaah every three days. If he finishes reciting it every three days, the heart will become active once again, blessings will dwell once again in the heart, and the heart will become strong enough to resist the diseases of lust and the devil's whispers, and self-obsessions. In this way, the heart will seem strong and firm with that blessed speech, and take from it a share of guidance and healing, as confirmed by Allaah The Almighty in His statement (which means): ***{Say, "It is, for those who believe, a guidance and cure."}*** [Quran 41:44] It is with this guidance he

receives that he will be able to resist the devil, sleep and laziness, and fulfill his promise to Allaah The Almighty. The solution then with which one has to endeavor to fulfill his promise with Allaah The Almighty is to be bound to (the Quran) for three days as of his present moment, without delay, and remember his battle with the devil.

If the devil says to him: *"Wait after this day, delay it to night, let it be after the 'Ishaa', Allaah willing"*, he should hearken only to the speech of Allaah The Almighty, and hasten to implement it, in response to His statement (which means):

- *{And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous.}* [Quran 3:133]
- *{Race toward forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden whose width is like the width of the heavens and earth, prepared for those who believed in Allaah and His messengers.}* [Quran 57:21]
- *{The last of it is musk. So for this let the competitors compete.}* [Quran 83:26]

Those Quranic verses indicate that once he hears the words of Allaah The Almighty, he should hasten to carry out His commands, in order not to be cut off by obstacles and occupations, and what he receives from the devil's whispers and harm which cut the way on him to Allaah The Almighty. The Quran then is your second medicine, after standing (at night in prayer), therewith you show your Lord what you are going to do, so that it would be your means and way to restore your happiness, power and psychological faculties, as well as your guidance and cure, as confirmed by Allaah The Almighty Who Says (what means):

- *{Say, "It is, for those who believe, guidance and cure."}* [Quran 41:44]
- *{[This is] a blessed Book which We have revealed to you.}* [Quran 38:29]

Whatever you take from it, you would receive nothing other than blessing, guidance and cure, as we have already mentioned. So, if you are bound to that in those days, in order to return to your Lord The Almighty, and reconfirm in your heart the passion for worship and love, strengthen yourself, take blessing, activity,

guidance, light and cure from those diseases that have afflicted man in those days: then, your way is to be bound, for those three days, to finish reading the speech of Allaah The Almighty in full. This gives you the impression of a new revival, provision from Allaah The Almighty, and blessing, with which you would start once again to proceed on your straight way. In this way, righteousness would start to descend upon your heart, so much that it would entertain neither trouble, nor worry, nor hesitation in your way towards Allaah The Almighty. In other words, one would neither turn back, nor revert, nor retreat; on the contrary, one would become firm, with the signs of guidance visible on him, along with the glad tidings of acceptance and approach to him on the part of Allaah The Almighty. One should do his best in those days, in fulfillment of his promise with Allaah The Almighty. No doubt, he will witness the good consequences of fulfilling his promise.

Try it, to show your Lord The Almighty what you are going to do after the '*Ishaa*' as regards prayer, standing (at night) and approach, or His speech, in terms of approaching it. In both cases, you would see yourself a new slave with Allaah The Almighty who began to revive those hearts once again by the descent of this relief, as mentioned by Him.

c- Remembrance of Allaah The Almighty

Remembrance of Allaah The Almighty is the next step which confirms the gratitude for the favor of proceeding on His way. For this reason, heedlessness is among the most important snares in which the devil causes the believers to fall after *Ramadhaan*. Thus, you find yourself heedless of considering your state as you were earlier, and there is no strength and no power save in Allaah The Almighty. Where is the Quran? Where are the morning and evening *Athkaar*? Many long hours elapse during which you do not remember your Lord The Almighty, but rather become heedless of the state in which you were. The devil occupies you so much as you see when you sit in seclusion with your Lord and discover how your day elapses in vain, on which you do nothing, even what you used to do before *Ramadhaan*.

Of course, you see how your day skips by, and your night is about to skip by, and the heart gets so tired that it fails to resume the way toward Allaah The Almighty, and rather relies on sleep or any deed of heedlessness.

Meanwhile, the devil comes to you, and tries to occupy you with things that may divert your heart and mind, with the signs of that being visible on your tongue, heart and mind.

He stimulates the heart to remember such-and-such, such-and-such, and such-and-such, until the heart becomes corrupt and possessed by heedlessness.

The next step to encounter this state of heedlessness after showing your Lord The Almighty your standing (at night in prayer) and recitation of the Quran, is to show Him that you are one of those who remember Him more often.

This good state is mentioned by Allaah The Almighty in His Statement (which means): ***{O you who have believed, let not your wealth and your children divert you from remembrance of Allaah. And whoever does that – then those are the losers.}*** [Quran 63:9] The Quranic verse confirms the concept of loss. If one is heedless of, and distracted from Allaah The Almighty, no doubt, he will see the loss, failure, recession and retreat of his states, and the slackening of his affairs with Allaah The Almighty. The result is that he would not be able to gather his concerns together, or even focus his heart on Allaah The Almighty, or find his mind pure, in a state of approach to Allaah The Almighty. That is because he sees his heart and mind fully occupied by worldly affairs, children, property, his past and future states, journey, study, and so on.

Two causes lie behind our concern with this state:

The first is that remembrance (of Allaah) always guards the heart, as stated by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, in connection with the remembrance of Allaah The Almighty: *"Its example is like a man after whom the enemies are running (to seize), until when he comes to an impregnable fort, he fortifies himself from them."* [At-Tirmithi] Similarly, man is fortified from the devil

by the remembrance of Allaah The Almighty. If this remembrance is even no more than words repeated by the tongue and adornment, this is better than the state in which he is heedless, by heart and tongue, of Allaah The Almighty. It may be that the remembrance of Allaah The Almighty by the tongue causes the heart to join it, so much that both the heart and the tongue come to feel the meanings and sweetness of remembrance of and approach to Allaah The Almighty. In this way, the believer would rise in rank and be fortified as he demands from Allaah The Almighty, *"like a man after whom the enemies are running (to seize), until when he comes to an impregnable fort, he fortifies himself from them."*

One may remember his Lord most with the statement *"There is no strength and no power save in Allaah"*; it is one of the treasures of Paradise, as mentioned by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*. If one feels its meaning, without doubt, it will protect him from the evil scheme of the devil, guard him against his whispers, and help him do what he likes and hopes of good deeds and acts of worship. The more one says it, i.e. *"There is no strength and no power save in Allaah"* after his remembrance of Allaah The Almighty with the help of *Tasbeeh, Tahleel and Takbeer* of Allaah The Almighty, and invocation of blessings and peace of Allaah upon the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, the more his heart would be joined (in love) for Him.

