

The Joy of *Worship*

09-February-2023



Thought-provoking speech of weekly
sunnah-inspiring ijtima

(For Islamic Brothers)

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ
 أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Joy of Worship

وَعَلَى الْإِلَهِ وَأَصْحَابِكَ يَا حَبِيبَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

وَعَلَى الْإِلَهِ وَأَصْحَابِكَ يَا نُورَ اللَّهِ

الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ

نَوَيْتُ سُنَّتَ الْإِعْتِكَافِ

Translation: “I have made the intention of Sunnah *i’tikāf*.”

Dear Islamic brothers, whenever you enter a masjid, make the intention of *i’tikāf*, for you will be rewarded as long as you stay in the masjid. Remember, inside a masjid, there is no *shar‘ī* permission to eat, drink, sleep or have suḥūr and ifṭār, and not even to drink Zamzam water and the water on which *dam* has been done. However, if the intention of *i’tikāf* is made, all these acts will become permissible. One should not make intention to observe *i’tikāf* only to eat, drink or sleep, but rather he should do it for pleasing Allāh Almighty.

It is stated in *Fatāwā Shāmī*:

“If someone wants to eat, drink or sleep in a masjid, he should make intention to observe *i’tikāf* and do the dhikr of Allāh Almighty for some time. Then, he may proceed as he wishes (i.e. now if he wants to eat, drink or sleep, he can do so).”

Excellence of sending *ṣalāt* upon the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

The final Prophet of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ فِي يَوْمٍ أَلْفَ مَرَّةٍ لَمْ يَمُتْ حَتَّى يَرَى مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ

“Whoever recites *ṣalāt* upon me 1,000 times, he will not die until he sees his place in Jannah.”¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ has stated: *أَفْضَلُ الْعَمَلِ الصَّادِقَةُ*, “A truthful intention is the best action.”² O devotees of the Prophet! Make good intentions before every action, as this can be a means of entering Paradise. Before listening to the *bayān*, make good intentions. For example:

- you will listen to the entire *bayān* to gain the knowledge of Islam.
- you will sit in a respectful manner.
- you will refrain from laziness during the *bayān*.
- you will listen to the *bayān* to reform yourself.
- whatever you hear and learn, you will try to convey it to others.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

¹ *al-Tarhib wa al-Tarhib*: 2,590

² *Jāmi‘ al-Ṣaghīr*, p. 81, *ḥadith*: 1,284

How the Beloved Prophet of Allāh ﷺ would worship

The renowned Companion, *Sayyidunā* Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates that the final Prophet of Allāh ﷺ would keep fasts and offer great amounts of ṣalāh to the extent his blessed feet would swell.¹ *Umm al-Mu'minīn Sayyidatunā* ʿĀ'ishah Ṣiddīqah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا once said, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ never left *qiyām al-layl* (offering *nafl* ṣalāh at night). If he was unwell, he would sit and pray.”²

As narrated by *Umm al-Mu'minīn Sayyidatunā* Umm Salamah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, the blessed practice of Allāh's Messenger ﷺ was to offer ṣalāh at night and then to sleep for the same amount of time that he had prayed. Upon awakening, he would offer ṣalāh for as long as he had slept. He would then sleep again for as long as he had offered ṣalāh. This blessed practice would continue until the time of *fajr* began.³

Sayyidunā Jābir رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ explains, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would use *miswak* as soon as he awoke, perform *wuḍū'* and offer ṣalāh.”⁴

The Companion, *Sayyidunā* Ḥudhayfah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ beautifully relates, “One night, the final Prophet of Allāh ﷺ was offering ṣalāh in the masjid. Considering this a priceless opportunity, I stood behind and began offering ṣalāh following him. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ then began reciting Sūrah al-Baqarah. In my heart, I thought the Prophet ﷺ would recite a hundred verses and go into *rukū'*. He did not do so, but instead recited more. I then thought he ﷺ would recite two hundred verses and go into *rukū'*, but again, he ﷺ did not do so. When this occurred, I now thought the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ would recite the entirety of Sūrah al-Baqarah.

¹ *Tareekh-e-Dimashq*, vol. 4, p. 141

² *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*: 1,307

³ *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhi*: 2,923

⁴ *Majm'a al-Zawaid*: 3,651

When recital of Sūrah al-Baqarah was complete, the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ still did not perform *rukūʿ* and began reciting Sūrah Āle ʿImrān instead. I assumed he would recite the entire sūrah and perform *rukūʿ*, but as he صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ finished reciting Sūrah Āle ʿImrān, he began Sūrah al-Nisā'. I again thought he would make *rukūʿ* after finishing this sūrah, but upon reaching the end of Sūrah al-Nisā', he صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ began reciting Sūrah al-Mā'idah. Only after finishing this sūrah did Allāh's Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ then go into *rukūʿ*.

