

THE CONCISE LEGACY

“...fear Allaah wherever you may be...”

by
Shaykh-ul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah
661-728AH

**Footnotes and Hadeeth checking by
Shaykh Saleemal-Hilaalee**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Question

Abul-'Aasim al-Qaasim bin Yoosuf bin Muhammad at-Tajeebee as-Sabtee al-Maghribee says:

I requested our leader, the shaykh, faqeeh, imaam, respected scholar, vanguard of the predecessors, leader of the later generations, reviver of the Deen, expresser of rare and wonderful ideas with great eloquence and literacy, the most knowledgeable person I have met in the lands of the East and West, Taqi ud-Deen Abul-'Abbaas Ahmad bin Taymiyyah (may Allaah enable us to continue benefiting from him):

- *To advise me towards what would set aright my affairs concerning Deen (religion) and dunyaa (worldly matters);*
- *To point me towards those books which I may rely upon regarding knowledge of hadeeth, and other sciences of the sharee'ah;*
- *To draw my attention towards the best of righteous actions after the compulsory duties;*
- *To explain to me those qualities and skills, attaining which should outweigh all my other aims;*

...all of this by way of concise guidelines. May Allaah safeguard him, and peace and Allaah's blessings be on him.

The answer given to these questions is presented to the reader in the following pages.

The Shaykh of Islaam, Ocean of Learning, Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allaah bestow His Mercy and pleasure on him, answered:

All Praise be to Allaah, Lord of the Worlds. As for the *wasiyyah*,¹ I know of no *wasiyyah* more beneficial than that of Allaah and His Messenger for the one who understands it.

The *Wasiyyah* of Allaah the Mighty and Sublime

The *Wasiyyah* of Allaah the Exalted is mentioned in the following *Aayah*:

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

“Verily, We have enjoined on those who were given the Book before you, and on you (O Muslims) to fear Allaah.”²

The Messenger’s *Wasiyyah*

When the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu’aadh (*radiyallaahu ’anhu*) to Yemen, he enjoined the following upon him:

“O Mu’aadh, fear Allaah wherever you may be, and follow up a bad deed with a good one and it will wipe it out, and behave towards people with beautiful manners.”³

1. *Wasiyyah*: legacy, advice, bequest, testament, will, commandment, injunction. [Publisher’s note]

2. Soorah an-Nisaa’ (4):131.

3. Narrated by Mu’aadh bin Jabal (*radiyallaahu ’anhu*) himself, reported by at-Tirmidhee, Ahmad, Ibn Abee Shaibah, at-Tabaraanee, Aboo Nu’aim, al-Wakee’ and al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee. It is also narrated by Aboo Dharr al-Ghifaaree (*radiyallaahu ’anhu*), reported by at-Tirmidhee, Ahmad ad-Daarimee, al-Haakim, Aboo Nu’aim, Qudaa’ee and Ibn Abee Shaibah. It is also narrated by Anas bin Maalik (*radiyallaahu ’anhu*), reported by Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Ibn ‘Asaakir and at-Tabaraanee. The *hadeeth* is *saheeh*, taking into account all its routes of narration. =

The excellence of Mu'aadh bin Jabal

Mu'aadh (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) had a high status in the eyes of the Prophet (ﷺ), for he once said to him:

“O Mu'aadh! By Allaah, truly I love you.”⁴

Sometimes the Messenger (ﷺ) would let Mu'aadh (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) ride behind him on the same mount.⁵

= The Noble Qur'aan indicates the meaning of this *hadeeth*, in verses such as:

إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ

“Verily, good deeds remove bad deeds” [Soorah Hood (11):114].

Publishers note: We have decided to abridge the extremely detailed *hadeeth* checking for reasons of readability and instead have given a summary of it, whilst retaining Shaykh Saleem's valuable comments on the text.

4. This is a portion of a *saheeh hadeeth*, the full text of which is as follows:

The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) took hold of my hand one day and said, 'O Mu'aadh! By Allaah, truly I love you.' So I said to him, 'May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allaah! By Allaah, I too love you.' He then said, 'I bequeath to you, O Mu'aadh, never fail to say the following at the end of each Prayer, Allaahumma a'innnee 'alaa dhikrika, wa shukrika, wa husni 'ibaadatik (O Allaah! Aid me in remembrance of You, gratitude to You, and excellent worship of You).

Reported by Aboo Daawood, an-Nasaa'ee, Ibn Hibbaan, Aboo Nu'aim, Ibn Khuzaimah and al-Haakim, who declared its *isnaad* to be *saheeh*, and adh-Dhahabee agreed.

5. On the authority of Mu'aadh bin Jabal (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), who said:

I was riding with the Prophet (ﷺ), sitting behind him, on a donkey named 'Ufair, when he said to me, "O Mu'aadh! Do you know what is Allaah's right over His slaves, and what is the slaves' right over Allaah?" I said, "Allaah and His Messenger know best." He said, "The right of Allaah over the slaves is that they should worship Him and not associate anything with Him, while the right of the slaves over Allaah is that He will not punish whoever does not associate anything with Him." So I said, "O Messenger of Allaah! Should I not convey this as glad tidings to the people?" He said, "Do not give them the glad tidings, otherwise they will depend (solely) on it."

Related by al-Bukhaaree, whose wording is given above, Muslim, at-Tirmidhee, Ahmad, Ibn Maajah, Ibn Mandah and Aboo 'Awaanah. This incident is also reported on the authority of Anas bin Maalik, Aboo Hurairah and Hudhaifah bin al-Yamaan (*radiyallaahu 'anhum*).

