

Jihaad An-Nafs

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Jihaad An-Nafs

Allah said in the Qur'an:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ
﴿العنكبوت: ٦٩﴾

As for those who strive hard in Us (Our Cause), We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i.e. Allah's Religion - Islamic Monotheism). And verily, Allah is with the Muhsinoon (good doers). (Surat al-Ankaboot: 69)

Among the meanings of this verse and not the only meaning is the struggle of one within himself, which is referred to as Jihaad an-Nafs (جهاد النفس) in Arabic. Among the meanings of this verse is Jihaad an-Nafs, which is the struggle of one within himself. Let us take the breakdown of these two terms. The first word is Jihaad and the second word is an-Nafs.

What do we mean by the internal struggle? The scholars like Ibn al-Qayyim and others have pulled out categories of one's struggle within himself. And pay attention to this because later we are going to base an example on what we talk about in the beginning of this Khutbah.

The first one is an-Nafs al-Lawwaamah (النفس اللوامة), one whose internal self blames him.

He goes and commits a sin or is about to commit a sin and then he sits with himself and says why did I do that or I should not do that. He blames himself, which is good. It is good if it is in this life but an-Nafs al-Lawwaamah could happen in the life after and that is not right (it is going to be bad). So the first one is an-Nafs al-Lawwamah. If you blame yourself for sins in this life, that is really what repentance is.

The second one is an-Nafs al-Mutma'innah (النفس المطمئنة), within you your Nafs tells you to do the good deed. Your Nafs within you tells you to do the good deed, go the Masjid. If there is a sin or a desire you want to commit, you stay away from that sin or desire because an-Nafs al-Mutma'innah comes into play and tells you to follow the guided path.

Allah said in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ﴿٢٧﴾ اِرْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ﴿٢٨﴾
فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٢٩﴾ وَاَدْخُلِي جَنَّتِي ﴿٣٠﴾ ﴿الفجر﴾

(It will be said to the pious): “O (you) the one in (complete) rest and satisfaction! Come back to your Lord, Well-pleased (yourself) and well-pleasing unto Him! Enter you, then, among My honoured slaves, and enter you My Paradise!” (Surat al-Fajr: 27-30)

A lot of the graves have a tombstone and they put this verse on the tombstone. The verse really means O you beautiful and pious soul, the pure soul, come to Us. You are pleased and We are pleased with you, come to My pleasure and My Jannah. That is the Nafs al-Mutma’innah.

The last one is an-Nafs al-Ammaarah Bis-Soo’ (النفس الأمارة بالسوء), that is the Nafs that pushes you to do the sins. We have three so far. The first one is one where you blame yourself and you regret things you are about to do or are going to do. That is good in this life but not good in the life after. You are going to regret it in the life after but it is going to be useless to you. The second one is your internal desire that tells you to do the good deeds and the one who tells you to stay away from the Haraam. And the last one is your desire to do the sins, because within you you have desire to do the Haraam and that is an-Nafs al-Ammaarah Bis-Soo’. While I am saying this you should check yourself and see which one of these you fall under. However, at times you could fall under all three of them together. In months and days of your life and within a day of your life you could wake up in the morning and say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَمَا أَمَاتَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

Alhamdulillah Allah gave us life after death (meaning sleep) and we shall return to Allah. That is an-Nafs al-Mutma’innah, the good self. Then you go out and work with all the desires and all the sins that are around us and you may commit a sin. That is an-Nafs al-Ammaarah Bis-Soo’. The third one, you get back home at night and you say oh I did this and I did that, I regret it. That is an-Nafs al-Lawwaamah. All three of them could happen in one day.

You can work out all three of them and make them strong, just like you make your body strong. Just like people go out, work out and weight lift to make their muscles strong, you can make one of these Nafs stronger than the other. Keep committing sins and sins and your Nafs that causes you to do the sins is going to be the strongest one. Keep resisting those sins and temptations and then your Nafs al-Mutma’innah is the one that is going to be strong.

Then you have a fourth sub category that some scholars made which is not mentioned in the Qur'an, and that is probably the vast majority of the Muslims today. An-Nafs al-Ghaafilah (الغافلة), the unworried mind. The good people come by, he is good with them. The evil people come by, he is evil. What are you living for? I am living to get married and have kids and that is my life. The women? I just want to raise my kids and that is it. Islam has no place in their minds, those are the people who Allah said they are like the animals.

لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَا
يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ
﴿الأعراف: ١٧٩﴾

They have hearts wherewith they understand not, they have eyes wherewith they see not, and they have ears wherewith they hear not (the truth). They are like cattle, nay even more astray; those! They are the heedless ones. (Surat al-A'raaf: 179)

They have hearts and their hearts are beating, but they cannot absorb anything. They have eyes, but they do not see in their eyes. What do they not see? That you were created for something beyond getting married, having kids and grandkids, retiring and sitting on the rocking chair with your wife looking at your grandkids. Those are the ones that cannot comprehend the truth in their hearts, they do not see what they are living for. They have ears, but they cannot hear the truth or what they were created for. What is the conclusion?

أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ

They are like animals, the ones who do not live for their religion and their belief. Animals have relationship and they have babies. But Allah says no, not only are they like animals.

بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ

The animals are better than them. The donkey knows what he was created for, he knows I am here to carry people on my back and a human being does not know he was created for Islam and for his religion. A cow knows he was created to give milk and give his flesh later on so people can eat it. He knows that, and a human being does not know what he was created for.

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٦٢﴾ الْأَنْعَام:

﴿١٦٢﴾

Say (O Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam): “Verily, my Salat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the ‘Aalameen (mankind, Jinns and all that exists).” (Surat al-An’aam: 162)

Allah says Salah, sacrifice and:

مَحْيَايَ

My whole life.

Allah said Yahya has a lot of wisdom in the Qur’an.

يَا يَحْيَىٰ خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ ۗ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا ﴿١٢﴾ مَرْيَم:

(It was said to his son): “O Yahya! Hold fast the Scripture [the Tawrah].” And We gave him wisdom while yet a child. (Surat Maryam: 12)

The reason scholars say Allah gave him the wisdom is since he was a little boy, he always knew that he was created for his religion and for the sake of believing in Allah. That is why Allah said he had the wisdom. That is the first point about the fourth category, those who are mindless in their lives.

Allah also described them as people with no life. You know there is a general statement, we go around here and tell someone who said something we do not like to go get a life. And we say that to everyone who does not practice his religion, go get a life. It is not us who says that.

أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ... ﴿١٤﴾ الْمَلِك:

Should not He Who has created know? (Surat al-Mulk: 14)

He said those without a belief, go get a life. Listen to what Allah said in the Qur’an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ...

﴿الأنفال: ٢٤﴾

O you who believe! Answer Allah (by obeying Him) and (His) Messenger when he (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) calls you to that which will give you life. (Surat al-Anfaal: 24)

Ibn Abbaas and Ibn Masood said if you hear:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا

Give me your attention. Give me attention because it is not me who is saying O you who believe in Allah, it is who created you saying O you who believe in Allah. Allah says O you who believe in Allah, respond to Allah and His Messenger if they call you to that which gives you life. Life? We are all living. If you are not living, how can you respond? Allah is trying to tell you that if you do not respond to that which Allah and His Messenger call you to, you have no life. Go get a life.

أَوْ مَن كَانَ مَيِّتًا فَأَخْيَيْنَاهُ وَجَعَلْنَا لَهُ نُورًا يَمْشِي بِهِ فِي النَّاسِ كَمَن مَّثَلَهُ فِي
الظُّلُمَاتِ لَيْسَ بِخَارِجٍ مِّنْهَا ۚ كَذَلِكَ زُيِّنَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

﴿الأنعام: ١٢٢﴾

Is he who was dead (without Faith by ignorance and disbelief) and We gave him life (by knowledge and Faith) and set for him a light (of Belief) whereby he can walk amongst men, like him who is in the darkness (of disbelief, polytheism and hypocrisy) from which he can never come out? Thus it is made fair-seeming to the disbelievers that which they used to do. (Surat al-An'aam: 122)

Do you know what the dead and alive is here? The one who follows Islam and one who does not follow Islam.

أَوْ مَن كَانَ مَيِّتًا

The one who is dead. He is walking, his heart is beating, he can see and he can hear but Wallahil-'Adheem according to Allah he is dead.

﴿طه: ١٢٤﴾ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا ...