I heard him reciting *سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ* in *rukūʿ*. In the second unit of ṣalāh, he صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ began reciting Surah al-An'ām."¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

O devotees of the Messenger! You have just heard of how the intercessor of this *ummah*, the master of both worlds, the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ would worship Allāh Almighty with such diligence. Look at the profuse amount of worship he صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ would engage in. Bearing all of this in mind, also remember the great number of responsibilities and preoccupations he was involved in.

Normally, we only have one home and its residents to look after. But our beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ is the prophet for the entire universe. He would carry out the obligations that came with prophethood, teach the honourable Companions عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّضْوَانُ Islamic knowledge, call towards righteousness, give happiness to the sad and visit the sick. People brought their needs and worries to him, and he would resolve their issues. In fact, even animals would come to him seeking help and relief from their troubles, and our beloved Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ would grant them his compassion and mercy.

¹ *Musannaf Abd. Razzaq: 2,845*

There are many more examples of how busy Allāh's Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ would be, yet despite all of this, he would diligently worship Allāh in abundance.

We were made to worship

Look at us, on the other hand.

- When it comes to making money, we have all the time in the world.
- When it comes to leisure and travel, we have all the time in the world.
- We are always available to use our phones or social media.
- We have time to gather around and watch public performers.
- We have time to play games.
- When cricket matches or sporting events occur, LCD screens are placed on roads, and we spend all night watching them. We have time to make noise, shout and scream.

We have time for absolutely everything in the world, but no time to worship Allāh Almighty.

- If there is anything we do not have time for, it is to offer *ṣalāt al-Duḥā* and *al-Ishrāq*.
- If there is anything we do not have time for, it is to offer the *nafl ṣalāh* of *al-Awwābīn*.
- If there is anything we do not have time for, it is to attend virtuous gatherings.
- We have no time to travel in Madanī qāfilahs.
- We have no time to call others towards righteousness.

- We have no time to learn.
- If there is anything we do not have time for, it is to prepare for our grave and the Hereafter.

Besides this, we have all the time in the world to do anything related to this world. If only we were fortunate enough to contemplate our Hereafter! If only we were able to practically take the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ as our role model and implement his blessed biography in our lives. If only we too were granted the ability to worship Allāh Almighty in a manner befitting Him!

The most important task in the world

The renowned Sufi scholar, *Mawlānā* Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ says:

“Tell me! If a king sends you for a specific task, but on the way, you instead become engrossed with many other things to the point you forget the specific task he sent you for, will the king be pleased? Not at all.

For this reason, if man were to forget every task or work of this world, then let him, but there is one specific task he must never forget. What is this one thing he should never forget, you may ask? The answer to this is mentioned in Juz' 22, Sūrah Aḥzāb:¹

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ^ط

[Translation from *Kanz al-Īmān*:] ‘We indeed offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to bear it and became afraid of it, and man bore it.’²

¹ *Fīhi mā fīhi*, p. 7

² *Al-Quran*, 33:72

The ‘trust’ referred to in this verse means *ṣalāh*. It also means every action a person is rewarded for doing and becomes sinful for not doing.”¹

Sadly, we seem to remember everything else.

- We do not forget to eat.
- We do not forget to drink.
- We do not forget to buy new clothes.
- We cannot sit still until we buy the latest model of a particular phone.
- We keep track of cars and their latest models.

If we forget anything, we forget only worship, which is itself the most important task we can ever do.

- We do not worry for what will happen in our graves.
- We turn a blind eye to how we will be fearful and alone in our graves.
- We do not stop to consider if we will be capable of answering the questions posed to us by angels in the grave when we will be afraid and alone.
- What will happen to us when we are exposed to the blazing heat of the Day of Judgement?
- What will be our state when our book of deeds is finally opened?
- How will we cross the bridge of *al-Ṣirāṭ*?
- We will end up in Paradise or Hellfire?

¹ *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn Ma’a Hashiya Ṣāwī, Sūrah Aḥzāb, under verse 72, Juz 5, vol. 3, p. 54*

If there is anything we forget or do not pay attention to, it is only these matters. If only we were to prepare for our Hereafter! If only we had enthusiasm and zeal towards our acts of worship! If only the love of this world was removed from our hearts and we became those who contemplated on these matters for the sake of Allāh Almighty.

The meaning of our lives

Allāh says in the 56th verse of Surah Al-Dhāriyāt:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: “And I have created Jinn and human beings only for this, that they should worship Me.”¹

From this sacred verse, we learn the following: we have come into this world only to worship Allāh Almighty. We must give priority and importance to worship over everything else. Whatever is lost, let it be lost, but we must never become lazy in worship.

Describing the worship of Sayyidunā Qays b. Muslim رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, Sayyidunā Sufyān b. ‘Uyaynah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said, “He رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ would offer ṣalāh all night, sit down at the time of suḥūr and cry before Allāh Almighty. He would beseech, ‘This is what we were created to do. If our end is not upon goodness, we shall be ruined.’”²

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

What is the sweetest thing?

O devotees of the Messenger! May Allāh Almighty grant us the ability to worship Him! Without a shadow of doubt, the worship of Allāh Almighty

¹ Al-Quran, 51:56

² Ṣīfat al-Ṣafwah, Juz 3, vol. 2, p. 84

is sweeter and more joyful than anything else in the world. The problem is, we are stuck in worldly joys. We have not given worship its due importance. This is why we do not feel the same sweetness and joy in worship as we do when we do something worldly.