It is also narrated about him that he is the most knowledgeable person in the *Ummah* about the issues of *halaal* and *haraam* (i.e. the lawful and the prohibited),⁶ and that on the Day of Resurrection he will be raised up one step ahead of all the People of Knowledge.⁷ Part of Mu'aadh's excellence further is that the Prophet (ﷺ) sent him to the people of Yemen as a preacher on his behalf, a caller, a teacher of understanding in the *Deen*, a giver of religious verdicts, and a judge.⁸

6. This is a portion of a *saheeh hadeeth*, of which the full text is as follows: "*The most merciful of my Ummah to my Ummah is Aboo Bakr; the most strict of them in the Deen of Allaah is 'Umar; the most true of them in modesty is 'Uthmaan; the best judge among them is 'Alee bin Abee Taalib; the best reciter of the Qur'aan is Ubayy bin Ka'b; the most knowledgeable of them about the lawful and the prohibited is Mu'aadh bin Jabal; the most knowledgeable of them concerning laws of inheritance is Zaid bin Thaabit; truly, every ummah has a guardian, and the guardian of this Ummah is Aboo 'Ubaidah bin al-Jarraah.*"

Related by at-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah, Ibn Hibbaan, al-Baihaquee and al-Haakim, who declared it *saheeh* and adh-Dhahabee and al-Albaanee agreed with him.

7. The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said, "*Verily, when the people of knowledge will be present before their Lord, the Mighty and Sublime, Mu'aadh will be one step ahead of them.*"

A *saheeh hadeeth*, related through various routes by Ibn Sa'd, Aboo Nu'aim and at-Tabaraanee.

8. Ibn 'Abbaas (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) narrated that when the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu'aadh (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) to Yemen, he said to him:

You are going to a nation from the People of the Book, so let the first thing to which you call them be that they should make all worship for Allaah, the Most High, if they learn that, tell them that Allaah has enjoined on them five prayers to be offered in one day and one night. And if they pray, tell them that Allaah has enjoined on them Zakaat of their properties and it is to be taken from the rich among them and given to the poor. And if they agree to that, then take from them Zakaat but avoid the best property of the people.

Related by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, Aboo Daawood, an-Nasaa'ee, Ibn Maajah, Ahmad, ad-Daarimee, al-Baihaquee and others, and also on the authority of Aboo Moosa al-Ash'aree (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*).

Mu'aadh (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) remained in Yemen until the caliphate of Aboo Bakr (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), then returned to Madeenah and later went to Syria. According to the strongest reports he did not cease to carry out *Jihaad* in the path of Allaah until he passed away as a martyr during the plague of 'Amawaas in 18AH, as the people of knowledge of *rijaal* (reporters of *hadeeth*) have explained, such as Aboo Nu'aim, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalaanee and an-Nawawee. May Allaah shower His Mercy on Mu'aadh and on all the Companions, and raise us up along with them in the highest ranks with those on whom Allaah bestowed His Favour, from the Prophets, Sincere ones, Martyrs and Righteous - such is the truly beautiful fellowship.

He also used to compare Mu'aadh (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) to Ibraaheem ('*alayhis salaam*),⁹ the friend of Allaah and Imaam of mankind. Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) used to say, "Verily, Mu'aadh is a leader of the people, he is Allaah's obedient slave, and he is not of the polytheists,"¹⁰ thus comparing him to Ibraaheem.¹¹

The Prophet (ﷺ) gave Mu'aadh (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) this *wasiyyah*, knowing that he was the possessor of all these excellent qualities. This indicates that this *wasiyyah* is comprehensive, which is obvious to anyone who understands it. Furthermore, it is an explanation of the Qur'aanic *wasiyyah*.

The comprehensiveness of the *wasiyyah*

What makes this legacy so comprehensive is the fact that it covers the two rights upon the human being:

- (i) The responsibility towards Allaah, the Mighty and Sublime;
- (ii) The responsibility towards Allaah's servants.

This *wasiyyah* also takes account of the fact that each person will be deficient in fulfilling this responsibility; for example by missing a duty or doing something forbidden. The Messenger (ﷺ) said: "Fear Allaah wherever you may be." This statement is comprehensive and his words "wherever you may be" confirm that the human being is in need of *taqwaa*¹² both secretly and in the open. He then

9. I have not found this after lengthy research.

10. This statement of 'Abdullaah bin Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) is authentically established, with many routes of narration related by al-Haakim (who declared it *saheeh* and adh-Dhahabee agreed), Ibn Sa'd, and Ibn Jareer in his *Tafseer*. The word *ummah* in this quote has been explained by Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhumaa*) as one who instructs the people in goodness, and *qaanit* as obedient. O Allaah! Make us among those who direct the people to goodness, in obedience to your orders and following your Messenger (ﷺ).

11. cf. Soorah an-Nahl (16):120.

12. See page 14 for Ibn Taymiyyah's explanation of "Taqwaa".

said, "Follow up a bad deed with a good one, which will cancel it." We can see the wisdom behind this, by looking at a man who eats something which is bad for him, after which the doctor prescribes him to take something which will cure him. It is inevitable that a human being will commit sin, so the wise person is the one who is continuously doing good acts in order that the effects of his bad deeds are cancelled out. In this *hadeeth*, the phrase "bad deed" is used first because the purpose here is to wipe out bad deeds, rather than to do good deeds; this is similar to the Prophet's (ﷺ) saying about the bedouin's urine, "Pour over his urine a bucketful of water."¹³

The types of actions by which sins can be forgiven

It is most appropriate that the good deeds are of the same nature as the bad deeds, for that is the most effective in cancelling them. The recompense for sins can be averted through several things:

- i) *Tawbah*¹⁴ (repentance);

13. The story of the bedouin who urinated in the *masjid* and the gentle way in which the Messenger (ﷺ) corrected him can be found in the *Saheehs* of al-Bukhaaree and Muslim; and Aboo Daawood, at-Tirmidhee, an-Nasaa'ee, Ibn Maajah, Maalik and Ahmad, among others, on the authorities of Aboo Hurairah, Anas bin Maalik, Waathilah bin al-Asqa, Ibn 'Abbaas and Ibn Mas'ood (*radiyallaahu 'anhum*).