“But whosoever turns away from My Reminder (i.e. neither believes in this Qur’an nor acts on its orders, etc) verily, for him is a life of hardship.” (Surat Taha: 124)

Allah said Ma’eeshah (معيشة). He could have said:

حَيَاةً ضَنْكًا

Hayaah means life, but when Allah is talking about those who are astray He brings words other than life. He could have said:

حَيَاةً ضَنْكًا

A miserable life. However, he said:

مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا

The difference between the two is Hayaah is one who is a Muslim, abides by Islam, knows what he was created for and why and he uses himself and the things Allah gave him for that. He knows that, he is living. One who does not do that, his heart is beating, he can hear and he can talk but that is not the life that Allah wants in the Qur’an and that is not the life Allah mentions. Allah is telling them go get the real life.

We know the four categories of an-Nafs and you get greeted in the life after by whichever one you choose. You choose to overwhelm your desires over the path of Allah, then get greeted in the life after by the verses of Allah.

أَنْ تَقُولَ نَفْسٌ يَا حَسْرَتِي عَلَىٰ مَا فَرَّطْتُ فِي جَنْبِ اللَّهِ وَإِن كُنتُ لَمِنَ

السَّٰخِرِينَ ﴿الزمر: ٥٦﴾

Lest a person should say: “Alas, my grief that I was undutiful to Allah (i.e. I have not done what Allah has ordered me to do), and I was indeed among those who mocked [at the truth] i.e. La Ilaaha Illallah (none has the right to be worshipped but Allah), the Qur’an, and Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam and at the faithful believers, etc] (Surat az-Zumar: 56)

You say oh my God I really missed out in the life before. I took life as a joke, to me life was a joke. Not a joke joke, but life was all about getting married, having kids, becoming an engineer, a lawyer and a doctor and that is all life was about.

أَوْ تَقُولَ لَوْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ هَدَانِي لَكُنْتُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿الزمر: ٥٧﴾

Or (lest) he should say: "If only Allah had guided me, I should indeed have been among the Muttaqoon (pious and righteous persons)." (Surat az-Zumar: 57)

Maybe it was the fault of Allah, you are saying that in front of Allah. Maybe if Allah guided me, I would have followed the right path.

أَوْ تَقُولَ حِينَ تَرَى الْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِي كَرَّةً فَأَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿الزمر: ٥٨﴾

﴿٥٨﴾

Or (lest) he should say when he sees the torment: "If only I had another chance (to return to the world) then I should indeed be among the Muhsinoon (good doers)." (Surat az-Zumar: 58)

Then you see Hellfire and you say O Allah give me one more chance.

بَلَىٰ قَدْ جَاءَتْكَ آيَاتِي فَكَذَّبْتَ بِهَا وَاسْتَكْبَرْتَ وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿الزمر: ٥٩﴾

﴿الزمر: ٥٩﴾

Yes! Verily, there came to you My Ayaat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc) and you denied them, and were proud and were among the disbelievers. (Surat az-Zumar: 59)

You got My miracles, you got My lessons, you heard the verses of Allah and you went away. You heard the Khateeb, you heard the lessons, you heard the talks and you disobeyed. It is too late for you. That is why you need to give power to and work out your Nafs al-Mutma'innah, so you can kill the other Nafs (the Nafs that always pushes you to do the sins).

A unique question about this topic is how do you know if it is the Devil who is pushing you to do a sin or if it is your Nafs that is pushing you to do a sin? I can tell you the easy way to find out. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said the Shaytaan is shackled in Ramadhaan. Allah gathered them and shackled them, that is why you see less sins in

Ramadhaan. If the Shaytaan is shackled, then why are there still sins? There are still clubs open over here in our countries and there are still sins here in our countries. The answer to that is the topic of this Khutbah, there is the Nafs that pushes you to do the sins. So how do you know how to deal with it? Which is from the Shaytaan and which is from your Nafs?

The answer is simple. If it is pushing to do sin after sin and they are different sins, it is the Shaytaan because the Shaytaan does not care what sin you are committing. He does not care what sin you are committing, as long as he makes you commit a sin. It may be Shirk or it may be an innovation. The Shaytaan starts off by putting doubts in you about Allah and things about Allah. For example, who created this Masjid, who created this building, who created the sky? Allah created them. Who created Allah? That is how the Shaytaan works. If that does not work, he moves to innovation. If innovation does not work, he moves on to sins which is the last thing he does. He does not care what you do, as long as you fall in his trap.

An-Nafs is different, an-Nafs sticks behind one sin. Girls day after day, alcohol day after day, that is your Nafs. You have to work on your Nafs. The first one we say:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

He is going to go and come back later with another sin. You have to work on your Nafs and work on it like we are going to be talking about today. That is how you know the difference between the two.

Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah said Jihaad (the struggle of an-Nafs) is categories. The first category is the struggle against your desires. We have desires, Allah put the desire for the opposite sex in you like He put the desire for food and wealth in you. You have to control that desire. You also have the desire to not do the ordains. Sometimes you have things to do and it is time for 'Asr, which one should you overwhelm (the things you have to do or follow the command of Allah)? You have to work on that. So the first one is the desires.

Ibn al-Qayyim says the second one is the struggle for knowledge. Muslims without knowledge, what kind of Muslims are they? Today if you put an Islamic question on the internet, in a group or anywhere, everyone gives his input. What do you think, is this Haraam or Halaal? In our day and life today, everyone is a Shaykh.

Allah said in the Qur'an:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ وَالْإِثْمَ وَالْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ
وَأَنْ تُشْرِكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

﴿الأعراف: ٣٣﴾

Say (O Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam): “(But) the things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are Al-Fawaahish (great evil sins, every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse, etc) whether committed openly or secretly, sins (of all kinds), unrighteous oppression, joining partners (in worship) with Allah for which He has given no authority, and saying things about Allah of which you have no knowledge.” (Surat al-A’raaf: 33)

Speaking about Allah without knowledge is among the major sins. You go in a public place and ask them a legal question and they will say brother here is a good lawyer, go call him. But if it is Haraam or Halaal, everyone is a Shaykh today. So Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah said the second one is the struggle to obtain Islamic knowledge. Halaqaat of Qur’an, Halaqaat of Tafseer, put a tape in your car and listen to a lecture or listen to Qur’an when you are going and coming from work. Buy Riyaadh As-Saaliheen or buy a book about Seerah. Obtain the Islamic knowledge.

He says the third one is putting that Islamic knowledge into practice. That is the struggle, it is easy to absorb knowledge. Allah said about Bani Isra’eel before us, they are like donkeys with books on their backs. What is a donkey going to get out of the Tawraah on his back? Do you know what He means? They have the knowledge but they do not work and apply that knowledge, just like a Muslim with the Qur’an on his back (he does not work and put that knowledge into practice). That is third one that Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah mentioned.

He says the fourth one is to give Da’wah about that knowledge. If you see something wrong or shortcomings of your brothers, you have to help them and work with them regarding these matters. And then he talks about the struggle of staying steadfast on the Islamic knowledge. For example, a woman who wears Hijaab. She learned that Hijaab is an ordain so she went and wore it. Maybe her relatives are going to give her problems, maybe her boss is going to give her a problem or maybe she is going to be mocked in the streets. You have to be patient. Allah told Luqmaan to tell his son:

يَا بُنَيَّ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَاصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا

أَصَابَكَ... ﴿لقمان: ١٧﴾

“O my son! Aqim-is-Salat (perform As-Salat), enjoin (people) for Al-Ma’roof (Islamic Monotheism and all that is good), and forbid (people) from Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief in the Oneness of Allah, polytheism of all kinds and all that is evil and bad), and bear with patience whatever befall you.” (Surat Luqmaan: 18)

Be patient. You cannot be a Muslim with standards and not face trials and tribulations. It is impossible. You cannot be a true Muslim without facing trials and tribulations.

The next one is the struggle against the Shaytaan, he brings branches of that and he mentions plenty of other struggles. I gave you the one that concerns our Khutbah today, which is the struggle that we define as Jihaad an-Nafs. Some of the Tabi’een used to mention this topic when they would come back from the battlefields, and listen to what they said. Actually some people claim it is a Hadith, but it is a fabricated Hadith. However from the Tabi’een it is authentic and it is narrated by plenty of Tabi’een. When they would come from the battlefield, they used to say we have come from the small Jihaad (which is the one fighting) to the big Jihaad. Do you know what the big Jihaad is? The Jihaad of this life (the internal struggle against themselves). They took that to be harder upon themselves than when they used to go in the battlefields.