If we were to become true worshippers in every sense of the word, then **ان شاء الله** we would find such joy in our worship that we would find it hard to carry on living without it. A pious servant of Allāh Almighty who performed abundant amounts of worship, once said, “If the kings of this world were to know of the joy and bounties we receive, they would battle us with swords.”¹

This means, that if worldly kings who combat one another in competition for kingship and power were to find out the unimaginable joy in worship, they would become captivated by it and seek to attain this instead.

Shedding tears when leaving this world

When the Prophetic Companion, *Sayyidunā* Mu‘ādh b. Jabal **رضي الله عنه** was passing away, he began to shed tears. When asked why, he said, “After passing away, I will be unable to fast on hot days and perform ṣalāh on cold nights, nor shall I be able to attend circles of dhikr held by scholars.”²

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ O devotees of the Messenger! Whoever is granted joy in their worship, prioritises their worship over everything else. May we be blessed with such joy and sweetness in our worship too! May we become those who prioritise worship over everything else!

¹ *Ṣifāt al-Ṣafwah, Juzz 4, vol. 2, p. 135*

² *Lataaif al-Ma‘arif, p. 402*

5 incidents regarding joy and sweetness in worship

1. An Anṣārī Companion

Sayyidunā Jābir رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ explains:

“We accompanied the Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ on a battle expedition. We came across a mountainous region when returning, in which he صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ ordered us to stay. Every Companion عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّضْوَانُ did as instructed in order to rest.

Allāh’s Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ then asked, ‘Who shall keep watch tonight?’ Two Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا stood up, one a Muhājir and the other Anṣārī. ‘O Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ!’ they submitted, ‘We desire this honour. Please accept us!’

He صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ granted them permission, and both Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا began preparing to keep watch. After discussion, they decided amongst themselves who would keep watch for half the night whilst the other slept. When the other woke up, he would take up guard duties whilst the first could then sleep.

For the first half of the night, the Anṣārī Companion رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was to stand in watch whilst the Muhājir Companion رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ slept. After some time, the Anṣārī Companion رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ began offering ṣalāh and reciting Sūrah al-Kahf. As this happened, an enemy had climbed a nearby hill and began firing arrows towards them. The very first arrow he fired struck the Anṣārī Companion رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.”

رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمُ! Look at the unimaginable love the Companions عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّضْوَانُ had for worshipping Allāh!

“The Anṣārī Companion رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ had an arrow lodged in his body, but he did not move an inch and continued ṣalāh as though nothing had happened. The enemy fired another arrow which struck him, but he رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ still did not break his ṣalāh. When a third arrow was fired and

lodged itself in his blessed body, the Anṣārī Companion رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ quickly performed *rukūʿ*, *sajdah* and finished his ṣalāh. He then turned to the Muhājir Companion رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and woke him up.

When the disbeliever who fired arrows at the Companion saw there was more than one present, he immediately ran away.

The Muhājir Companion رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ awoke to find his friend injured. ‘Why did you not wake me up?’, he asked as he pulled arrows from the others body, ‘An enemy attacked you!’ In display of his utmost love for ṣalāh and the Qur’ān, the Anṣārī Companion رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ replied, ‘I had begun reciting a sūrah of the Qur’ān. I did not consider it acceptable to leave it half unread and break my ṣalāh. By Allāh! If the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not give me the responsibility to keep watch, I would have completed the sūrah even if it cost my life.’¹

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

2. Sayyidunā ‘Urwah b. Zubayr

Sayyidunā ‘Urwah b. Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was once afflicted with a particular illness, which was slowly eating away at the flesh of his foot. Doctors advised for his foot to be amputated so that this illness would not spread into the rest of his blessed body. Sayyidunā ‘Urwah b. Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was not pleased with this, and continuously objected to it. Finally, it was said to the physicians, “When he offers ṣalāh, amputate his blessed foot.”

Sayyidunā ‘Urwah b. Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was offering ṣalāh, when doctors came and amputated his blessed foot to stop the illness spreading. May we be sacrificed upon him! He رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was so engrossed in the joy of ṣalāh, he did not even notice his foot had been amputated.²

¹ ‘Uyoon al-Hikayat, part 1, pp. 33,34

² Al-Madkhal li-Ibn al-Haaj, vol. 2, p. 190

3. Sayyidunā Muslim b. Yasār

Imam Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ writes,

“Sayyidunā Muslim b. Yasār رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was once offering ṣalāh. A fire suddenly broke out nearby. Due to his complete involvement in prayer, he رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ did not notice this at all, to the extent people had to come forward to pull him away from the fire.”¹

4. Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh b. Zubayr

The Prophetic Companion, Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh b. Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا would become completely immersed in his worship and the joy he received from it. He would offer ṣalāh with utmost presence and humility.