14. *Tawbah* refers to the act of leaving what Allaah has prohibited and returning to what he has commanded. By sincerely obeying Allaah's command to turn to him in repentance, the penitent sinner embarks on an act of worship which is so great that it can totally absolve him of his sins providing the conditions pertaining to *tawbah* are met: (i) the *tawbah* must be as immediate as possible as repentance is not accepted when death comes upon a sinner; (ii) the sin must cease being repeated; (iii) if the sin involved abusing the honour, property and lives of others, the rights taken must be repaid as far as possible; (iv) the sinner must feel sincere regret and sorrow for his transgression and must continue his life fleeing from that which he committed by performing righteous deeds and reform his life for the better.

Aboo 'Ubaydah ibn 'Abdullaah reported that Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "One who repents from sin is like one without sin." (Reported by Ibn Maajah, declared *saheeh* by al-Albaanee) [Publishers' note]

ii) *Istighfaar* (asking for forgiveness), even without repentance, for Allaah forgives in answer to one's *du'aa* (supplication) even if one has not repented; however, if repentance and forgiveness are combined (i.e. a person stops sinning and petitions for forgiveness), then that is ideal.

iii) Good and correct actions which are *kaffaraat*.¹⁵ The *kaffaraat* are of two types:

a) Specific *kaffaraat*, for those actions for which the *Sharee'ah* has fixed an expiation. Examples of such *kaffaraat* are those for committing sexual intercourse while fasting in Ramadaan; *dhihaar*¹⁶; for violating certain prohibitions during *Hajj* or leaving some of its obligations; or for killing game in the area of al-Haram; all these sins have been allotted specific ways of expiation, there are four ways: sacrifice, freeing a slave, charity and fasting.

b) General *kaffaraat*, as shown by Hudhaifah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*)'s saying to 'Umar (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), "*Fitnah*¹⁷ *is caused to a man due to his family, wealth and children; so prayer, fasting, charity, enjoining goodness and forbidding evil wipe this out.*" Also on this point, the Qur'aan and the *saheeh ahaadeeth* prove that the five daily prayers, Friday prayer, fasting, *Hajj* and other actions expiate sin. There are many actions of this type; whoever studies the books of hadeeth will find narrations such as "*Whoever says such-and-such or does such-and-such, then he is forgiven, or his previous sins are forgiven,*" particularly in those books compiled regarding the virtues of actions.

15. Those good deeds that act as an expiations for sins [Publishers' note].

16. Saying to one's wife: "You are like the back of my mother to me," treating one's wife as a mother in which case she is neither divorced nor treated as a normal wife as was the practice among the pagan Arabs.

17. Trial, temptation, affliction (with sins).

Influence of the habits of ignorance, especially of the Jews and Christians

It should be known that care regarding expiation of sins is one of the most important needs of a person, for neglect of this may lead a person to acquire the habits of the Days of Ignorance, especially in an age in which Revelation and Messengership has stopped, and hence these days have some similarities with the Days of Ignorance. Even one who is brought up amongst people of Knowledge and Faith finds himself polluted by many aspects of *Jaahiliyyah*, so what about one who does not have that advantage?!

In the *Saheehs* of al-Bukhaaree and Muslim, there is a *hadeeth* on the authority of Aboo Sa'eed (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said,

"You will certainly follow the ways of those nations who were before you, handspan by handspan, cubit by cubit, so much so that if they entered a lizard's hole, you would follow them." They said, "O Messenger ! (Do you mean) the Jews and the Christians ?" He said, "Whom else ?"

This *hadeeth* is supported by the Qur'aan:

فَأَسْتَمْتَعُوا بِمَخْلَقِهِمْ فَأَسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِمَخْلَقِكُمْ كَمَا اسْتَمْتَعَ الَّذِينَ مِن
قَبْلِكُمْ بِمَخْلَقِهِمْ وَخُضْتُمْ كَالَّذِي خَاضُوا

"... they had their enjoyment of their portion, and you have yours as did those before you, and you indulge in idle talk as they did ..."¹⁸

This *hadeeth* is supported also by many authentic narrations.¹⁹

18. Soorah at-Tawbah (9):69.

19. At-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah, Ahmad, al-Haakim, Ibn Abee 'Aasim, Ibn Nasr, Aboo Nu'aim, and others, on the authorities of Aboo Hurairah, Ibn 'Abbaas, Aboo Waaqid al-Laithee, 'Amr bin 'Awf al-Muzanee, Shaddaad bin Aus and 'Abdullaah bin 'Amr (*radiyallaahu 'anhum*).

This matter even affects the elite people who are attributed with (knowledge of) the *Deen*, as some of the *Salaf*, like Sufyaan ibn 'Uyainah,²⁰ have said: *"That some people attributed with knowledge have become affected by many of the conditions of the Jews, and some of those attributed with piety have been affected by many of the conditions of the Christians."* This will be perceived by one who understands the reality of the *Deen* of Islaam, with which Allaah the Most High sent the Messenger (ﷺ), and compares it with the situation of the people.

With the situation as it is, that person whose heart Allaah has opened; who is firm on the light that Allaah has given him; who was dead, then Allaah brought him to life and gave him light by which he could move among the people; for such a one, it is necessary to be aware of the conditions of Ignorance and the paths of the two nations, *"those who incurred (Allaah's) anger"* and *"those who have gone astray,"* among the Jews and the Christians, so he may realise which things have affected him.