Some of the Tabi’een used to say whomever does not become victorious over his internal struggle (the Jihaad an-Nafs), he is a failure. Wallahi how can a Muslim claim to be a Muslim and want to achieve victory in this life when he cannot become a victorious man over his own self? How can you? How can a Muslim look to victory (whether in his household or around him), when he cannot achieve victory in himself? Some of them said whomever does not achieve victory in himself is the slave of that sin he did. Slave of the sin does not mean you worship the bars and the clubs, backbiting and mocking Muslims and talking about the righteous believers. When the sin controls you, that is exactly what worshipping a sin is. And you know what happens on the Judgment Day? The people who worship backbiting come up on the Judgment Day. Worship? But I only used to do it? No, you worshipped it. The people who are addicted to clubbing (every Friday and Saturday they have to go clubbing) and the ones who are addicted to girls (adultery, Haraam and fornication), on the Judgment Day you are the slave of that sin because that sin controlled you.

أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ
وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ اللَّهِ ۗ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

﴿الجاثية: ٢٣﴾

Have you seen him who takes his own lust (vain desires) as his Ilaah (god), and Allah knowing (him as such), left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover

on his sight. Who then will guide him after Allah? Will you not then remember? (Surat al-Jaathiyah: 23)

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam raised the Sahaabah to become victorious against their own selves before anything else. Rabee'ah al-Aslami radhiallahu 'anhu in an authentic Hadith in Muslim said I used to serve the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He is not the slave of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, but rather someone who hung around the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam to learn from him and had the honour of helping the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He said one morning I went and gathered water so the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam can make Wudhu. After he used the bathroom, I was waiting there with the water so I can pour it upon him so he can make Wudhu. He said and then the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was happy that I had it ready for him, he said Rabee'ah ask me anything you want and you are going to get it.

Rabee'ah said my mind went from one area to another, he is thinking what do I want? He said after a short term of silence, I said O Prophet of Allah I want to be your partner in Heaven. What do I want more than that? Do you know how old Rabee'ah was? Seventeen years old at that time, he was a young boy. Look at that youth, look at how they used to think. How many of us would say that? You tell me that and I will tell you I want a house in Bloomfield Hills, that is what I would tell you. Rabee'ah a young youth said O Prophet of Allah, I want to be your partner in Heaven. How are you going to get that Rabee'ah?

أَعْنِي عَلَى نَفْسِكَ ، بِكَثْرَةِ السُّجُودِ

Struggle with yourself to make a lot of Sujood.

You may not want to make a lot of Sujood. Jihaad an-Nafs, do a lot of struggling against yourself and do a lot of Sujood to Allah. That is how the rest of the Sahaabah were. As you know, before the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam the Sahaabah were the bums of their time. The only reason the Romans and Persians did not invade them is because they had nothing to invade. Makkah? A town with nothing in it. What do they need with it? Something changed. Do you know what changed? When they became victorious over their own desires, they became victorious over the world. Within thirteen years they led the world. How did that happen? They were from flesh and blood before the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and they were from flesh and blood after the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. We are from flesh and blood too so we can be like them. What happened? When they became victorious over themselves, Allah made them victorious.

Before the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was sent, there were prostitution houses. In history books they call them the houses with red flags. For a hundred years after the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, there were six times that someone was either whipped or stoned for adultery. From houses of prostitution widespread throughout Makkah and

Madinah, to only six times in a hundred years (from the time the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam was sent until a hundred years after that). What changed? They became victorious, Jihaad an-Nafs that they did upon themselves.

They were corrupt, they were scam artists and thieves. What happened to them after the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam? A hundred years from when the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam was sent to a hundred years after him, there were four cases where someone’s hand was cut off. What changed? The Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam raised them to become victorious over themselves. That is what made them what they were, what we look up to today and who we will look up to until the Judgment Day.

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ ﴿٢﴾ الجمعة:



He it is Who sent among the unlettered ones a Messenger (Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) from among themselves, reciting to them His Verses, purifying them (from the filth of disbelief and polytheism), and teaching them the Book (this Quran, Islamic laws and Islamic jurisprudence) and Al-Hikmah (As-Sunnah: Legal ways, orders, acts of worship, etc of Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam). And verily, they had been before in manifest error. (Surat al-Jumu’ah: 2)

It was Islam. Every time Umar felt so proud internally, he would get up on the speech ladder. He opens with an introduction and he says you guys know who I was? People look at him, what is wrong with Umar today? He says before I was a man called Umayr (when he was a baby they used to call him Umayr), after that they called me Umar and now they call me the Khaleefah of the Muslims. Do you know who I was? I was a man who used to take the sheep of my aunt to the outskirts of Makkah and raise those sheep. And you know when one of those sheep used to use the bathroom, sometimes I used to open my hand and clean behind that sheep. He begins to explain something disgusting like that, and then he got down. Ali radhiallahu ‘anhu said Umar what are you doing? You only put yourself down. Why did you do that? He said I felt so proud internally, I wanted to put myself down. Uthman said I passed by his house and he used to sit and cry and say before you were the Khaleefah of the Muslims you were Umar and before you were Umar you were Umayr, fear Allah Umar before Allah dooms you. The struggle of what is in one’s Nafs, that is what the Jihaad an-Nafs is all about. That is why they were pure people.

