



# TIPS FOR LOWERING THE GAZE

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# Tips for Lowering the Gaze

Ash-Shaykh Al-Imām Ahmad Mūsā Jibrīl (حفظه الله)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Question: What do you advise us on help in lowering the gaze?

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There's really nothing that can be said about this more eloquent, more meaningful than the advice and command of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى,

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

*Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts). That is purer for them. Verily, Allāh is All-Aware of what they do.*<sup>1</sup>

The verses on lowering the gaze are right before

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

*Allāh is the Light of the heavens and the earth.*<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى mentioned a wisdom behind the order of those verses in Sūrat An-Nūr. He said, “Lowering one’s gaze results in Nūr in the heart, and looking at what’s forbidden cloaks the heart with darkness. If the heart is cloaked with Nūr, goodness comes to it from every direction, and when it’s darkened, clouds of calamity and evil come at it from every angle.” If you look at what Ibn Al-Qayyim رحمه الله تعالى mentioned in Rawdat Al-Muhibbīn, or in his book, for example, Ad-Dā’ wad-Dawā’ — he has a chapter in that book about this matter, the Chapter on Lowering the Gaze and its Benefits — or elsewhere where he talks about this, you’ll be astounded at his eloquence, foresight, facts, details, and the

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<sup>1</sup> [24:30]

<sup>2</sup> [24:35]

harms he mentions. Many who wrote on this topic after him relied, for the most part, on what he wrote. He felt passionate about warning from falling into such a sin. And it appears, *والله أعلم*, that he, like his Shaykh, were victorious in their Jihād of the Nafs on this matter. So what was the result? Their minds and insight and works were blessed with Nūr and acceptance.

Deficiency in this matter for Talabat Al-‘Ilm may be the reason why Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* is depriving one from attaining knowledge or forgetting what he memorizes or depriving one from the honor, from the great honor, of being a Dā’īyyah to Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى*, because knowledge needs sincerity, and Talabat Al-‘Ilm are held at a higher standard than laymen. Closing the Shaytānic window opens a gate of Īmānic sweetness, and it opens gates of knowledge and Ma’rifah of Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* and Firāsah. Ibn Taymiyyah *رحمه الله تعالى* said, “*Lowering the gaze is means to attaining the provision of knowledge.*” Pay attention to this advice, because it's coming from one of the all-time Imāms of this Dīn. He said lowering the gaze is a means for one to attain the Ni’mah of knowledge. There’s an avenue between the eyes and the heart. If the heart is corrupted, the sight is corrupted, and if the sight is corrupted, the heart is corrupted, and the opposite is true as well. When one controls his eyes from looking at Harām, Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* grants him a pure heart with pure insight. Their insight, their Basīrah, will be the likeness of one who physically looks with his physical eyes through clean, clear eyeglasses. Looking at Harām to the heart is like breathing on those glasses. What happens to the glasses when you breathe on them? It fogs and clouds one’s vision. The same happens to the heart when one looks at Harām. When the Imams were victorious over themselves in such matters, Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* granted their work inextinguishable Nūr and acceptance, even when the world may have collaborated against their work. The lesson from that is that when one lowers his gaze from that which Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* has forbidden for Allāh’s sake, rest assured, Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* will not let it go in vain. He will compensate him with something similar in nature but better.

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ

*Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts (from illegal sexual acts).<sup>3</sup>*

An order to lower the gaze from whats forbidden, and then after that *and protect the private parts from Harām*. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى started with the order of lowering the gaze and then he said and protect the private parts, because Zinā starts with the sight, just like fires start with tiny sparks. And like the poet said,

كل الحوادث مبدأها من النظر \*\*\* ومعظم النار من مستصغر الشرر  
كم نظرة فتكت في قلب صاحبها \*\*\* فتك السهام بلا قوس ولا وتر

Look at the end of the verse,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

*Verily, Allāh is All-Aware of what they do.*

Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is All-Aware of what they do. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is aware of what everyone does. If you know Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is watching over you, why is Allāh سبحانه وتعالى the least of whom you care about watching you? If a father or a teacher or a spouse walks in on one who's watching Harām, one quickly hides it, but Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, to some, is the least of Whom they care about.