The other cause is to prevent himself from slackening and distraction of the heart. That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, *"The one upon whom the morning comes, with the Hereafter being his only concern, Allaah The Almighty gathers all of his affairs together for him, makes him fully satisfied, and the world comes to him in willing submission."* [Ahmad and At-Tirmithi] How could one turn all his concerns into only one? It is this one concern with which he should do his best to have in the heart, approach his Lord The Almighty, gather together all his affairs on it, and keep away from heedlessness, evil intentions, and worldly occupations which cause him to forget the Hereafter and readiness to meet Allaah The Almighty. Failing to abstain from this world, and rather abstaining from and being heedless of the Hereafter, not

knowing that he may be seized on his current day or night, with his day and night being the last to live, will cause one to leave the world in a very bad state.

This is the significance of remembrance (of Allaah The Almighty), and saying, more often, *"There is no strength and no power save in Allaah"*. It is one of the statements of *Thikr*, with which the heart gathers, one brings together all his affairs and approaches Allaah The Almighty, and turns all his concerns into only one, i.e. his concern for the Hereafter. No doubt, the most important concern is to stand before Allaah The Almighty, just as wanted by Him The Almighty. He, upon whom the morning comes, with the world being his main concern, Allaah The Almighty disperses all his affairs from him.

Thus, see the state which you are in: that is, he, upon whom the morning comes, with the world being his main concern, no doubt, Allaah The Almighty disperses all his affairs from him, makes him see nothing except poverty, and he will take from this world only what is decreed by Allaah for him. This state shows you why your affairs scatter from you, and you come to see only poverty and fear of tomorrow and today, and how you would do. Thereby the believers are distracted from their Hereafter, their Lord The Almighty, their remembrance (of Allaah) and lack the purity of hearts and minds to receive those meanings from the Light of Allaah The Almighty that is cast into those believing and loving hearts. This is stated by Allaah The Almighty Who Says (what means): *{And thus We have revealed to you an inspiration of Our command. You did not know what is the Book or [what is] faith, but We have made it a light by which We guide whom We will of Our servants. And indeed, [O Muhammad], you guide to a straight path - The Path of Allaah.}* [Quran 42:52-53]

2- To give preference to the Hereafter over the world

After one knows how to strive against himself in terms of gratitude, it should be known to him that to stand straight and firm on the Way of Allaah The Almighty

has another sign that one should detect in himself. That is, to abscond from the abode of delusion, and rather incline to the Hereafter, prepare for meeting Allaah The Almighty, engage in amending oneself to be qualified for meeting Allaah The Almighty, and follow a right course on that way until he meets his Lord The Almighty.

No one stands on a right course as such but the repentant one as stated in the verse (which means): *{So remain on a right course as you have been commanded, [you] and those who have turned back with you [to Allaah].}* [Quran 11:112] It is only the repentant person who could remain on the right course. The first sign and feature to distinguish those repentant ones is that they abscond from the abode of delusion and rather incline to the abode of eternity, and give preference to the Hereafter over this world. Nevertheless, what prevents man from doing so?

a- Having extensive ambitions in this worldly life:

What prevents one from this disinclination and preference is having extensive ambitions in this world, and no certainty of the swift movement and departure to Allaah The Almighty. That is one of the most important means that the devil utilizes to corrupt the believers, and make them deviate from obedience to the Lord of the worlds. He says to him, *"Allaah willing, next year you will be better."* The present year is the first thing to be lost by the believer because of that, as he comes out reliant on the assumption that the next *Ramadhaan*, he will do such-and-such. Thus, his deeds are lost. Who has guaranteed that you would not be seized (by death) during that period? It is that which the believer should think about in those days. That is the absence of caution about death, by saying: No, I will not die today. I am still young. Tomorrow, Allaah willing, I will do such and such, or I will do start from the coming week. Allaah willing, from the next year, I will try.

Were he to think that his night/day is the last one he would be alive (in this world), for sure, his state would be quite different. He would decide to end, from this day, all things that may blacken his face in the presence of Allaah The Almighty, and conclude his day with repentance, drawing close to Allaah The Almighty,

amending what was, and compensating what he could do of deeds that he may have missed, until when he meets his Lord The Almighty, He will be pleased with him for what he did.

So, let no one rely on his youth, that there is still a respite in his lifetime to come after youth, Allaah willing. Such a person seems not to think that he would be seized by death, as stated by scholars. If he looks at the old men in his mosque, he will find them few in number, as if he says (to himself) that death attacks the youth faster than the elderly. That is, it is the young men who pass away more than the old men. Where are your friends and companions? They have been arrested by death and buried underneath the earth; however, you have not been affected by that.

Has death not seized any of your young brothers so that thereby you would take consideration and have this view about yourself? If you rely on your health, and that you could do such-and-such, and that there is still a respite in your lifetime, and there remains something of health and power, it may be that death would overtake you, or, at least, disease would catch you, given that disease is always the herald of death, after which you would move to Allaah The Almighty. Having no long-life hope is still the unsolved problem. If the devil comes to you to say that you will do such-and-such the next year, or even tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow, or the next week, or when you return from your journey, or when you recover from this disease, or when you solve that problem, or when such-and-such takes place: then, say to him, No, ***{Fear Allaah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow.}*** [Quran 59:18] That is, tomorrow is the nearest day to you in the sight of Allaah The Almighty, on which you may leave for the Hereafter, and had there been any day nearer, it would have been mentioned by Allaah. It is mentioned in this indefinite form because of its great significance and difficulty: ***{fear Allaah . And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow.}*** That is, do you know this tomorrow? It is a very significant and dangerous day, on which it is due upon everyone to prepare for the meeting.

It is that state which you should see in yourself, if you are heedless of the remembrance of death, and disobey the command of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, *"Remember the conqueror of pleasures."* [At-Tirmithi] If one remembers death, what is far will seem near to him, and what is near will seem far from him, and he will come to think about the swift departure, which develops within himself the fear of the bad states in which he is. Thereupon, he will try to repent of them, seek the forgiveness of Allaah, retract, give up wrongness, and prepare to meet Allaah The Almighty, for fear of Him.

He should then get rid of his wrongdoings from today in between him and Allaah, and in between him and people, in response to the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, *"Whoever has committed an injustice against his brother, he should make his brother free him from it today before (the coming of a day on which) there will be neither a dinar nor a dirham."* [Al-Bukhaari] Thus, if he concludes his day or night as such, he will conclude it with something therewith he could meet his Lord The Almighty, because he could not meet Him with an injustice due upon him whether between him and Allaah, or between him and people.