His small, beloved child was once near him as he prayed. A snake then fell down from a nearby rooftop and drew close to the child, causing people to cry out, stirring commotion. In the end, the snake was killed. Despite all this happening, Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh b. Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا remained unmoved in his ṣalāh.² His *sajdah* would go on for lengthy periods of time, such that birds would sit upon his blessed back.³

Sayyidunā ibn Abū Mulaykah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said, “By Allāh! I have not seen anyone like ‘Abdullāh b. Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا. He was once offering ṣalāh when someone fired a rock from a slingshot. It passed between his beard and chest, but such was his presence and humility in ṣalāh, that by Allāh, I did not see any element of fear come into his eyes, nor did he waver in his recitation. He رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا continued his ṣalāh in the same serene fashion as before.”⁴

¹ *Al-Zuhd li-Ahmad Bin Hanbal*, p. 301

² *Tareekh-e-Dimashq*, vol. 28, 174

³ *Tareekh-e-Dimashq*, vol. 28, 170

⁴ *Tareekh-e-Dimashq*, vol. 28, 173

5. Sayyidatunā Rābi‘ah Baṣriyyah

Sayyidatunā Rābi‘ah Baṣriyyah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا was a female saint, who spent her every day and night totally devoted to worshipping Allāh. She offered one thousand *nafl* ṣalāh a day, and she did not place her head on a pillow for fifty years. In the book *Tanbīh al-Ghāfilīn*, we find a narration that describes how she was once offering ṣalāh, when a piece of her prayer mat found its way into her blessed eye. Her heart was so engaged in ṣalāh and such was her focus in the court of Allāh that she رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا did not even notice something was in her eye for the duration of her prayer.¹

Mīr ‘Abd al-Wāḥid Bilgrāmi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ writes:

After ṣalāh, she asked someone, “Take a look at my eye; I feel something in it.” A small fragment of her prayer mat was found within, which had caused injury to her eye. An onlooker exclaimed, “O *Sayyidah!* Your eye is injured, and you did not realise?” “I was in ṣalāh when this happened”, she explained, “and when I am in the court of my Lord, even if all of Hellfire was to pass by my eyes, I would not notice due to my fear of Him.”²

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

The misfortune of not experiencing joy in worship

O devotees of the Messenger! You have just listened to how our pious elders would remember Allāh with complete presence and humility, utterly engrossing themselves in His remembrance. The result of this was them experiencing inexplicable joy and sweetness in their acts of worship. May Allāh grant us the same joy in ours!

¹ *Tanbih al-Ghafilin*, p. 308

² *Sab‘a Sanabil*, p. 93

Imam Ḥasan al-Baṣrī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ discusses this subject by saying, “People are deprived from sweetness in their ṣalāh, recitation of the Qur’ān and du‘ā’. If you find sweetness in these three things, thank Allāh Almighty. If people are unable to attain these, then know the doors of goodness have been closed upon them.”¹

الله أكبر! Think for a moment! Look how detrimental it is to not find joy in your ṣalāh, recitation of the Qur’ān or du‘ā’! Sadly, many of us fall into this category today.

- We find it hard to offer ṣalāh.
- We do not recite the Qur’ān for months, sometimes years on end.
- We do not even think to recite the Qur’ān.
- We do make du‘ā’ after we offer ṣalāh.
- But even in this, do we ask wholeheartedly and with full attention?
- How do we go about making du‘ā’ in the first place?
- What are we thinking of when we make du‘ā’?
- How much presence and humility do we feel when we ask from Allāh?

All of these things are extremely important for us to think about. It is a most grievous matter!

- We have moved far away from our true purpose in life, which is to worship Allāh.

¹ *Shu’ab al-Īmān*: 7,226

- Our enthusiasm and love for ṣalāh has nearly diminished entirely.
- Passion for making du‘ā' is decreasing day by day.
- We placed the Qur'ān in a beautiful cover and kept it in a high place out of respect, but we never cleansed the rust of our hearts by reciting it. As a result, our circumstances in life became worse and worse.
- We find modern society is moving towards ruin and destruction.
- Fights and quarrels occur in our households.
- We find no peace in our lives.
- We encounter issues in our jobs and businesses.
- We find anxiety in our hearts.
- We do not love or show respect to one another anymore.
- Worries are widespread wherever you look.

This is all a result of turning away from our real purpose in life. This is what happens when we do not worship Allāh Almighty as we should.

Dear Islamic brothers! If we want peace and success in this world and the Hereafter, we must remain attached to our purpose. In order to do this, we must draw guidance from the lives of our pious elders and completely attach our hearts to worship. There is no other way for man to attain dignity.

Man's true dignity is found in worship

The father of Imām Aḥmad Razā Khān, *Mawlānā* Naqī ‘Ali Khān رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ, says, “The root of every perfection is worship. Man’s true dignity is in

lowering one's head in the court of Allāh.”¹ It is mentioned in the Qur'ān:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا ط

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: “Whoever desires honour, so (he should know that) all honour belongs to Allāh.”²

Commenting on this verse, Sayyidunā Qatādah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ explained,

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلْيَتَعَزَّزْ بِطَاعَةِ

“Whoever desires dignity should seek it through obeying Allāh.”³

In other words, esteem, honour and dignity are only attained through worshipping Allāh.