Hence, one of the most beneficial things for both the "elite" and the "ordinary" person is knowledge of what he can do to save himself from these pitfalls: it is to follow up bad deeds with good ones, good deeds being the actions, manners and characteristics which Allaah has recommended on the tongue of the Last Prophet (ﷺ).

Patience in the face of misfortunes

Another category of things which avert the consequences of sinning is "expiating misfortunes" i.e. whatever causes hardship or suffering, be it fear, sorrow, or harm to one's wealth, honour, body etc. However, these misfortunes are not the work of the person himself.

20. He was a famous, knowledgeable and pious taabi'eeut-taabi'ee (3rd generation after the Prophet (ﷺ)). Imaam Shaafi'ee said about him: "If it were not for Maalik and Sufyaan ibn 'Uyainah, the knowledge of the Hijaaz would have passed away." He died at the age of 91 in the year 197 H.

Good nature

After the Messenger (ﷺ) had covered Allaah's right in the first two clauses: to act righteously and to rectify any harm done, he then said, "...and behave towards the people with beautiful manners," thus turning to the rights of the fellow worshippers.

It is from the good nature of a worshipper that when a person cuts off relations with him, he continues to associate with him by greeting him, respecting him, praying for him, asking Allaah to forgive him, speaking well of him and visiting him. If someone deprives the worshipper of knowledge and wealth, he responds by presenting them to him. He who does injustice to the worshipper with regards to his blood, wealth or honour, he forgives him. These are some of the characteristics that constitute good nature; among them are some that are obligatory and others that are recommended.

As for the "great character"²¹ by which Allaah described the way of Muhammad (ﷺ), then it is none other than the complete *Deen*, comprising everything that Allaah commanded him with, as explained by Mujaahid and other commentators. It is the implementation of the Qur'aan, as 'Aa'ishah (*radiyallaahu 'anha*) said, "His character was the Qur'aan."²² The reality of this is an eagerness to put into practice those things that Allaah loves, with purity of soul and contentment of heart.

21. Allaah, the Most High, says:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

"And verily, you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character."

[Soorah al-Qalam (68):4]

22. Muslim, Aboo Daawood, an-Nasaa'ee, ad-Daarimee and Ahmad.

Meaning of *taqwaa*

All of the above ideas emanate from the *Wasiyyah* of Allaah mentioned at the beginning, and this should be understood as such. The word *taqwaa*²³ is very comprehensive, covering the fulfilment of *all* of Allaah's orders, including carrying out the obligations and the recommendations, and refraining from the forbiddances as well as the strong discouragements. Thus it encompasses both the right of Allaah and the right of His slaves. However, wherever *taqwaa* specifically refers to fear of the consequent punishment, thereby discouraging one from indulging in the prohibited, then this is clear from the context; an example of this is in the *hadeeth* of Mu'aadh (under discussion), and similar is the *hadeeth* of Aboo Hurairah which at-Tirmidhee has narrated and declared to be *saheeh*:

The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) was asked about that which mostly earns people entry to Paradise; he replied, "*Taqwaa and goodness of character.*" He was also asked about that which mostly earns people entry into the Fire; he replied, "*The mouth and the private parts.*"

In a narration of a *saheeh hadeeth* from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar, the Messenger (ﷺ) said,

*"The most complete of the believers in eemaan (faith) is he who is the best of them in character."*²⁴

Hence, the Prophet (ﷺ) told us that perfection of *eemaan* lies in completeness of one's good character. It is known that all of *eemaan* is *taqwaa*, however, this is not the place for a detailed discussion of the fundamentals and branches of *taqwaa*, for that would cover the *Deen* in its entirety.

23. Ibn Abee Shaibah reports in his *Kitaabul-Eemaan* (no. 99) that the *Taabi'ee* Talq ibn Habeeb was asked to define *taqwaa*, so he said: "*Taqwaa* is acting in obedience to Allaah, hoping for His Mercy, upon light from Him, and *taqwaa* is leaving acts of disobedience to Allaah, out of fear of Him, upon light from Him." Declared *saheeh* from him by al-Albaanee. [Publishers' note]

24. At-Tirmidhee, Aboo Daawood, Ahmad, al-Haakim, Ibn Hibbaan and others.

Ikhlāas

The origin and root of all good is *Ikhlāas*, i.e. that the slave directs all worship and seeking of assistance purely towards his Lord, as in Allaah’s statements:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾

“You alone we worship and Your aid alone we seek.”²⁵

فَاعْبُدْهُ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَيْهِ

“... then worship Him, and put your trust in Him ...”²⁶

عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَإِلَيْهِ أُنِيبُ ﴿٨٨﴾

“... in him I trust, and unto Him I turn.”²⁷

فَابْتَغُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ وَاعْبُدُوهُ وَأَشْكُرُوا لَهُ

“... then seek sustenance from Allaah, and serve Him, and be grateful to Him.”²⁸

This is done in such a way that the slave terminates his heart’s connection with the created, whether with regard to benefiting from them or acting for their sake, and instead preoccupies himself with his Exalted Creator. The means of attaining this is to supplicate to Him for everything that he requires out of poverty, necessity, fear, etc. and to carry out every beloved action for the sake of His good pleasure. If someone were to implant this type of *Ikhlāas* firmly and thoroughly, it would not be possible for him to be affected by any punishable trait.