For this reason, the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, always clarified the case of hopes for a long life by saying: *"It is incumbent upon the Muslim, who has anything to bequeath, not to spend two nights without having his bequest written and kept by the side of his head."* [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim] Here, the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, clarifies the extent of hope of everyone. That is, the believer should have no hope in this world, as stated by the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: *"Be in this world like a stranger or a wayfarer"*, and as said by Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him: *"If the morning comes upon you, then, do not wait (to live) until the evening; and if the evening comes upon you, do not wait (to live) until the morning (of the coming day)."* [Al-Bukhaari]

Strive then during your day, and if you are granted (a life of) a night, then, thank Allaah for it, and regard it a new lifetime which you hope to return to if you die; and similarly, if you are at night and then live until the coming morning, you should then thank Allaah for it. You should strive during that day or night, because it may be the last one you live; and if you are granted, in your lifetime, a new night or day, thank Allaah for (enabling you to do good on it) that were you to go to Allaah The Almighty, you would wish for this night or day. That is because Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{And spend [in the way of Allaah] from what We have provided you before death approaches one of you and he says, 'My Lord, if only You would delay me for a brief term so I would give charity and be among the righteous.'}*** [Quran 63:10]

When the angel of death comes to him, he says: Delay me for even a day, so that I would repent and return to Allaah. But he says: All your days have been consumed, and no single day is remaining. He says: Then, delay me for even an hour. He says: All your hours have been consumed and no single hour is remaining as stated by Allaah who Says (what means): ***{when death comes to one of them, he says, 'My Lord, send me back that I might do righteousness in that which I left behind.'}*** [Quran 23:99-100] If this day/night is granted to you, it should be the day you will hope for if you go to Allaah The Almighty. If Allaah The Almighty gave you this day/night, then, what would you do in it?

Suppose you had gone to Allaah The Almighty, and said: Give me a respite for a day or night to repent and return (to Allaah The Almighty), and it was said to you: Take this night or day; and then you have come to this world once again: What would you do in them? Your bad conduct today is to waste the night and day and then return to Allaah The Almighty to say: Delay me for a night or a day, thereupon it will be said to him: We have delayed you, and you have done nothing.

For this reason, the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: ***"Pray like the one who is going to leave (the world)."*** [Ahmad and Ibn Maajah] When one of them was asked to lead the prayer, he rejected and said, *"I will not*

lead you in prayer." On asking him pressingly, he led them in prayer and then said, *"If I lead you in this prayer, I then will not lead you in prayer any longer."* It was said to him, *"Then, does it occur to your mind, when assuming the prayer, that you will (live until you) perform a prayer after it?"* This is hoping for a long life. We seek refuge with Allaah The Almighty from hope of a long life which always wastes the best of deeds, when you assume the prayer, thinking that you would perform another prayer, without doubt, you will lose the reward of this prayer. You engage yourself, and come out to the market, your house, your children, your property, and so on, and say: Allaah willing, in the next prayer, I will try.

That is not a real prayer in so much as distraction and whispers, where one does not taste the sweetness of faith and approach to Allaah The Almighty. It is within this context that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: *"Pray like the one who is going to leave (the world)."* [Ahmad and Ibn Maajah] That is, pray, having the assumption that you are going to leave this world with this prayer. That is your end in which you should conclude your life. For this reason, if the devil comes to tell you that in the next year you will do so-and-so, say (to yourself): *"Pray like the one who is going to leave (the world)."*

Muhammad Abu Habeeb, may Allaah be pleased with him, – one of the righteous predecessors – used to say to his wife every night, *"If I die, then, send to so-and-so to wash me, and to so-and-so to shroud me, and to so-and-so to do such-and-such..."* She was asked, *"Did he see a vision that he would die?"* She said, *"No, but every night he did so."*

It was the habit of anyone of the righteous predecessors to answer, in reply to the question why he did not sleep, *"I feel afraid lest death would take me aback."* That is, he feared lest death would catch him by surprise at night while being in the very state in which he might be.

Thus, one should be in a state which brings about the good Pleasure of Allaah The Almighty with him, and leads to his salvation (from His punishment). *"If Allaah loves a slave, He then will use him."* it was said, *"What is intended by using him?"*

The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "*He guides him to do a righteous deed and then causes him to die on it.*" [Ahmad and At-Tirmithi] No doubt, one does not know when he will die and go to Allaah The Almighty. So, he should be always doing righteous deeds, until when death approaches him, Allaah The Almighty then uses him in His service that He approves of for him, therewith to conclude his deeds, so that it would be the conclusion of happiness with Allaah The Almighty.

b- Love for the world

No doubt, love for the world is the cause of the long-life hope we are suffering from. To love the world means to be attached to it; to one's property, residence, family, children, vehicle, and material benefits. The more one loves the things in the world, the more he gets attached to them; and whenever he feels the bitterness of leaving them, he tries to resist that departure. He indeed fears to leave them, and dislikes to keep away from the familiar things he likes. Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{But you prefer the worldly life, While the Hereafter is better and more enduring.}* [Quran 87:16-17] That is, you prefer what is despicable and perishable to enduring permanent good in the presence of Allaah The Almighty. If the idea of death occurs to the mind of such a person, he soon drives it away from himself, because he does not like that cause which keeps him away from the things he likes and is familiar with in this world. For this reason, the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "*What do I have to do with this world?*" [At-Tirmithi] "*Nay! My similitude is like a traveler who has sought the shade of a tree (for a short time) and then gone on and left it.*" No doubt, if his heart gets attached to anything in this world, he will like it; and if he likes it, he will dislike to leave it. To dislike to leave that thing means to dislike to meet Allaah The Almighty, i.e. to dislike death which hastens the meeting with Allaah The Almighty, because he has no longing for Allaah The Almighty, nor for meeting Him.

Even if he remembers death and the lamp of faith flourishes in his breast, he will procrastinate and say, "*Allaah willing, tomorrow...when I grow old... when I finish*

the ceremonies of this marriage... when I finish that job...when I finish this study, I will do such-and-such." Being so, he does not know that if an occupation is opened to him in this world, it brings about ten further occupations.

In no way would the world come to him one day to say, *"You are a kind man. Leave this world and what it contains this day, or in those days, and rather be fully devoted to Allaah The Almighty."* Neither this world would say so, nor would his soul, which loves the world, help him do so, nor would his heedlessness of the Hereafter and of the meeting with Allaah The Almighty aid him to achieve anything thereof.