How can we find joy in our worship?

Commonly we think to ourselves, “We read ṣalāh, recite the Qur'ān and do as much worship as we can, yet we are unable to find joy in it. We cannot draw the level of sweetness from our worship that we should.”

In relation to this, remember that having worship affect your heart, being inclined towards it, finding joy in it and having presence and humility are all huge bounties from Allāh Almighty. We should continue worshipping Allāh no matter if we have this bounty or not. Some people cease their acts of worship when they do not experience joy in them. The Amīr of Ahl al-Sunnah دَامَتْ بَرَكَاتُهُمُ الْعَالِيَةِ advises such people beautifully by saying, “Even if it disinterests you, stay attached to it.”

¹ Anwar-e-Jamal-e-Mustafa, p. 323

² Al-Quran, 35:10

³ Tafsīr al- Khāzin, Sūrah Faatir, under verse 10, vol. 3, p. 453

Whether we feel joy in our worship or not, and whether we feel it in our hearts or not, we must always continue to worship Allāh Almighty. One day or another, you will be granted this huge bounty of joy in worship if Allāh wills.

The joy of worship is found through hard work

Remember, our *nafs* is not usually used to performing worship. This is why worship is difficult in the beginning; a person may struggle to incline their heart towards it, perhaps they find it tiresome, or they remain engrossed in worldly matters. A person in a situation like this should continue burdening their *nafs* and worship Allāh over and over. ان شاء الله A day will come when your *nafs* becomes used to worship, and the joy of this will blossom in your heart.

Allāh Almighty says in the Qur'ān

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

Translation from Kanz al-Īmān: “Whoever does good deeds; whether a male or a female, and is a Muslim, We shall definitely henceforth make him live a good life.”¹

This sacred verse explains how whichever Muslim man or woman performs good deeds, will be granted a good and pure life by Allāh. According to a narration in *Tafsīr al-Khāzin*, a good life means the joy of worship.² By extension, this means any Muslim who performs good deeds will be granted joy in their acts of worship. A pious elder رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ once said, “I spent twenty years giving my all in offering ṣalāh (striving

¹ Al-Quran, 16:97

² Tafsīr al- Khāzin, Sūrah Nahl, under verse 97, vol. 3, p. 97

hard despite my heart not feeling it). After this, I began to feel joy in worship.”¹

Increase in your *nafl* acts of worship

Dear Islamic brothers! If we want to acquire joy in our worship, we should begin performing lots of *nafl* (voluntary) deeds alongside our *farḍ*. For example, we can offer *nafl* ṣalāh, keep *nafl* fasts and give *nafl* charity. With the blessings of this, we will find untold joy in our worship
 ان شاء الله.

Allāh Almighty says in a hadith *qudsī*: “A person gains closeness to Me through voluntary acts till I love him.”²

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ By performing an abundance of *nafl* acts, a person becomes beloved to Allāh Almighty, and it goes without saying: whoever Allāh Almighty loves will have their heart always focused and inclined towards Him. Whoever has their heart focused upon Allāh Almighty will find the joy in their worship they were looking for ان شاء الله.

How to discover joy in worship

The jurist Abū Layth Samarqandī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ writes:

A person cannot acquire joy in worship until he does these four things: begins worship with good intentions; he was granted the ability to worship, so he should be mindful of this bounty of Allah Almighty; worship with fear of Allāh in his heart; and remain sincere from beginning to end.

Whoever begins worship with good intentions knows the ability to perform good deeds is from Allāh Almighty alone, and when

¹ *Qut al-Quloob*, vol. 1, p. 92

² *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*: 6,502

a person keeps the bounties of Allāh Almighty in mind, he remains thankful. This thankfulness results in an increase of bounty. Further, when a person worships whilst fearing Allāh Almighty, reward is made *wājib* upon him.

The worldly reward of worship is a person experiencing sweetness and joy as he performs it. When a person completes his worship sincerely, Allāh accepts his deeds. A sign of this acceptance is a person being given the ability to perform more and even better good deeds.¹

A hard heart - an obstacle to finding joy in worship

O devotees of the Messenger! One foundational reason we cannot find joy in our worship is having a hard heart. If our hearts were instead soft, then finding joy in worship will happen automatically **ان شاء الله**. Anyone who wants to feel the effects of worshipping Allāh in their hearts, anyone who wants to incline towards worship and find joy in it, should strive to soften their heart.

Try to carry out deeds which soften your heart, as anything that softens the heart contains blessings which lead a person to experiencing joy in his worship. On the other hand, anything that hardens one's heart deprives a person of this.