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<sup>3</sup> [24:30]

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمِ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَى

*Knows he not that Allāh does see (what he does)?<sup>4</sup>*

A brother, many years ago, mentioned a story to me. He said he was looking at something that was forbidden in Islām, something normalized by people, but in the Laws of Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* it's forbidden. He said it was random women on social media, with no Hijāb. He said when he was watching it he felt guilty, he knew what he was doing was sinful. His wife was sleeping next to him. She didn't know what he was doing. She woke up telling him she had a dream. In the dream, she's advising her husband telling him,

أَلَمْ يَعْلَمِ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَى

*Knows he not that Allāh does see (what he does)?*

He told me this with tears in his eyes. The dream was his wife telling him, in her dream, *أَلَمْ يَعْلَمِ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَى*? That's all she's telling her husband. She never previously memorized that verse. She actually memorized that verse in 'Arabi from the dream. She doesn't speak 'Arabi. She didn't even know the meaning of the verse, nor did he. They both opened the Qur'ān and looked at the meaning. *أَلَمْ يَعْلَمِ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَرَى*? Don't you know Allāh sees everything?

When one truly estimates Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* an estimation due to Him, knowing that He sees him, he will be ashamed from Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* to go near such sins. He said, *"Everytime I'm tempted to look or scroll through social media, I remember that incident and I put my phone away."* People see you externally, but

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<sup>4</sup> [96:14]

Allāh سبحانه وتعالى sees you externally *and* internally, He sees what you conceal and what you reveal.

أَوَلَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ

*But do they not know that Allāh knows what they conceal and what they declare?*<sup>5</sup>

When Al-Junayd was asked a question exactly like this question that I'm answering — when he was asked a question like this, his answer was simple: just realize that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is watchful over you. I said there's nothing more eloquent than this verse. Because all this is taken from the end of that verse.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

*Verily, Allāh is All-Aware of what they do.*

Allāh wants you to know that He's aware of what you do, and one who comprehends that, will not go near that sin.

And also remember, for every Harām, there's a price one will pay in Dunyā or in Ākhirah, or possibly both, may Allāh سبحانه وتعالى save you all from that. Are those few moments of sin worth that consequence? Why bring it on yourself? Many brothers complain to me about this issue. A brother, maybe a year ago or so, asked me for advice on this matter, on leaving this sin, and he said something many who have Īmān and fall into this sin can relate to. He said, *"Everytime I fall into this sin, I'm afflicted with problems, depression, trials, and when I stop and repent, they suddenly vanish! When the Shaytān gets the best of me and I fall into that sin again, the problems, the depression, and the trials return again."* He said,

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<sup>5</sup> [2:77]

*“When I fail in this matter, I begin to wait by the minute for problems to come, and it never fails, it always comes.”* He said he’s been struggling through that for years. I told him he should be happy and sad. Sad for the sin of course, so repent to Al-Ghafūr Ar-Rahīm, the One who asks you to repent so He can forgive you. Ask Him for forgiveness, and He will not only forgive, but He will replace that sin into deeds.

فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَبْدِلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ

*For them Allāh will replace their evil deeds with good.*<sup>6</sup>

But you should be happy for two reasons. One that your Īmān is at a level where you figured out the root of your problems, and secondly, you should be thankful to Allāh سبحانه وتعالى that He keeps giving you those wake-up calls. It’s a sign that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى loves you inshā’Allāh. If Allāh سبحانه وتعالى didn’t love you, He would let you transgress in this sin, and then follow it with bigger sins, then delay the punishment to when you meet Him.