The states of the hearts in this world and after *Ramadhaan*

People, in this respect, are of three divisions:

- The first represents the one who has a long-life hope, is fully indulged in this world, heedless of the Hereafter, does not remember death and the departure to Allaah, and rather dislikes to remember death and departure to Him The Almighty. This is because he is immersed in (the pleasures of) this world, indulges in it, is busy in gathering and accumulating its pleasures, or because he is so occupied by the world and forgetful of the Hereafter, and heedless of the movement to Allaah The Almighty. This is recognized, among scholars, by indulging in the world and becoming heedless of remembering death and meeting Allaah The Almighty. At the same time, whoever dislikes death, its mention and talk about it, because it will separate him from the world he likes, and from his family, property, children, the hopes he has in it, and what he will accumulate in it, and how he will gather all things in it, for him it is difficult to remember death, and more difficult to remember his movement to Allaah The Almighty. He is of those who dislike to meet Allaah The Almighty, and whoever dislikes to meet Allaah The Almighty, no doubt, Allaah The Almighty dislikes to meet him accordingly.

The second is the one who repents to Allaah The Almighty. The person who repents to Allaah The Almighty dislikes to remember death, not because he dislikes to meet Allaah The Almighty, but because he dislikes to meet Allaah The Almighty in the very state in which he is, and rather does his best to prepare himself, perfect his repentance, and prepare himself for the best, until when he meets his beloved, The Almighty, he will meet Him in the very good state in which he likes to meet Him.

This differs from the one who indulges in this world in the fact that he likes to meet Allaah The Almighty, even though he dislikes to meet Him in this bad state. This is the sign of this approaching the one who likes to meet Allaah The Almighty, which you should see in yourself, and get ready for what is better than it. That is, to prepare yourself entirely for the meeting with Allaah The Almighty, strive to do what Allaah The Almighty likes, obtain the complete provision that conveys him to Allaah The Almighty, and preoccupy himself with what puts him in the best state in which he could meet his Lord The Almighty. Otherwise, he will join the one who indulges in this world, who is heedless and dislikes to meet Allaah The Almighty, loves this world, dislikes death, and wants to abide in this world and obtain its benefits simultaneously.

Unless the repentant person is in such a state as to say that he has repented and come out of *Ramadhaan* on repentance, righteous deeds, readiness to meet Allaah The Almighty, standing straight on His commands, hastening to and racing toward good until he draws near Allaah The Almighty, he then will join the one who indulges in this world.

Nevertheless, love for the world and love for Allaah The Almighty are like water and air which could never gather together in one container; as much as one of them gets in, the other gets out. One could not claim that he loves Allaah The Almighty at the time he loves this world, as much as he feels afraid of losing it, is eager to collect its benefits, and becomes sad when it decreases or is consumed, or if he has no fortune in it, or fails to collect it. No doubt, this world and love for Allaah The

Almighty never gather in the heart of a slave, because if love of Allaah The Almighty enters the heart, Allaah The Almighty renders despicable the world in the sight of the righteous believers, and clarifies to them that it is but an amusement and diversion as He Says (what means): *{Know that the life of this world is but amusement and diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children}* [Quran 57:20]

Not to mention agriculture, cars, buildings, property and landscapes which you know. No doubt, in no way could love for those worldly pleasures and love for Allaah The Almighty gather together in the heart of the believer.

The third is the thankful person, and how few they are! It is those who like to meet Allaah The Almighty, because the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: *"Whoever likes to meet Allaah, Allaah likes to meet him."* [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim] He likes to come out of the abode of difficulty to be in the presence of the Lord of the Worlds, The Almighty. He only wants to be in the presence of his Lord The Almighty.

That is a high degree that one could seldom think about. Almost everyone thinks about what he will do and gain tomorrow; when he will travel, where he will do so-and-so, and what he will present. But he never says, one day, *"Tomorrow, I will go to Allaah."* What has he put forth and delayed? With what would he meet Allaah The Almighty? For what would his Lord The Almighty hold him accountable?

Two states only are characteristic of the righteous believers: to be repentant, and to love to meet Allaah The Almighty. The state of the one who loves to meet Allaah The Almighty is higher, in which you see yourself having prepared yourself in expectation for it, while supplicating Allaah to meet Him in that good state.

Or, are you still one who indulges in this world and is heedless of the Hereafter, and of meeting Allaah The Almighty and, at the same time, dislikes death and dislikes to remember it? If he remembers it, he does not get ready for it and rather says, that he will do it when this journey is over, when he returns from this

journey, when this job is over, when he marries, when he consummates his marriage, when he finishes such-and-such, and when he does such-and-such. Amidst this long-life hope, behold! Death attacks him by surprise, thereupon he bites his fingers out of regret.

That is the very state you should think about. It is that state which drives one to abscond from the abode of delusion, and incline to the abode of endurance. That is the state of the faithful believers in relation to which the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: *"What do I have to do with this world? Nay! My similitude is like a traveler who has sought the shade of a tree (for a short time) and then gone on and left it."* [At-Tirmithi]

The people of this world are careless about that speech, because they are dipped and indulged in it, whether they love it, like to obtain its benefits, or fear losing it: in all cases, it should be known to them that the significance of this speech is to confirm that whoever wants the world, his way is the Hereafter; and whoever wants the Hereafter will obtain both the world and the Hereafter.

If you follow the way of Allaah The Almighty, O you who fear losing the world, without doubt, the world will come to you in willing submission, as stated by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, in his saying: *"He, upon whom the morning comes, with the Hereafter being his only concern, Allaah The Almighty instills faith in his heart, gathers all of his affairs together for him, and the world comes to him in willing submission."* [Ahmad and At-Tirmithi]

You will not miss the world whose loss is ours as well..and grieve for your failure to obtain its benefits. However, the matter is quite as Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{Whoever desires the reward of this world – then with Allaah is the reward of this world and the Hereafter.}*** [Quran 4:134]

The way of the reward of both the world and the Hereafter is the Lord Almighty, and love for Allaah The Almighty.

The world you are weeping for will come to you in willing submission. No soul shall die until it reaches the farthest end of the sustenance and term predestined for it. No soul shall come out of this world before it fulfills all that it has with Allaah The Almighty, as stated by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, in his saying: *"No doubt, sustenance pursues the man in the same way as does his death."* That is, it runs after him until he obtains it. All you have to do is to utilize the means of the Hereafter, and the correct means of the world so that you would obtain both the world and the Hereafter.

To hasten to righteous deeds

It is the state which the pious believers should see in themselves after *Ramadhaan* and do righteous deeds before moving to the days of righteousness and kindness during the season of *Hajj*. That is, to meditate on this important issue that the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, urged the believers to do, i.e. to hasten to do righteous deeds. To hasten here is to waste no time without doing a righteous deed before meeting the angel of death.