The heart hardens with sin

For example, if someone's heart is hard due to sin, the blessings of *tawbah* will cause his heart to soften. It is extremely unlikely for someone drenched in sin to also find joy in worship. *Sayyidunā* Wuhayb b. Ward **رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ** was once asked, "Does a person who disobeys Allāh Almighty not find joy in their worship?", to which he replied, "Indeed,

¹ *Tanbih al-Ghafileen*, p. 341

he who sins does not draw joy from worship, and he who even intends to sin remains deprived of this also.”¹

Sayyidunā ‘Abdullāh b. Khabīq رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ also declared, “Listening to that which you should not extinguishes the light of joy in worship from one’s heart.”²

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ! Dear Islamic brothers! Music, lies, backbiting and tale telling etc., are all sins we should not be involved in. Simply listening to them leads to a person being deprived of tasting sweetness in worship.

Whoever wants their heart to be inclined towards worship, feel enjoyment in offering ṣalāh, have their eyes fill with tears when they recite the Qur’ān, taste the sweetness of asking from Allāh, have their heart overflowing with love for the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ when they recite ṣalāt upon him, remain lost in thoughts of the Green Dome atop the Prophet’s masjid, and not be disturbed by trivial thoughts during worship, should try hard to do the following:

- Not listen to music
- Save one’s eyes, ears, hands and entire body from sinning
- Refrain from useless speech
- Never lie
- Never backbite anyone
- Never tell false tales about someone
- Do not look for faults in others, etc.

¹ *Shu’ab al-Īmān*: 7,225

² *Hilyat-ul-Awliyā*, vol. 10, p. 177

Try to always implement these positive changes in your life. ان شاء الله Your heart will become soft, and you will find joy in your worship like never before.

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Think of the Hereafter!

Dear Islamic brothers! Another thing a person seeking joy in worship must do, is rid his heart of worldly love and begin contemplating over the Hereafter. ان شاء الله The blessings of this will manifest in you finding joy and peace in worship. Regarding this, *Sayyidunā* Abū ‘Abdullāh Qurashī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ said:

A person approached a pious man and said, “I do good deeds but do not feel their joy in my heart.” The pious man replied, “The daughter of Satan, meaning the world, lives in your heart. The father (Satan) comes to meet his daughter (the world) in your heart. Whenever Satan enters your heart, it is apparent he shall spread nothing but mischief, and this is the reason you do not feel joy from your good deeds.”¹

A beautiful narration explains how Allāh Almighty spoke to His Prophet Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام and announced, “O Dāwūd! If you love Me, then take love for the world out of your heart! Love for Me and love for the world certainly cannot co-exist in one heart.”²

Prophet ‘Īsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام once said to his disciples, “Do not sit with the dead, or your heart shall die.” “Who are the dead?”, they asked. Prophet ‘Īsā

¹ *Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Bayān, Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān, under verse 189, vol. 2, p. 149*

² *Mukāshafat al-Qulūb, p. 317*

عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام then explained, الْكَرَّاعِيُونَ فِي الدُّنْيَا الْمُبْحَبُونَ لَهَا - “Those attracted to the world and those who love it.”¹

Eating excessively and its effect on the heart

Dear Islamic brothers! Eating excessively hardens the heart. Whoever seeks joy in their worship should build the habit of not eating to a full stomach. *Sayyidunā* Ibrahīm b. Adham رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ once said, “I met with many saints in Mount Lebanon, all of whom said to me, “When you are amongst people, give them four pieces of advice.” One of these four was, “Whoever eats excessively will not find joy in their worship.”²

Imām Muḥammad Ghazālī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ writes:

A noble habit of pious individuals رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ who walked the path of the Hereafter, was that they would not eat condiments continually, but only from time to time. They would also withhold their *nafs* from desires. If a man continues to eat delicious food in accordance with his desires, his *nafs* becomes rebellious and hardness develops in his heart.³

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Leave three things and you find joy in worship

Offering priceless advice, *Sayyidunā* Aḥmad b. Ḥarb رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said:

I worshipped Allāh for fifty years. When I stopped three things, I found joy in my worship. Firstly, I stopped pleasing people (this means, not worrying about what people will say and fully focusing on what will please Allāh Almighty). Secondly, I left the company of open sinners and began staying with the pious. Third

¹ *Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Bayān, Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, under verse 189, vol. 2, p. 149*

² *Minhāj al-Ābidīn, p. 260*

³ *Iḥyā al-'Ulūm, vol. 3, p. 280*

and final, I let go of the joy of this world. This led to me attaining joy in matters of the Hereafter.¹

The Weekly Ijtimā' Department

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ Dawat-e-Islami is a religious movement full of those who love the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. It works across over 80 departments around the globe, calling people towards righteousness. One of them is the Weekly Ijtimā' Department, which itself normally has three to five members. Their responsibilities include:

- Drawing up schedules for noble Qur'ān and *na't* reciters, as well as for *muballighs*.
- Writing up information regarding recitation of the Qur'ān, *na't* and speeches, as well as having these delivered to relevant responsible individuals at least seven days before an ijtimā'.
- Arranging security measures for an ijtimā', in particular at entry and exit points.
- Arranging lighting, speaker systems and electrical power sources for an ijtimā'.
- Ensuring water is available at washrooms and wuḍū' areas.
- Keeping masjids and any place in which an ijtimā' is occurring clean.
- Spreading mats and sheets for attendees to sit upon and having these collected post-ijtimā'.
- Kindly inviting Islamic brothers in areas around the ijtimā' to attend and take part themselves.