Yes we all have our flaws and we all have our mistakes and that is why we quickly repent to Allah, but how can one be swayed with his desires and his sins? Ibn al-Qayyim Rahimahullah

says how can your struggle against your Nafs defeat you when Nooh 'alayhis-salaam went through a struggle for nine hundred and fifty years and became victorious out of that. When Ibraheem was thrown in a huge fire for his struggle, when the neck of Zakariyyah was cut off for this struggle, when Yahya was cut into two pieces for his struggle and when Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was tossed around and bullied by the people of Makkah around him. He was mocked and made fun of, they even used to make fun of his name. When they used to mock his name the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam told the Sahaabah they are talking about someone else, to calm the Sahaabah down and to comfort them. He says if souls went through that, how can you not win a struggle against yourself?

We took the breakdown of Jihaad an-Nafs in the first Khutbah and now I want to give you an example of something we all need to do Jihaad an-Nafs in. The most basic command of Islam after the Shahaadah and you all know more than I know the danger of leaving prayer, but I do not want to talk about prayer. Look at the percentage of the Ummah who pray and those who do not pray. You cannot say brother I have Imaan in my heart. If you say your Imaan is in your heart when you do not pray, Wallahil-'Adheem you are a liar. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said it, if they really thought good about Allah they would show it in their practice.

It is the same thing in Surat al-'Asr.

وَالْعَصْرِ ﴿١﴾ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ﴿٢﴾ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ﴿٣﴾ وَالْعَصْرِ ﴿٤﴾

By Al-'Asr (the time). Verily! Man is in loss, except those who believe (in Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth (i.e. order one another to perform all kinds of good deeds (Al-Ma'roof) which Allah has ordained, and abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds (Al-Munkar) which Allah has forbidden), and recommend one another to patience (for the sufferings, harms, and injuries which one may encounter in Allah's Cause during preaching His religion of Islamic Monotheism or Jihad, etc). (Surat al-'Asr: 1-3)

If they truly believe in Allah, they would show it in practice. You cannot just say my heart is clean and I do not hurt anyone. Brother, you have to show it. Allah says pray five times a day and you are going to be with Haamaan, Qaaroon and Fir'awn on the Judgment Day if you do not pray. That is the least of it, I am not going to go to the dispute or whether he is a Muslim or a Kaafir. Put that aside, but the least of it is in the authentic Hadith that he is going to be with Haamaan, Qaaroon and Fir'awn on the Judgment Day. That is a punishment for one who does not pray. What percentage of the Ummah pray today? That is not what I want to

talk about either. Out of that percentage of those who pray, how many pray the Fajr on time? That is what I want to talk about.

Inshaa Allah all of us pray today, how many of those who pray, pray the Fajr on time? I could say from the Ummah, less than two or three percent probably pray on time on a constant basis. How many of the Ummah pray the Fajr on time? That is Jihaad an-Nafs. If you cannot become victorious in that, Wallahi you are a failure. You want to sleep? That is peace for your body.

When you hear:

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

And you are sleeping, that is peace for your body but you need peace with Allah. When you are sleeping and you hear:

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

You are dead like those verses we mentioned. Not sleep dead, but your heart is dead. When you get up and reply to the call of Allah, you are alive with Allah like the one who took the darkness away and went in the path of Allah. When you hear:

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

You know it is time for Fajr and you are still sleeping, you are a slave of the Shaytaan. If you get up, you are a slave of Allah. When we know:

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

Is being called or it is time for Fajr and we are sleeping, we are like animals, pigs and donkeys. You are sleeping and they are sleeping, and most of the human beings as well. When you get up, you are among the few pious of the believers who say Yaa Allah Labbayk. Whatever you want Yaa Allah, I am there to respond.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said whomever prays Salat al-Fajr in Jamaa'ah, it is as though he stayed up half of the night praying to Allah. One of the best things you could other than the five prayers is get up at night and pray to Allah. Shed some tears to Allah and ask Allah what you want. If you pray the Fajr in Jamaa'ah, you get half of that night. You pray the Isha' in Jamaa'ah and it is as though you prayed from Isha' until Fajr. All that Ajr (reward) just for praying them in Jamaa'ah. Look at how simple that is. Someone will say the

Masjid is too far, well you have children, you have a wife and you have family so gather them and pray the Jamaa'ah in your house. What is wrong with that?