That is, as stated by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, *"Hasten to righteous deeds (before the coming of) six (afflictions)."* It is just like the other *Hadeeth* in which he said: *"Hasten to righteous deeds (before the coming of) six (evils)."* [At-Tirmithi] I mean *"the temptations which are like parts of the dark night during which one will be a believer/disbeliever in the morning and it is not after the evening that he will become a disbeliever/believer; and will sell his religion for a transitory worldly benefit."* [Muslim]

The previous *Hadeeth* clarifies this meaning well. You should hasten to do righteous deeds, because you have no power over your heart, O poor one, so that you may become a disobedient/believer in the morning, and it is not after the evening that you would become a believer/wicked. Who has control over his heart? Who could close his heart on faith? For this reason, the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, urged one to hasten to do those righteous deeds, for fear that this would befall him. But even, you seem to be sure of your faith, and

that, Allaah willing, you will pray, attend the coming *Ramadhaan* and do such-and-such good deeds. This is indeed the disillusionment we have already referred to in the *Hadeeth* mentioned above: "*Pray like the one who is going to leave (the world).*" [Ahmad and Ibn Maajah] [Al-Albaani: Hasan]

The Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said so only because he knew that meaning well.

The other meaning is clarified in his saying: "*Hasten with [good] deeds before six things take place: Do you wait but for prosperity that makes you oppressors; poverty that makes you forget; an ailment that corrupts you; old age which makes you senile; the Antichrist which is an absent evil waiting you; or the Hour, which is indeed the hardest and most bitter?*"

That is, what makes you think, O poor one, that when you are rich, you will be on the way of faith? What makes you think that when you are poor, you will be on the way of faith rather than suspicion, remoteness and objection to Allaah The Almighty? It may be that when Allaah The Almighty enriches you, you transgress and forget your Hereafter and religion and become indulged in the world, which is indeed the bad state of today. It may be that disease attacks you and takes you out of the righteous deeds you are doing, or that old age overtakes you and hinders you from doing righteous deeds, and the same is true of the Antichrist or the Hour (of Judgment). In other words, it may be that you are attacked by afflictions, whether they are private or public, which may take you out of the concept of faith, the fulfillment of worship and piety, and return to Allaah The Almighty; or, in other words, that may keep you away from the Light of Allaah The Almighty.

Every time you meet a worldly desire, it wastes from you one of your acts of worship. Then, what do you see if you encounter a fairly severe adversity, or any such thing which takes you out of worship? If you fail in the small desire thereby you are tried, then, what do you think of the great or somewhat formidable adversities? No doubt, you see those failing in these tests to Allaah The Almighty. For this reason, the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, said: "*Hasten to do*

righteous deeds." [At-Tirmithi] The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, further said: "*Seize five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your illness, your leisure before your preoccupation, your wealth before your poverty and your life before your death.*" [Al-Baghawi] [Al-Haafith Ibn Hajar: *Saheeh*]

The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, clarifies this meaning in your resistance to the devil. You are required to see that those deeds, those breaths you take today, and those times constitute your lifetime about which you will be questioned. So, you should utilize all of this before you are impeded from it, from the righteous deed, from repentance, from the Quran and *Thikr*, the mosque and worship, and all deeds of faith. That is why the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, commanded us to hasten (to do righteous deeds) and utilize our time, because it may be that anyone who does not do so would lose his life suddenly, and see himself, unexpectedly, before the angel of death thereupon he says what is mentioned in the verse (which means): ***"My Lord, Send me back That I might do righteousness in that which I left behind."*** [Quran 23:99-100]

In their worship of Allaah The Almighty, the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and his Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, after him, like Ibn 'Umar and others, slept at night only a little, and that is why they were called 'those who observed the night'.

The Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, used to sleep at night (for a short time) after which he would get up, perform ablution and then pray. Then, he would take a short nap after which he would get up, perform ablution and pray. Then, he would have a short nap after which he would get up, perform ablution and pray. In this way, he prayed the whole night. A lot of the Companions, Taabi'is and those who followed them with good conduct, did the same. feared to be seized, they hastened to do righteous deeds, and utilized the opportunity of their lifetime. Many authentic stories were reported from them indicating that they culminated the zenith of righteous deeds. It was said about some of them, *"If the angel of death*

came (to take his soul), he would find no further righteous deeds to do (more than he did)." If he was told that the angel of death was standing at his doorstep, he would have no more righteous deeds to present.

It was said about them, even in their food, drink and worldly affairs: What was the interval between eating and taking pleasure in that food? He said: The interval between cutting and chewing the food was sufficient for one to recite fifty Quranic verses. To eat by cutting means to swallow the food without chewing. To say that the interval between cutting and chewing is sufficient for one to recite fifty Quranic verses means that one continues to chew, eat, place, and do such-and-such things for a very long time.

We have mentioned in the story of ‘Umayr ibn Al-Humaam, may Allaah be pleased with him, in the Battle of Badr, that he said to the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, "Should I die (what will my destiny be)?" He said, "No doubt, you will enter Paradise." On that ‘Umayr said, "Then, nothing separates me from Paradise other than these dates I am eating!" He threw them underneath his feet while saying, "Welcome! Welcome!" Then, he fought until he was killed. There was nothing between him and Paradise except eating those dates, thereupon he threw them away. There is no need to leave himself in that very state he sees himself in.

3- To achieve the signs of the love of Allaah

The important point in the way toward Allaah The Almighty, and drawing near to Him is the fact that whoever proceeds on His way becomes the dearest and the nearest to Him The Almighty, and has the highest position in His sight. Those states have many signs that should be visible on the righteous believers, indicating that they are the best to proceed on the way of Allaah The Almighty, the most convenient to approach Him, and the strongest in their ambition, striving and

spending in their procession toward Allaah The Almighty. That is the concept we would like to refer to, i.e. the love of Allaah The Almighty.

Everyone claims to love his Lord The Almighty. But Allaah The Almighty made a test in His love, and the signs which distinguish him who loves his Lord The Almighty from him who does not love Him, and what should be visible on the believer, in order to know whether or not he is so, and start to reckon himself for those concepts from this day on, otherwise, he, whose world is lost, his Hereafter will be lost accordingly; and if one is not in this state, this indicates his remoteness from the way of Allaah The Almighty.

What are those concepts which indicate the Love of Allaah The Almighty?

- a- To give priority to the Love of Allaah and His Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, over all things that one loves:

The lovers (of Allaah) always give priority to the Love of Allaah The Almighty and His Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, over all things that they love. If the love of Allaah The Almighty and His Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, opposes the love of one's children, property, family, majesty, authority, self-inclination, sleep, laziness, the appetite for food and sex, without doubt, the love of Allaah (and His Messenger) should be given priority. That is the significance of the statement of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, *"None of you will have his faith (complete) until I become dearer to him than his own self, child, parent and all people."* [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim]

One will not taste the sweetness of faith if he gives priority to the love of anything over the love of Allaah The Almighty, and His Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*. Similarly: *"There are three (signs), and if anyone possesses them, he will taste the sweetness of faith: that Allaah and His Messenger are dearer to him than anything else; that whenever he loves anyone, he loves him only for the sake of Allaah; and that he dislikes to revert to disbelief in the same way as he dislikes to be thrown into Hell."* [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim] Consider how you give priority to your sleep and comfort over standing (at night in prayer) out of love for Allaah,

remembrance and worship of Him; and how you give priority to your food, drink and sexual desire over fasting, remembrance (of Allaah), recitation of the Quran, undertaking the interests of religion and the believers; and how you prefer your niggardliness, stinginess, greediness for this world to spending and giving for His sake, so that He would give you more, bestow upon you greater bestowal, and raise you in position and rank. Look at your state, O poor one, how you forbid yourself the giving, mercy, generosity, munificence, forgiveness, and, ultimately, love of Allaah.