¹ *Tareekh al-Islam, vol. 6, p. 184*

- Arranging for drinking water wherever an ijtimāʿ is taking place.
- Ensuring the books and booklets of Maktaba-tul-Madinah are available at stalls.
- Making sure unsuitable literature and unsuitable food items are not sold nearby or from a stall.
- Organising parking space for Islamic brothers attending the ijtimāʿ.
- Arranging shoe racks and ensuring shoes are put away tidily.
- In terms of stalls, ensuring they are all easily identifiable from one another. For example, arranging for boards or banners above a stall that contain information regarding it.

May Allāh grant the Weekly Ijtimāʿ Department more success.

One of the best ways to find joy in worship

Dear Islamic brothers! One of the best ways to find joy in your acts of worship is to adopt the company of Allāh’s pious servants. **الْحَبْلُ لِلَّهِ** Through spending time with them, listening to their words, looking at them with love and attempting to become like them, one will find the hardness of his heart begin to disappear. Also, one will begin to think and prepare regarding their Hereafter.

Sayyidunā Jaʿfar b. Sulaymān **رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ** once recalled, “Whenever I found hardness in my heart, I would visit Muḥammad b. Wāsiʿ **رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ** in the morning. By doing so, I would receive great benefit.”¹

¹ *Hilyat-ul-Awliyā, vol. 2, p. 395*

Fateḥ Muḥammad began offering ṣalāh

Miyān Sher Muḥammad Sharaqūrī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ is a famous saint of Pakistan. He was approached by a man who exclaimed, “O honourable one! I have a son named Fateḥ Muḥammad. I poured my heart and soul into making him a memoriser of the Qur’ān, but despite this, he does not offer ṣalāh.” Miyān Sher Muḥammad Sharaqūrī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ replied, “Bring him to us.”

After two days, the man brought his son with him and said, “Fateḥ Muḥammad is at your service.” Miyān Sher Muḥammad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ then lovingly asked, “Fateḥ Muḥammad, why do you not offer ṣalāh?”, to which he replied, “My heart is not drawn towards ṣalāh. If you are to make me pray, then I also ask you to make my heart incline towards praying.”

At this time, Miyān Sher Muḥammad رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ was lying down on a mat. Hearing what Fateḥ Muḥammad had said, he swiftly sat up and pointed his first finger at the boy’s heart. “Go!”, the saint said to him, “Your heart will be attached (to ṣalāh).” It was enough for a saint of Allāh to say only this, and the state of Fateḥ Muḥammad changed immediately. When he began *ḥuḥr*, his ṣalāh would go on till *‘aṣr*. He would make intention for *‘ishā* and pray until *fajr* began.¹

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ! Dear Islamic brothers! If we are to attain joy in our worship and have our hearts attached to it, we should also adopt the company of pious people. Who knows when we shall be looked upon generously, and our hearts become enlightened the same way Fateḥ Muḥammad’s was.

Pious Deed number 5

Dear Islamic brothers! In order to find joy in acts of worship, have your heart attached to righteous activities and adopt the company of pious people, affiliate yourself with the religious environment of Dawat-e-

¹ *Mawa’iz Na’eemi*, pp. 316, 317

Islami. Also try your best to take part in the 12 religious works. **ان شاء الله**
 With the blessings of this, you shall find steadfastness in performing
 good deeds and develop the mindset to avoid sin. One of these 12
 religious works is to fill in the Pious Deeds booklet given to us by the
 Amīr of Ahl al-Sunnah **دامت بركاتهم العالیه**.

From the 72 pious deeds listed inside this booklet, pious deed number
 5 is, “Today, have you recited Ayat-ul-Kursī, Surah al-Ikhlāṣ and Tasbīh-
 e-Fāṭimah at least once after offering the 5 Ṣalāhs?”

الحمد لله The Amīr of Ahl al-Sunnah **دامت بركاتهم العالیه** has beautifully prescribed
 this to his spiritual disciples so they may improve and reform themselves.
 You can acquire this pocket-sized booklet from Maktaba-tul-Madīnah.
 After reading it, you can implement its points in your life and take account of
 your daily actions. **ان شاء الله** You will develop a mindset to avoid sin and do good
 deeds. Your heart shall be purified, and your character made beautiful.

May Allāh Almighty take hardness away from our hearts, and may He
 illuminate them. If only our hearts were attached to ṣalāh; if only we found
 joy in our worship and were enthusiastic about it! If only we were blessed
 with joy and steadfastness in our worship too! **امین بچاہا النبی الامین صلی اللہ علیہ والہ وسلم**

Imam Ja‘far Ṣādiq **رحمۃ اللہ علیہ**

O devotees of the Messenger! 15th Rajab is the day of Imam Ja‘far Ṣādiq
رحمۃ اللہ علیہ. In relation to this, let us briefly discuss his illustrious personality
 and draw blessings from his mention.