25. Soorah al-Faathihah (1): 5

26. Soorah Hood (11):123

27. Soorah Hood (11):88

28. Soorah al-Ankaboot (29): 17

After the obligatory acts the best action is *dhikr*²⁹ of Allaah

As for the next question, regarding the best action after the obligatory duties, then it is not possible to provide an answer which is totally comprehensive and detailed for everyone, since that would vary according to each person's differing capabilities and opportunities. However, what is agreed upon by all those who have knowledge of Allaah and His Commands, is that in general, the best thing with which a slave can occupy himself is the *dhikr* of Allaah. In support of this is the *hadeeth* from Aboo Hurairah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) which Muslim narrates:

*"The loners (mufarridoon) have taken the lead." The Companions asked, "O Messenger of Allaah! Who are the loners?" He replied, "Those men and women who remember Allaah in abundance."*³⁰

29. Dhikr (pl. Adhkaar): Remembrance (by the heart) , mention (by the tongue).

30. This *hadeeth* is also narrated via a route different to Muslim's by Ahmad and al-Haakim, who declared it to be *saheeh* and adh-Dhahabee agreed, in which the final answer to the meaning of *mufarridoon* is, **"Those who are passionately occupied with the *dhikr* of Allaah."**

Note: In some copies, there has been a mistake in script, such that the word *yahtaroon* (they are passionately occupied) became mistaken for *yahtazoon* (they stir, move [with the *dhikr* of Allaah]). Hence, there is no justification here for the dancing Soofis whose posteriors shake sideways to the *dhikr* of Allaah; the *dhikr* they use is not even from the *Sunnah*, so they are guilty of innovation in nature as well as type.

In Imaam an-Nawawee's *Commentary on Saheeh Muslim* (17/4), there occurs: "In one narration: *ihtazoo* (they are stirred) in the *dhikr* of Allaah." The author adds, "i.e. they are passionate in it." Even if this wording was authentic, it would mean: they rejoice, delight and comfort their hearts with the *dhikr* of Allaah. Allaah knows best.

One who is trying to obey his Lord and follow the example of his Prophet (ﷺ) should know that out of all that is quoted by those who dance while doing *Dhikr* of Allaah, none of it is authentic, such as the story that Allaah inspired His Prophet (ﷺ) saying, "Truly, Allaah is pleased with Aboo Bakr, so is Aboo Bakr pleased with his Lord?" so when Aboo Bakr heard that, he began to shake in delight and sway left and right, and began to say, "How can I not be pleased with Allaah?" Even if this imaginary tale was correct, it would oppose their argument, for Allaah describes the believers, saying:

الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

"Those who, when Allaah is mentioned, their hearts tremble" (Soorah Anfaal (8):2) =

A similar *hadeeth* is narrated by Aboo ad-Dardaa' (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) as reported by Aboo Daawood:

*"Shall I not inform you of the best of your actions, the most pure in the sight of your Master, the one which raises your ranks highest, that which is better for you than giving gold and silver (in charity), and better for you than your meeting your enemies, so that you strike their necks and they strike yours?" The companions urged, "Of course, O Messenger of Allaah! (Inform us!)" He replied, "It is the dhikr of Allaah."*³¹

There are many other indications of the virtues of *Dhikr-Allaah* in the Qur'aan and in the natural faith of the heart, for those who listen, think and perceive.

Types of *dhikr*

The basic method of *dhikr* is that the slave makes a habit of putting into practice those *adhkaar* which have been taken from the teacher of goodness, the leader of the righteous, Muhammad (ﷺ), such as:

- (i) Those *adhkaar* which have a fixed time, such as those for the beginning and the ending of the day, when going to sleep and waking up, and after the compulsory prayers etc.

= in contrast, these people remain unmoved when the Qur'aan is recited, whereas when the flute is played, they rush into their well-known movements! However, this incident is not quoted in any *hadeeth*, authentic or otherwise.

Similar is the case with their quoting 'Alee (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) as describing the Companions, "When Allaah was mentioned, they would sway as the tree does on a windy day." Related by Aboo Nu'aim in *Hilyatul-Awliyaa'* (1/76) with a baseless, clouded *isnaad*. This issue has also been discussed in detail by Imaam ash-Shaatibee in *al-I'tisaam*.

31. Related by at-Tirmidhee, Ibn Maajah, Ahmad, al-Haakim and al-Baghawee. Al-Haakim declared its *isnaad* to be *saheeh*; adh-Dhahabee and al-Albaanee agreed with him.

(ii) Those *adhkaar* which are specified for certain actions, such as eating and drinking, putting on clothes, sexual intercourse, entering and exiting the masjid and toilet, or at the time of rain and thunder etc.

As regards both these types of *dhikr*, books have been compiled under the title of “Actions of the day and night.”

There are also those *adhkaar* which are unrestricted, i.e. they are not confined to some special time or occasion; of these, the most excellent is *Laa ilaaha illa-l-laaah* (There is none worthy of worship except Allaah), but sometimes according to the situation, some phrases such as *Subhaan Allaah* (How perfect is Allaah), *Al-hamdu li-l-laaah* (All Praise is due to Allaah), *Allaahu Akbar* (Allaah is the Greatest) and *Laa Hawla wa laa Quwwata illaa bi-l-laaah* (There is no power or movement except by Allaah) become more excellent.

Furthermore, it should be known that everything that brings mankind closer to Allaah, whether it is a saying of the tongue or contemplation of the heart, for example in acquiring knowledge or commanding the good and forbidding the evil, this is all part of the *dhikr* of Allaah. Hence, one who is occupied in seeking beneficial knowledge after fulfilling the obligatory acts, or one who takes his place in a gathering where *Fiqh* (understanding) is taught - that which Allaah and His Messenger have named *Fiqh* - this is also an excellent *dhikr* of Allaah. When you consider this, you will thus realise that there is no real disagreement among the early people of knowledge regarding the most excellent of the actions after the obligatory duties.³²