Allah says:

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۚ كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾ مريم: ٧١

There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with your Lord; a Decree which must be accomplished. (Surat Maryam: 71)

When the Sahaabah heard that, it caused a problem for them because they really believed it. It did not go in one ear and out of the other ear, it sank in and registered. We are going to go in it? What do you mean? Then the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam described to them that is the bridge sharper than the edge of a sword and thinner than a hair, and everyone has to go across it. Do you know what is going to get you across that? Salat al-Fajr.

بَشِّرِ الْمَشَّائِينَ بِالظُّلَمِ بِالنُّورِ التَّامِّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

Give the good news to those who walk in the darkness. Walk in the darkness to turn the light on when you get up for Fajr, walk in the darkness to make Wudhu, walk in the darkness to go to the Masjid maybe or walk in the darkness to the Masjid for Isha'. You are going to be crossing that bridge with brightness because do you know what gets you through that bridge? The brightness you have on you. The hypocrites about whom Allah says:

...وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كُسَالَىٰ... ﴿النساء: ١٤٢﴾

And when they stand up for As-Salat (the prayer), they stand with laziness. (Surat an-Nisaa': 142)

They say to the believers:

...انظُرُونَا نَقْتَبِسْ مِنْ نُورِكُمْ... ﴿الحديد: ١٣﴾

"Wait for us! Let us get something from your light!" (Surat al-Hadeed: 13)

...قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا وَرَاءَكُمْ فَالْتَمِسُوا نُورًا... ﴿الحديد: ١٣﴾

It will be said: "Go back to your rear! Then seek a light!" (Surat al-Hadeed: 13)

The brightness comes for you from Salat al-Fajr. Walking in the darkness for Salat al-Fajr and praying Salat al-Fajr. In Sahih Muslim:

مَنْ صَلَّى الْبُرْدَيْنِ دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ

The ones that come in the coldness, whomever prays those two will enter Jannah. The one that comes in the coldness the most is Fajr and the other one that comes in the cold is Isha' at night.

Do you want to know if you are a hypocrite or not? Ask yourself do I pray the Fajr on time or not? Am I a hypocrite or not?

أَثْقَلُ صَلَاةٍ عَلَى الْمُنَافِقِينَ صَلَاةُ الْعِشَاءِ وَصَلَاةُ الْفَجْرِ

The toughest Salah on the hypocrites is Salat al-Isha' and Salat al-Fajr. And if they knew the reward of them, they would come to the Masjid crawling.

Do you guys want to look at Allah on the Judgment Day? We all want to enter Heaven but the best you could have in Heaven is seeing Allah. In a Hadith narrated by Jareer al-Bajali in Sahih Muslim and al-Bukhari, Jareer said we were in a Halaqah around the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and he looked up at night. He said do you see how you see the moon (on the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth of the Hijri month)? Do you see how beautiful it is? You are going to see Allah in Heaven like you see that moon. That is the peak, that is the life. The people who claim they are living up their life today, when they get to the life after they know.

يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي ﴿الفجر: ٢٤﴾

He will say: "Alas! Would that I had sent forth (good deeds) for (this) my life!" (Surat al-Fajr: 24)

Everyone in Heaven is enjoying themselves in the market of Heaven on Friday, meeting each other, meeting the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, Musa and Aishah and whoever you want to, and then there is the Hijaab that opens up and then everyone sees Allah. And when they see Allah, they think they have never seen anything from the pleasure of Heaven before that and better than that. Do you want to see Allah? In Sahih Muslim he said pray a Salah before sunrise and another before sunset (Salat al-Fajr and Salat al-'Asr) if you want to see Allah. If you want to see Allah, you have to do that.