It is you who cut yourself off from this way, by giving priority to what you love and are pleased with, and what you desire and incline to over what your Lord The Almighty likes and approves of. It should be kept in mind that if you give priority to anything over the love of Allaah, it will be a source of misfortune against you. If anyone gives priority to anything over the love of Allaah, he would be punished by it in the world and the Hereafter. No doubt, you will leave in this world whatever you love and give priority to in this world, in confirmation of the statement of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam*: "*You could love whomever you like, for you will, inevitably, leave him.*" [Al-Albaani: *Saheeh*] Love whomever you want, for you will, inevitably, leave him, except the love for Allaah The Almighty, which will remain with you wherever you are, in the grave, at the time of reckoning, on the day the witnesses will stand forth until you enter Paradise with nothing dearer to you than it, as stated by Allaah The Almighty Who Says (what means): *{but approval from Allaah is greater.}* [Quran 9:72]

Look at the righteous believers, and how they give priority to their love (for Allaah) if it conflicts with sleep, food, drink, children, property, worldly benefits, majesty, authority and passion for one's own self. Then, make a comparison with your own state if the sciences of *Sharee'ah* and love for Allaah The Almighty conflict with His creation. Behold! You invent such-and-such excuses, delay because of such-and-such and give priority to such-and-such over it. It may be that you indulge in those things, given that it is the first concept on which you should measure your own self and faith, and know whether you have moved forward on

the Way of Allaah The Almighty, or are still in your previous conduct, controlled by the devil, about whom Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{and he [Satan] departed from the command of his Lord. Then will you take him and his descendants as allies other than Me while they are enemies to you? Wretched it is for the wrongdoers as an exchange.}*** [Quran 18:50] The love of Allaah The Almighty is the touchstone. It is followed by the love of the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, as stated by Allaah The Almighty Who Says (what means): ***{Say, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allaah , then follow me, [so] Allaah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allaah is forgiving and merciful."}*** [Quran 3:31] The good consequence of this love is to receive forgiveness, and not to be punished, as confirmed by Allaah The Almighty in this respect when He Says (what means): ***{But the Jews and the Christians say, "We are the children of Allaah and His beloved."}*** [Quran 5:18] In reply to their claim, Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): ***{Say, "Then why does He punish you for your sins?" Rather, you are human beings from among those He has created.}*** [Quran 5:18] Thus, love leads to no punishment, and is a way to forgiveness: ***{Say, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allaah , then follow me, [so] Allaah will love you and forgive you your sins."}*** The other is His Saying (which means): ***{Then why does He punish you for your sins?}*** That is, had you been His beloved, He would not have punished you at all.

For this reason, this way always distinguishes the righteous believers who are true in their love for Allaah The Almighty from those who claim to love Allaah, and disobey His Messenger, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, secretly and publicly, and also violate the commands of Allaah The Almighty, knowingly, in their secrets, deeds, and the deeds of the heart and physical organs, and give priority to their beloved things, sleep, laziness, comfort and fear over their Love for Allaah The Almighty. If anything contradicts the worship of Allaah The Almighty, they give priority to it, and rather defer the worship of Allaah The Almighty, and perform this worship (if they are to do it) with boredom, difficulty and readiness to leave it,

rather than with love, approach and continuity to Allaah The Almighty, or with love for the deeds of faith that draw one near Allaah The Almighty.

b- To dislike what Allaah The Almighty dislikes of sins:

Since love is one of those signs, if not the highest, and the touchstone which distinguishes belief from disbelief, the same is true of the reverse of that. In other words, have sins become, in their sight, bitterer than the bitterest taste in their throats? One does not come to love his Lord The Almighty, having visible on him the traces of love, obedience, approach to Allaah The Almighty, abandonment of the abode of delusion, inclination to the abode of the Hereafter, abstention from this world, and standing straight on the Command of Allaah The Almighty, unless sins are the hardest thing for his heart.

That is to dislike what his Lord The Almighty dislikes. One is not a lover who likes what his beloved dislikes. On the contrary, the lover always hastens to know what his beloved dislikes in order not to do, not to eat, not to support, and not to have passion for. In other words, he should know what he dislikes in all his affairs, behavior, words, deeds, outward, inward, secret and public, in order not to do it at all. That is because if he violates any of that, he then will claim to love the Lord, and, at the same time, disobey Him, that is indeed analogically fallacious as they say.

It is one of the important issues with which only the righteous believers may stand straight in their states. That is, to see the sin so bitter in your throat, or, in other words, the sin should taste more sour than bitterness itself.

To disobey Him The Almighty is the most difficult thing for you. Whilst He is seeing you, rewarding you with favors, making living extensive upon you, screening your faults, and refraining from putting you to shame, while you, in the meantime, disobey Him, with your heart filled with the devil's whispers, evil forms and suggestions, which, were the people to know, they would rebuke you, and blacken your face, because you claim to love Allaah.

How could your heart, which is in the Hand of Allaah The Almighty, be filled with what violates His commands and provokes His wrath, of the devil's whispers, forms of wickedness and corruption? No doubt, Allaah The Almighty knows all of this, and looks at you. Being so, it is due on you to make your heart sincere and sound to Him.

If something of what Allaah The Almighty dislikes takes place in His House, would you be closer to anger and disapproval or love and approval?

If Allaah The Almighty sees you disobeying Him, violating His command and provoking His anger, would He be pleased with you? would he smile at you? Would He send down His mercy and forgiveness upon you or would you receive His displeasure and wrath?

If your own self or the devil permits you to commit a sin, you should then mourn, grieve, and hasten to repent and give up those sins and misdeeds, show regret, and draw close to Allaah The Almighty, to bestow mercy upon you, accept your repentance, and relieve you of them with determination not to do them ever again, as much as Allaah The Almighty wills.

c- To be addicted to the Words of Allaah The Almighty:

What demonstrates this point well, i.e. one's love for Allaah The Almighty, is to persist in His remembrance, or, as put by scholars, to be addicted to the remembrance of Allaah The Almighty. That is, his tongue should not weary and his heart should not sleep from the rof Allaah The Almighty. No doubt, whoever loves anything remembers it frequently. Your remembrance of Allaah The Almighty causes Him to remember you as stated by Allaah when He Says (what means): ***{So remember Me; I will remember you.}*** [Quran 2:152]

Your remembrance of Him shows the extent to which you approach Him, and your heart stands straight after those seasons of forgiveness. But to return to the state of heedlessness, i.e. that your tongue and heart become heedless, indicates that you have received no benefit from those seasons of forgiveness, nor given thanks to

your Lord for them so He has not increased you in them, and rather disobeyed and been heedless of Him, and returned to your former bad state.