32. Ibn Taymiyyah was himself a shining example of what he taught. Ibn al-Qayyim says about his teacher, “After he had offered the Dawn Prayer, he would sit in his place mentioning (remembering) Allaah until well into daylight. When he was asked about that, he would say, ‘This is my morning-meal; without it, I would not have any strength.’” (*Al-Radd al-Waafir* of Ibn Naasir ad-Deen, publ. Maktab al-Islami, Beirut, 1393H, p. 69). He was, of course, following the *Sunnah*, for the Prophet (ﷺ) would sit at his place of prayer after the Dawn Prayer until the sun had risen, and he (ﷺ) also said, “Whoever offers the Dawn Prayer in congregation, then sits mentioning Allaah until the sun rises, and then prays two rak’ahs, will have a reward like that of a [complete] Hajj and ‘Umrah.” (*Saheeh Sunan at-Tirmidhee* of al-Albaanee, nos. 479-480). [Publishers’ note]

*Istikhaarah*³³

In those matters where the slave is in doubt, he should seek Allaah's guidance in making his decision, for he who seeks help in a decision from Allaah will never regret. He should do this often and also supplicate often, for that is the key to every benefit, and not be impatient saying, "I have asked but I have not been answered." He should seek to find the best time to supplicate, for example in the last part of the night, at the time of *adhaan*, after the obligatory prayers, at the time of rain, and other occasions.

The best quality to have is trust in Allaah

As for the next part of the question, about the most valuable quality to aim for, then the answer to this is that the best prize is to have trust in Allaah, reliance upon Him of His sufficiency, and keeping a good opinion of Him, the latter being that if anyone is anxious regarding their sustenance then he should turn to the shelter of Allaah, as the Exalted said, from what is narrated by His Prophet (ﷺ),

*"O My servants, all of you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food of Me and I shall feed you. O My servants, all of you are naked except for those I have clothed, so seek clothing of Me and I shall clothe you."*³⁴

33. Asking for Allaah's guidance in reaching a decision on a certain matter. See *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree*, Volume 2, *hadeeth* number 263 (English Translation). [Publishers' note]

34. The full text of the *hadeeth*:

On the authority of Aboo Dharr (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ) is that among the sayings he relates from his Lord is that He said:

"O My servants, I have forbidden oppression for Myself and have made it forbidden amongst You, so do not oppress one another. O My servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided, so seek guidance of Me and I shall guide you. O My servants, all of you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food of Me and I shall feed you. O My servants, all of you are naked except for those I have clothed, so seek clothing of Me and I shall clothe you. O My servants, you sin by night and by day, and I forgive all sins, so seek forgiveness of Me and I shall forgive you. O My servants, =

In this regard there is also the *hadeeth* which at-Tirmidhee narrates from Anas (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*), who said that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said,

“Each of you should ask for his needs from Allaah, even if the strap of your sandal breaks, because if Allaah does not facilitate it, it will never be possible.”

Allaah the Most High says in His Book:

وَسَأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ

“... But ask Allaah for His bounty ...”³⁵

He, the Most Perfect, also says:

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ

“And when the prayer is finished, then you may disperse through the land, and seek of the Bounty of Allaah...”³⁶

= you will not attain harming Me so as to harm Me, and you will not attain benefitting Me so as to benefit Me. O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you, to be as pious as the most pious heart of any one man of you, that would not increase My kingdom in anything. O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you, to be as wicked as the most wicked heart of any one man of you, that would not decrease My kingdom in anything. O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you, to rise up in one place and make a request of Me, and were I to give everyone what he requested, that would not decrease what I have, any more than a needle decreases the sea if put into it. O My servants, it is but your deeds that I reckon up for you and then recompense you for, so let him who finds good praise Allaah and let him who finds other than that blame no one but himself.”

Related by Muslim, at-Tirmidhee and Ahmad, all on the authority of Aboo Dharr (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*). It was also transmitted by an-Nawawee in his *Adhkaar* (pp. 367-8), who said: “The reporters in its chain of narration from me until Aboo Dharr are all people of Damascus, and Aboo Dharr settled in Damascus. Hence there are a number of features of this *hadeeth*: the authenticity of its chain of narration as well as its text; the large number of reporters in this chain, which is *musalsal* since all of them are from Damascus, may Allaah bless its people and be pleased with them; the fact that it contains an explanation of great fundamentals as well as details of the *Deen*, manners, subtleties of the heart and much else, and to Allaah be all praise.”

35. Soorah an-Nisaa' (4):32.

36. Soorah al-Jumu'ah (62):10

Although this *aayah* is in the context of the congregational Friday Prayer, its meaning applies to all the prayers. This is why - and Allaah knows best - the Prophet (ﷺ) instructed the person entering the mosque to say,

“*Allaahummaftah lee abwaaba rahmatik*”
(*O Allaah! open the doors of Your mercy for me*)

and when leaving the mosque to say,

“*Allaahumma innee as'aluka min fadlik*”
(*O Allaah! I ask of You some of Your Bounty*).³⁷

Also, the Friend of Allaah ('*alaihis-salaam*) had said,

فَابْتَغُوا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الرِّزْقَ وَاعْبُدُوهُ وَأَشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ

“...then seek sustenance from Allaah, serve Him, and be grateful to him.”³⁸

This is a command, and a command signifies obligation. Therefore, to seek help from Allaah and to entreat to Him in the matter of livelihood and others is a fundamental principle. Furthermore, it is important in seeking a livelihood that one should acquire wealth with generosity of heart and not with greed so that he may be blessed in it. Neither should he make wealth the primary aim; rather, he should regard wealth much as he regards the toilet, which he has need of but it has no place in his heart, and he only resorts to it when necessary.

37. Muslim, Aboo Daawood, an-Nasaa'ee, ad-Daarimee, Ibn Maajah, Ahmad, Aboo 'Awaanah, 'Abdur-Razzaaq and al-Baihaqee.

NOTES:

- i) Aboo Daawood, Ibn Maajah, Aboo 'Awaanah and Baihaqee add, “**He should send the greeting of peace on the Prophet**” at the time of entry. Its *isnaad* is *saheeh*.
- ii) Aboo 'Awaanah also adds a second greeting of peace at the time of exit. Its *isnaad* is *hasan*.