A brief description of Imam Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq **رحمۃ اللہ علیہ**

His name was Ja‘far, whilst his teknonym was Abū ‘Abdullāh. He **رحمۃ اللہ علیہ**
 was famously known for his truthfulness, which led to him being called
 al-Ṣādiq (he who speaks the truth).¹

¹ *Wafyaat al-A‘yaan, vol. 1, p. 168*

He رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was born in 80 AH and was a Ḥusaynī *sayyid*. In terms of his lineage, he is the son of Imam Muḥammad Bāqir رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, grandson of Imam Zayn al-‘Ābidīn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, and great grandson of *Sayyid al-Shuhadā’* Imam Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Another amazing point regarding his family background is his honourable mother *Sayyidah* Umm Farwah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا descending from the first Caliph of the Muslims, *Sayyidunā* Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

This makes Imam Ja‘far Ṣādiq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ Ḥusayni through his blessed father and Ṣiddīqī from his blessed mother.¹

The great imam رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ lived for 68 years and passed away on the 15th of Rajab in 148 AH. He is buried in Jannat al-Baqī‘.²

Grapes from the unseen

Sayyidunā Layth b. Sa‘d رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates:

It was ḥajj season. I had just offered ‘aṣr ṣalāh in Makkah al-Mukarramah and proceeded to climb atop a mountain named Abū Qubays. I saw a pious man sitting at the top making *du‘ā’*. He first called upon Allāh by saying *يَا رَبِّ*, then continuously repeated *يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ* until he ran out of breath. He then began saying *يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ* until his breath ran short. After this he said, *يَا اللَّهُ يَا اللَّهُ* until running out of breath, and then called upon Allāh, saying *يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ* and ending with *يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ*.

The pious man did all this seven times. I was stood hidden nearby, watching all of this occur. He had not finished making *du‘ā’*, when a bunch of grapes and two newly made shawls appeared from the unseen. This was despite the fact it was not the season for grapes, and they could not be found anywhere. The pious

¹ *Siyar A'lam al-Nubala*, vol. 6, p. 438

² *Wafyaat al-A'yaan*, vol. 1, p. 168

man finished his *du‘ā* and began eating them. This is when I decided to approach and speak to him. “I saw you making *du‘ā*, and I was saying *āmīn*”, I said, “so please allow me to have some of these grapes!”

“Come and eat with me!” the pious man رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ said, “However, do not save any one of them.” Thus, I began to eat. These grapes were unexplainably delicious, the likes of which I had never tasted. What astonished me alongside this was despite eating to a full stomach, I noticed the bunch of grapes had not lessened at all.

After we finished eating, the pious man gestured towards the two new shawls. “Take any one of these you wish”, he said. I replied by saying I had no need for a shawl at that time. He then tied both shawls to his body, picked up some older shawls which were laid on the floor in his hands, and walked away. I followed him to Şafā and Marwah. A poor person saw the man and exclaimed, “O descendant of Allāh’s Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ! Please cover my body!”

The pious man gave him the shawls he was holding in his hands and walked further on. As he left, I went to the poor man and asked, “The person who gave you these shawls; who was he?” He replied, “He is Imam Ja‘far al-Şādiq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, descendant of Allāh’s Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ.”

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ - I then began looking for the great Imām so I may hear hadīth from him. Sadly, I was never able to meet him again.¹

May Allāh have mercy upon him and forgive us without accountability for his sake. اٰوِيْنُ بِجَاوِزِ النَّبِيِّ الْاَمِيْنِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

¹ Hikayatayn aur Naseehatayn, p. 437

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

Dear Islamic brothers! Bringing this speech to an end, let us discuss some sunan of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ and their excellences. Also, we will discuss certain etiquettes and manners we can implement in our lives. The Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, *مَنْ أَحَبَّ سُنتِي فَقَدْ أَحَبَّنِي وَمَنْ أَحَبَّنِي كَانَ مَعِيَ فِي الْجَنَّةِ* - “He who loves my sunnah loves me, and he who loves me will be with me in Paradise.”¹

The sunan and etiquette of eating

Dear Islamic brothers! Let us now discuss some sunan and etiquette related to eating extracted from Maktaba-tul-Madīnah’s book, *Sunnatein aur Ādāb*.

- Before eating, wash your hands up to the wrists. The Messenger of Allāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, “Whoever likes for Allāh to place more blessings in his home should perform wuḍū' when food is presented and when it is taken away.”² Mufti Aḥmad Yār Khān رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ explains the wuḍū' mentioned in this hadith to mean, “cleaning the hands and mouth by washing the hands and rinsing the mouth.”³

Announcement

More sunan and etiquette related to eating will be explained in the study circles. Please make sure to join them and find out more!

صَلُّوا عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

¹ *Mishkāt*: 175

² *Sunan Ibn Mājah*: 3260

³ *Mirāt al-Manājīh*, vol. 6, p. 32