For this reason, one of the indications, if not the most evident indications, of following the way of forgiveness is to remember Allaah The Almighty. So, Allaah The Almighty urges the people to remember Him Saying (what means): ***{O you who have believed, remember Allaah with much remembrance and exalt Him morning and afternoon.}*** [Quran 33:41-42] On the other hand, to give up remembrance (of Allaah) indicates loss as clarified by the Lord Almighty Who Says (what means): ***{And whoever does that – then those are the losers.}*** [Quran 63:9]

This remembrance of Allaah The Almighty is manifested well in love for the Quran, because the greatest remembrance is to love the speech of Allaah The Almighty, and remember Him in His speech. It is also shown in their addiction to the speech of Allaah The Almighty, by way of love and recitation, learning, teaching and seeking guidance. It is also clarified in their attestation by it, as stated by the Lord Almighty who Says (what means): ***{Say, "It is, for those who believe, guidance and cure."}*** [Quran 41:44] For this reason, the indication of the love for His remembrance is to love His speech, The Almighty, and whoever absconds and keeps away from the speech of Allaah The Almighty, will slip once again into his bad state.

One of the greatest states which indicates that you have proceeded on His way and drawn near Him is to be addicted to the Speech of Allaah The Almighty, its recitation, love for it, reflection upon its meanings, by means of prayer, reading, recitation, standing, while going and returning, persistently and relentlessly, out of love for Allaah The Almighty – otherwise, he will be exposed to loss, as we have already mentioned in detail. We just clarify those states that the believer should try to detect in himself, whether he has become in those good states, or is still heedless and indulged (in this world), far (from Allaah The Almighty), forgetful of Allaah The Almighty and of the Hereafter. Consider the words of Allaah The Almighty in

reference to the meanings of coming apart and approach to Allaah The Almighty as He Says (what means): *{If We had sent down this Quran upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allaah . And these examples We present to the people that perhaps they will give thought.}* [Quran 59:21] That is, they may meditate on their own states; had they been mountains, they would have come apart and humbled before Allaah The Almighty. What is the matter with them then that they have become harder, more solid, harsher, and farther than mountains? *{If We had sent down this Quran upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allaah . And these examples We present to the people that perhaps they will give thought.}* [Quran 59:21]

d- To grieve for missing your share from Allaah

The next state which shows your love for Allaah The Almighty is to grieve and feel sad for missing your share from Allaah The Almighty. By no means would your states improve after forgiveness unless you grieve much and show sorrow for what you have missed, of the remembrance of Allaah and worship.

As for those who give no care to what passed them, and rather go on carelessly, there is no indication of their love for Allaah The Almighty, because if one misses any of his share of the relationship with Allaah, he will not be more sad than he is on missing his share of this world. You grieve, show regret and feel sad for missing your share of this world, whereas you do not feel sad in the same way for missing your share from Allaah The Almighty, concerning His remembrance, worship, standing before Him, and approaching Him. Where is the love for Allaah The Almighty? Where is your approach to Allaah The Almighty? Where is your exaltation of Allaah The Almighty? Where is your estimation of Allaah The Almighty? *{What is [the matter] with you that you do not attribute to Allaah [due] grandeur.}* [Quran 71:13]

For this reason, one of the greatest things which indicate this good state to which the righteous believers move is to grieve for what they have missed; and, at the

same time, begin a new stage of worship and obedience, i.e. not to find cumbersome obedience, out of love for Allaah The Almighty, nor to get bored of it, nor to be disturbed by it, nor to fidget of it. On the contrary, the indication of love, endurance and feeling no tiredness is that if one loves a person in this world, he will not find cumbersome to do everything for him, to strive with everything for his sake , to give him everything, with pleasure and gladness, like to be in his service, save him his property, alleviate from him (difficulties), set out on a journey for him, and undertake great suffering to obtain his love. Then, what do you think about Allaah The Almighty?

That is the sign missing in the people of faith, i.e. not to find worship cumbersome in so much as to love and rejoice at it, dislike to leave it, and like to be permanently in the service of his beloved Allaah The Almighty; he neither leaves it, nor gets bored of it, nor finds it cumbersome, nor is fed up with it. Being so, *"Allaah The Almighty never gets tired (of giving reward) until you get tired (of doing righteous deeds)"* [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim] as mentioned by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*. However, the believers these days find the worship of Allaah The Almighty cumbersome, and anyone of them finds it cumbersome to go to the mosque to seek knowledge, to come to obtain anything that may draw him near Allaah The Almighty, to learn two Quranic verses from the speech of Allaah The Almighty, to obtain anything that may lead to his happiness in the Hereafter, to perform standing in prayer, to observe fasting, to remember (Allaah) and even to recite the Quran.

The mercy of Allaah The Almighty descends upon him because He comes to him running as He Says in the Qudsi *Hadeeth*: *"O My slave! Stand towards Me, so I would walk to you"*, and *"Whoever comes to Me walking, I go to him running."* [Al-Bukhaari] Consider then, do you love your Lord when you find worshipping Him heavy, leave it through giving excuses, because you find it cumbersome, whether it is fasting, standing (at night in prayer), spending, giving in charity, doing the deeds of faith, fulfilling the interests of Muslims, enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil and calling to Allaah The Almighty? Look at yourself to

see all of this. If you find those acts of worship cumbersome, and get bored of them, then, know that you are no longer in the state of love for the acts of worship and rather come to dislike them, and find them heavy upon yourself. Then, look at your state with Allaah. Look at your hard-heartedness, tearlessness, heedlessness and forgetfulness of departure, readiness, preparation and mending oneself in the procession to Allaah The Almighty.

e- To love and humble oneself to the believers:

The next sign of love is that out of love for Allaah The Almighty is to love the believers, and be merciful and kind to them. That is to be kind and compassionate to all the people of faith, and, at the same time, very severe and strong against the enemies of Allaah The Almighty, in response to His statement (which means): ***{forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves.}*** [Quran 48:29] One will not truly love his Lord The Almighty unless he loves His creation and slaves as confirmed by Allaah The Almighty Who Says (what means): ***{Allaah will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him [who are] humble toward the believers, powerful against the disbelievers; they strive in the cause of Allaah and do not fear the blame of a critic.}*** [Quran 5:54] It is this state which distinguishes the one who has love for Allaah from the one who does not have such love. That is to be humble toward the believers, and merciful among themselves; to have those attributes of love, maintenance of relations with them, and endeavor to fulfill their interests; to be in harmony and go hand in hand: ***"The believer, in his relation with the other believer, is like a single building whose parts strengthen each other."*** [Al-Bukhaari and Muslim] as put by the Messenger of Allaah, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, to the end of those *Hadeeths* and Quranic verses which confirm that meaning. The point is that you will not truly love your Lord unless you love the believers. The one who loves Allaah most among the people is he who has the strongest love for his brothers, as illustrated in the *Hadeeth*.