38. Soorah al-'Ankaboot, (29):17

A *marfoo*'³⁹ *hadeeth* which is related by at-Tirmidhee and others states that,

*“He who begins the morning with this world as his greatest concern, Allaah disperses his collected gains and puts its loss in front of him, and only that of the world comes to him which is written for him. And he who begins the morning with the Hereafter as his greatest concern, Allaah gathers for him his works and creates richness in his heart due to them, and the world comes to him subserviently.”*⁴⁰

One of the *Salaf*⁴¹ said, “Each of you is in need of the world but you are in more need of your portion in the Hereafter. Therefore, if you are in search of your portion in the Hereafter first and foremost, then you will achieve your portion of the world in passing, such that it is taken care of as it comes.”

Allaah the Exalted says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ﴿٥٦﴾ مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ
وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُوا ﴿٥٧﴾ إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ ﴿٥٨﴾

“I have only created jinn and men that they may worship Me. No sustenance do I require of them, nor do I require that they should feed Me. For Allaah is He who gives (all) sustenance, Lord of Power, Steadfast (forever).”⁴²

39. This is a report consisting of a chain of narration that goes back to the Prophet (ﷺ).

40. Related by at-Tirmidhee with a *da'eef* (weak) *isnaad*, but the *hadeeth* is *saheeh* due to the supporting narrations of Ibn Maaajah, Ibn Hibbaan and Ahmad.

41. *Salaf*: The first three generations of Muslims, whose excellence has been established by the saying of the Prophet: “*The best of people is my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them.*” (Related by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim) [Publishers' note]

42. Soorah adh-Dhaariyaat (51):56-58

The best skill/occupation

With regard to the best skill, or specifying one skill over another, out of handicraft, trade, building, agriculture etc. then this varies among people. I know of no all-embracing answer, except that when an opportunity presents itself to a person, then he should seek help in making his decision from Allaah through the *istikhaarah* learnt from the Teacher of Goodness (ﷺ), because there is unlimited blessing in that, and then adopt whatever is easy for him. Thus he will not have to go to great hardship in another line, unless there is any Islamic objection to the initial possibility, in which case it is a different matter.

Regarding knowledge

As for which books one may depend on for the different branches of knowledge, then this is a vast topic, and again, the answer to this varies according to people's backgrounds in different lands. This is because in each land, one field of learning or way or mode of thinking may be easier than another, but the source of all good and blessings is that one seeks help from Allaah in acquiring knowledge inherited from the Prophet (ﷺ), because that is what is truly fit to be named *knowledge*. Anything else is either not knowledge at all even though people call it so, or it is knowledge which is not beneficial, or it is beneficial knowledge, in which case it is necessarily true that there exists in the inheritance of Muhammad (ﷺ) that which replaces it, being similar to or better than it.

Thus the person's effort should be to understand the purposes of the Messenger (ﷺ) in his commands, prohibitions and his various other sayings. When the heart is contented that something is indeed as the Messenger (ﷺ) intended, then he should not waver from it as far as possible, whether it is regarding his duties to Allaah or to the people. In all branches of knowledge, he should strive to hold firmly to principles narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ); if he is in doubt regarding any matter about which the people of knowledge have differed, then he should supplicate to Allaah with the *du'aa* which appears in *Saheeh Muslim* narrated by 'Aa'ishah (*radiyallaahu 'anhaa*), that when the Messenger (ﷺ) stood for the

night prayer, he would say,

*“O Allaah! Lord of Jibreel, Meekaa’eel, and Israafeel, Originator of the Heavens and the Earth, Knower of the Unseen and the Present! You judge among your slaves regarding what they have differed in. Guide me to the truth regarding that in which they have differed, for truly, You do guide whomsoever You wish to a path that is straight.”*⁴³

This is because Allaah the Exalted has said, as narrated by His Messenger from Him,

*“O My slaves, all of you are astray except those that I have guided, so seek guidance of Me and I shall guide you.”*⁴⁴

As for a description of good books and compilations: people will have heard from me what Allaah has made easy on other occasions. I will say this much now, that out of all the compiled books which have been divided into chapters, there is none more beneficial than the *Saheeh* of Muhammad bin Ismaa’eel al-Bukhaaree. However, this alone is not enough to cover all the major principles of knowledge, nor can it fulfil all the objectives of one who seeks to dive deep into the various branches of knowledge. It is imperative that other *ahaadeeth*, as well as the words of the people of understanding and the people of knowledge of different specialised fields be known, for the Ummah has progressed tremendously in all fields of learning. He whose heart Allaah enlightens, He guides him through what reaches him; but he whose heart Allaah blinds, many books only increase him in confusion and misguidance, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said to Ibn Labeed al-Ansaari,

43. Muslim, at-Tirmidhee, al-Baghawee and others as an opening supplication, before Soorah al-Faathihah.

See *The Prophet's Prayer Described* of Shaykh al-Albaanee, published by Jam'iat Ihyaa' Minhaaj al-Sunnah (p. 18). [Publishers' note]

44. *Hadeeth Qudsee* related by Muslim, as mentioned before.

“Did the Jews and Christians not have the Tauraat and the Injeel? So what benefit did these bring them?”⁴⁵

So we ask Allaah Almighty that He sustains us with guidance and firmness, instils in our hearts our correct direction, protects us from the mischief of our own selves, that He does not allow our hearts to deviate after giving us guidance, and that He bestows on us Mercy from Him, for He is the Most Generous.

All Praise be to Allaah, Lord of the Worlds, and His blessings be on the most noble of the messengers.