Ibn Umar radhiallahu 'anhu used to say we know a hypocrite when he starts missing Salat al-Fajr in the Masjid. I am not saying in the Masjid, I am saying let us start off praying Salat al-

Fajr on time and if we Inshaa Allah all do that over here, convey the message. Wallahil-'Adheem whoever does not pray the Fajr on time has a life of hardship. Do you know who the one who does not pray the Fajr on time is? Do you know how the American bathrooms are where they have somewhere for the males where they urinate standing? That is what you are to the Devil if you do not pray the Fajr on time. A Hadith in Sahih al-Bukhari and Muslim narrated by Ibn Masood, the Sahaabah said to the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam that there is a man who did not get up for Fajr on time. He said:

ذَلِكَ بَالُ الشَّيْطَانِ فِي أُذُنِهِ

The Shaytaan urinated in his ears. How disgusting, the cursed creation of Allah and the worst creation of Allah urinates in your ear. You are a urinary toilet for the Shaytaan if you do not get up for Fajr.

The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said in another authentic Hadith, when you sleep the Shaytaan comes on top of your head. When he says:

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

The Shaytaan is on top of your head saying:

عَلَيْكَ لَيْلٌ طَوِيلٌ فَارْقُدْ

You have a long night's sleep. It is cold, you are going to get up out of the comfort of your bed, make Wudhu, probably take a shower and it is tough upon you. Do not get up, stay, and he ties a knot over his head. Do you know what that knot is? I am going to tell you exactly what that knot is.

Then he goes again:

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

The Shaytaan says:

عَلَيْكَ لَيْلٌ طَوِيلٌ فَارْقُدْ

And ties a knot on top of his head. The third time the same thing. If he gets up and praises Allah, one knot goes away.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَحْيَانَا بَعْدَمَا أَمَاتَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

One knot goes away. He makes Wudhu or showers for Salah, another knot goes away. He performs the prayer, a third knot goes away. Do you know the one who does not? That is the one who goes to his job in the morning and has a problem with his boss, he got a ticket that day, he gets ill that day, a family member dies that day, a hardship falls that day and then he goes on Lithium and Prozac that day because it is knots after knots after knots. Just three knots per day, those are the problems of your life. You got a ticket? Ask yourself did I wake up for Fajr? Brothers have a problem and they call me up, they say Shaykh Wallahi I did not pray the Fajr today and that is why this happened. Yes Wallahi you are right.

And do you know who is happier? Is it the guy who woke up six o'clock or five thirty, or that guy who is sleeping? Wallahi that guy who woke up and got up is happier because look at the other guy whose desires overwhelmed him. They have all the girls they want, they have all the clubs they want and they have all the money they want but where are they on their weekends? They are drunk. If you are really happy, why would you want to lose your mind? If you are really happy, why do you need to go on Marijuana and crack? I say take the people of this country and then take the percentage of those who are on illegal drugs, alcohol and the legal depression drugs, and you would come up with a few percent who are okay. Those are the knots of the Shaytaan that make your life miserable.

You get brothers who say brother I have been working for twenty years. Brother how many times did you miss going at seven o'clock to your job? He says two times, and if I got the third time they would have wrote me up. You can do that for an employer but not for Allah who gave you these beautiful eyes, a beautiful face and these hands that no one on this earth could give you? If they fire you from work you go get another job, but if Allah takes your eye then who is going to give you another one? Is that not enough for you to jump up in the morning and pray the Fajr? Like when we have finals, you sleep probably a few hours before the final. You say wake me up Mum and Dad, I have to wake up. And Wallahil-Adheem you wake up, but Allah? No one wakes up for Him. That is something we need to work on.

The last thing I end with is practical things to wake up for Fajr. We are practical here, we are talking about this so it will sink in, we absorb it and go and convey it. Let us get out with an oath to Allah that from today onwards we never miss the Fajr. Number one, put it sincerely in your heart that you are going to wake up, just like you will put it in your heart to wake up for work. I know people who have not missed a minute off work for twenty five years. Wallahi I know a guy who was bragging to me, he said for twenty five years I always go on time. How many times do you pray the Fajr on time? Never. It is not worth it for Allah but it is worth it for a middle person who provides you through the will of Allah? That is number one, put it in your mind.

Number two, you have to sleep early. If you cannot control yourself, you have to sleep early. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said I used to hate to speak after Isha', immediately to his bed. That is if you know you are not going to wake up. If you know you are going to wake up then stay up. The next thing is be practical. You need an alarm clock and two or three brothers can call each other up in the morning and me and some brothers agreed to that. You call them up in the morning and crack a joke, he is going to jump up and go make Wudhu. That is how we have to be. This is the simplest thing of Jihaad an-Nafs. If you cannot do that, then something is wrong.