Chapter Four

To seek the Aid and Power of Allaah

If you strengthen yourself with Him The Almighty, you then will have an invincible power, an unconquerable determination and an unsurpassed ambition.

In the end, after Allaah The Almighty has instructed you, do you grieve for leaving the times of worship, and the noble days during which you approached and loved Allaah The Almighty, and how you have neglected His love and decreased worshipping Him? Do you not grieve for losing the sweetness of faith and the worship you were in? No doubt, He is awaiting your return to Him; if you come near Him as little as a span, He will come to you as much as a cubit. However, you are still in laziness and remoteness from Him. You like laziness, sleep, remoteness and disinclination, and give priority to all of this over your approach to and love for Him, and feeling of the sweetness of worship and obedience, faith, approach, attachment, reassurance, confidence, turning (to Allaah), reliance (on Him), and good hope in Him The Almighty. How can you give priority to what is perishable?

You will have a long sleep in your grave, then, why do you sleep from today? As much as you trouble yourself in this world, you will be comfortable in the Hereafter, then, how do you hasten to receive the perishable comfort rather than the permanent comfort prepared by Allaah for His righteous slaves? Detecting in his heart the sweetness of faith, what should one do when he sees this disinclination and remoteness in his heart, and fails to restore this sweetness once again, and the lessons he sees and listens to become ineffective?

If you do not have such feeling, then, what do you do in this bad state in which you are in? How do you get rid of this weak ambition and weary determination which is apt to be blown down at the blast of the first devilish wind on you?

You could not do those deeds of the heart and physical organs unless you have an ambition too high to remove laziness and reliance on this world, along with

decisiveness, determination, approach and hurry. It is this power whose aid you seek to cut off the relations and obstacles that may hinder you.

Ambition and determination stem from the power of Allaah The Almighty, and result from your becoming strong and powerful by virtue of your Lord The Almighty, by whose supplies, you have come to live, proceed on, struggle, combat and strive. It is not by your weak evil-enjoining soul in so much as by the power of Allaah The Almighty. If your power is by Allaah The Almighty, it then will be too magnificent to enable you to defend yourself, strive against yourself, and show your Lord The Almighty what you are going to do. But to rely on your weak soul, that is indeed our present state in these days.

If one relies on his weak ambition, and disintegrated determination we are suffering now, he will achieve no progress; and even every progress he achieves will be followed by recession. In this case, he should implore his Lord The Almighty to strengthen his ambition, and move around in front of Him The Almighty to strengthen his determination, provide him with His supplies, lead him by his hands and forelock, and he entirely belongs to Him, make his attention focused on one concern, aid him, and raise in his heart the degree of faith and good reliance on Him. No doubt, if you supplicate your Lord, by then, and implore Him to relieve you of your bad state at present and in the future, being truthful and sincere in your supplication to Him, thereby you intend the countenance of Allaah The Almighty, so that He The Almighty would approach you, strengthen you, and provide for you, it is most likely that He The Almighty would take you to Him, to strong ambition and truthful determination. If Allaah The Almighty is with you, then, who could dare to be against you?

If you become strong by means of Allaah The Almighty, then, you will have an invincible strength, an unconquerable determination, and an unsurpassed ambition. That is required from you especially in these days. That is, to strive against yourself, move around before Allaah The Almighty, and implore Him to provide you with power, strengthen your ambition, raise your determination and take your

hand. If you do so, and if your Lord The Almighty knows and sees how truthful and sincere to Him you are in it, and how you grieve and like to spend in this way, whatsoever, so that He The Almighty would give you, grant you, aid you and strengthen you in that, at this point, Allaah The Almighty will not withhold anything from the person who approaches Him.

Nay! If you approach Him, He will approach you more; and if you proceed on toward Him, He will proceed on toward you more. Thus, we should promise Allaah The Almighty once again to do this, and let not the day come to an end until one feels those states, and supplicates Allaah The Almighty to make him successful in it; and whatever time and effort he is to spend, it will be insignificant in comparison with what will be revealed to him by Allaah The Almighty.

No doubt, the states of the believers in these days require them to revisit *Ramadhaan* before they become loose, return fast to heedlessness, and indulge in this world so much that the heart would weaken to return to Allaah The Almighty. Let it be a new beginning, with which one should not despair of the fact that Allaah The Almighty may reveal to him, approach him, provide him from His supplies, revive him with His mercy, make him strong enough to proceed on toward Allaah The Almighty, and make his devil, inclination and self too weak to resist the acts of worship and procession toward Allaah The Almighty.

One may ask about the way to revisit *Ramadhaan* once again. In reply, let us tell him to return to Allaah The Almighty one, two or even three nights, on which you prayed (in *Ramadhaan*): stand on them (at night in prayer) to Allaah The Almighty, return to your recitation of the Quran and finish it in three days as we have already mentioned, return to your remembrance and fixed-size portion of the Quranic recitation, and choose to reiterate for one, two or three days a long devotional recital of seeking forgiveness, exaltation of Allaah, invoking the blessings and peace of Allaah upon the Prophet, *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, thereby to revive your heart, reactivate your soul and approach Allaah The Almighty once again. Bind yourself and your heart from this moment, so that you

could return to Allaah The Almighty. Finish the recitation of the Quran in three days, or stand (at night in prayer) for three nights consecutively to Allaah The Almighty, keeping in mind that this would make you more active and strong, and provide you with supplies from Allaah The Almighty. The devil will come to you to convince you that you are very tired and have tasks to do. But all of this would be removed from you by Allaah The Almighty.

If you approach Allaah The Almighty, no doubt, He will alleviate all of this from you. If you approach Him, He will approach you, provide you with His provision, aid you with His aid, and strengthen you with His power. Fear nothing. Do not feel afraid of the consequences of anything if you draw closer Allaah The Almighty. Head toward Him these days, so that you would restore the activity of your soul and heart, revive the worship in your heart, and help your body and soul become strong enough to return to Allaah The Almighty; it is, most likely, that you would stand straight in your states, Allaah willing.