45. This *saheeh hadeeth* is related on the authority of several Companions, its full text is: *The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) looked towards the sky and said, ‘It is now the time when knowledge will be raised up.’ So a man from the Ansaar called Ziyaad bin Labeed said, ‘O Messenger of Allaah! Will knowledge be raised up, when it has been established and the hearts have stored it?’ So the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said, ‘I used to regard you as the best man of understanding among the people of Madeenah ...’ and then he mentioned the straying of the Jews and Christians despite what they possessed of the Book of Allaah.*

Related by al-Bukhaaree in *Khalq Af’aal al-’Ibaad*, an-Nasaa’ee, Ahmad, al-Haakim, Ibn Hibbaan and others with a *saheeh isnaad* from Jubair bin Nufair from ‘Auf bin Maalik al-Ashja’ee. Jubair bin Nufair said after reporting the hadeeth: I later met Shaddaad bin Aus and narrated to him the hadeeth of ‘Auf bin Maalik, so he said, “‘Auf has spoken truthfully.” He then said, “Shall I not inform you of the first part of that knowledge to be raised up?” I said: Of course. He said, “*Khushoo’* (humility, concentration, attention) in prayer, until you will not see an attentive worshipper.”

The Following Appears in the Original Manuscript:

This wasiyyah was verified orally with its author: our Shaykh, Imaam of the leading Imaams, the Shaykh of Islaam, chief of the experts and scholars of *hadeeth*, leader of the Muslims, Mufti of many groups, signpost of guidance, Taqi-ud-Deen Abul-'Abbaas Ahmad bin 'Abdul-Haleem bin 'Abdus-Salaam bin Taymiyyah al-Harraanee, may Allaah be pleased with him, by:

his brother, the Imaam and learned one, Sharf-ud-Deen Aboo Muhammad 'Abdullaah;

the Shaykh, Imaam, learned one and renouncer of the worldly-life, Shams-ud-Deen Muhammad bin Abul-'Abbaas ad-Dibaahee;

'Izz-ud-Deen 'Abdul-'Azeez bin 'Abdul-Lateef bin 'Abdul-'Azeez bin 'Abdus-Salaam bin Taymiyyah;

Noor-ud-Deen Muhammad bin Sharf-ud-Deen Muhammad bin 'Alaa-ud-Deen Muhammad bin 'Abdul-Qaadir bin 'Abdul-Khaaliq al-Ansaaree Ibn as-Saa'igh; the Shaikh Aboo Bakr bin Qaasim bin Abur-Rajbee al-Kinaanee;

Zayn-ud-Deen 'Ubaadah bin 'Abdul-Ghaniyy bin Mansoor bin Mansoor bin Ibraaheem bin Salamah al-Harraanee;

Jareer bin Sa'eed bin Humair al-Ghassanee;

'Abdul-Majeed bin Mahmood bin Ahmad al-Jadlee; and

Naasir-ud-Deen Muhammad bin Ahmad bin 'Abdul-Ghaniyy bin al-'Alaa'ee al-Harraanee,

by the reading of al-Qaasim bin Muhammad bin Yoosuf al-Barzaalee, on the night of the thirteenth of Rabe'e' al-Aakhir, in the year six hundred and ninety-seven, at Daar-al-Hadeeth, al-Qusaa'ain, Damascus.

All praise be to Allaah, Lord of the worlds. There is neither movement nor power except by Allaah, the High, the Great. May Allaah bless Muhammad, his family and his companions, and grant them peace.

THE END

Our Da'wah

1. To return to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and to comprehend them in accordance with the practice of the Pious Predecessors (*As-Salaf-us-Saliheen*).
2. To inform Muslims of their real *Deen*: to call them to act in accordance with its teachings and regulations, and to adorn themselves with its virtues and ethics, which will ensure them the pleasure of Allaah and will realise for them happiness and glory.
3. To warn Muslims against *Shirk* (worshipping others besides Allaah) in its various manifestations, *Bid'ah* (innovations), foreign concepts, and rejected and fabricated *Ahaadeeth*, which have marred the beauty of Islaam and have prevented the advancement of Muslims.
4. To revive free Islaamic thought within the boundaries of Islaamic principles and to remove the intellectual lethargy which has rested upon the minds of many Muslims and has kept them away from the source of pure Islaam.
5. To strive towards the resumption of an Islaamic life, to establish an Islaamic society and to apply the rule of Allaah, *Subhaanahu Wa Ta'aala*, on earth.

This is our *Da'wah*. We call upon all Muslims to support us in carrying out this Trust which will, *Inshaa-Allaah*, elevate our *Ummah* and spread the eternal message of Islaam.

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The Concise Legacy

Imaam Ibn Taymiyyah left behind him a vast legacy, including hundreds of profound writings on *'Aqeedah, Tafseer, Hadeeth, and Fiqh*, and numerous students who became outstanding scholars in their own right: Ibn al-Qayyim, Ibn Katheer and adh-Dhahabee are perhaps the most well-known.

Ibn Taymiyyah was a sharp sword against the onslaught of innovations, in both doctrine and practice, that had swept across the Muslim nation, against the intellectual stagnation of rigid madhhab-ism, and against the corruptions of the Jews and Christians, not forgetting his physical contribution to Jihaad, decisive in defending Damascus against the attack of the Tartars who had ransacked many Muslim lands.

While Ibn Taymiyyah will be most remembered for those outspoken refutations of whatever contradicted the path of the *Ahlu-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah*, the Adherents to the Prophetic Way according to the understanding of the Companions (because of which he was repeatedly imprisoned, and to this day subjected to much imbalanced, and often false and slanderous, criticism), his "Concise Legacy," as presented in the following pages, is quite different: a simple but valuable exposition of the basic ideas of *taqwaa* and sticking to the Straight Path, with the individual's personal relationship with Allaah repeatedly emphasised as the key to success in both this world and the Hereafter.

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