When a student of Abu Bakr Ad-Daqqāq was walking with his Shaykh, he looked at something he should not have looked at. The teacher, Abu Bakr Ad-Daqqāq, saw him and he said, *“O Son, you’re going to find the effect of this sin, even if it takes time,”* Meaning, if if not now, you’re going to see the effect. He said, *“I kept anticipating the effect of that sin to happen, until one day, twenty years later, I woke up forgetting the entire Qur’ān that I had memorized.”* The concept in that narration is absolutely true without a doubt.

Ibn ‘Asākir, Ibn Al-Jawzi, and Ibn Kathīr mentioned, with slight variations, that Al-Fudayl said, *“When I disobey Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, I see the effect of that sin in the manners or disobedience of my donkey, and in my servant, and in my wife.”* Meaning, we go to sleep for example — there’s no problems. There’s a sin that

<sup>6</sup> [25:70]

one may have committed. One wakes up and suddenly has a problem with his wife, an argument. It's from the effect of the sin. He nudges his donkey to move, he gives him a hard time. It's a sin he committed. Financial difficulties and marital disputes may be the result of glances into Harām.

And I must note, when we talk about lowering the gaze, the minds of many brothers and sisters wander off thinking we're referring to the very indecent filth, the filth that even some Kuffār despise — that's part of it, but that's not all of it. There are sins Muslims look at that are forbidden, yet they're normalized by them, and it's a catastrophe that many no longer see them as sins. Scrolling through videos and pictures of women with their hair showing is a sin! It's a Harām glance! Looking at women who have a cloth on their head with tight clothes and makeup is Harām, it's a sin! It's a sinful glance, even though most normalize that. It all falls under

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*Tell the believing men to lower their gaze (from looking at forbidden things), and protect their private parts...*

Looking at what's forbidden like that is also a common reason why many are not pleased with their wives. One who freely looks at Harām can never be pleased with his wife, no matter how beautiful she is. Why? Because no matter how beautiful looking she is, there's always someone better looking than her that he sees. The one he wakes up to cooking and cleaning and raising his kids isn't going to be looking like that Shaytānah who flaunts herself in full Tabarruj and full makeup, posing on social media. Those women become alluring and seductive with those forbidden poisonous arrows of the Shaytān, and then the marital issues begin. Then, the effect of the sins will be seen.

Ar-Rabī' Ibn Khuthaym رحمه الله تعالى when to the extent of walking while lowering his head to his chest. He would walk with his head on his chest. He

would do that to lower his gaze. Women would pass by him and say, “We seek refuge in Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* from being blind.” They would think he’s blind. Look what became of him. He became one of the masters of the Tābi’īn.

And a final point to make, and it's possibly the most important point: make sincere Du'ā that Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* aids you in overcoming this sin and keeping your eyes — the blessing, the Ni'mah from Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* — pure from being used for what’s Harām. Make Du'ā for that. That's probably the most important point. Say,

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ ذَنْبِي، وَطَهِّرْ قَلْبِي، وَحَصِّنْ فَرْجِي

*Allāhummagfir Dhanbi, wa Tahhir Qalbi, wa Hassin Farji.*

*O Allāh! Forgive my sin, purify my heart, and safeguard my chastity.*

That's the Du'ā that the Messenger ﷺ made to a young man who came and asked him for permission to commit Zinā. After the Messenger ﷺ explained to him the danger of what he’s asking for, the Messenger ﷺ put his hand on him and made Du'ā for him. After that Du'ā, he never had interest in what he asked for and there was nothing more hated to him than what he had asked for.

Also, when you turn your eyes away from what’s Harām — yes it's difficult because the Shaytān and the Nafs are working against you — but when you turn your eyes away from that Harām, and then you fall in a difficult predicament in your life — and we’re all destined to fall in such predicaments — raise your hands to Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* and say, “Yā Allāh, you know how difficult it was for me to turn my eyes away from that or to stop doing that, and you know Yā Allāh, I did that for Your sake and only for Your sake. O Allāh, now I’m in a desperate need, so help me in this.” Do you think Allāh *سبحانه وتعالى* will turn that Du'ā down?