

In The Name of Allaah, The Most Merciful, The Bestower of Mercy.

Imaam Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Al-Husayn Al-Aajurree [may Allaah have mercy upon him] said:

"All praise and thanks be to Allaah by way of Whose Grace all righteous deeds are accomplished. All praise and thanks be to Allaah in all circumstances and may Allaah's peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad, his family and all his companions, and we seek Allaah's Aid and Assistance. To proceed:

May Allaah grant us and you all the path towards right conduct in speech and deeds, protect us from the evils of our souls and the evil consequences of our evil deeds, and truly He is All-Hearer, Ever Near [to all things by His knowledge]. Know that Allaah has mentioned the soul in various parts of His Book [i.e. the Qur'aan] with a notification of many affairs regarding it, and all of it shows that one should be cautious of the soul. Our Generous Protected [i.e. Allaah] informed us that the soul tends to incline towards the [evil] it desires, whilst knowing definitely that it is forbidden. Our Generous Protector [i.e. Allaah] made it known and taught us that whoever forbids the soul against the [evil] it desires, then indeed paradise will be his abode. Allaah said:

فَإِذَا جَاءَتِ الطَّامَّةُ الْكُبْرَى
يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا سَعَى
وَبُورَّتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَنْ يَرَى
فَأَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَعَى
وَأَتَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى
وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَى
فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَى

But when there comes the greatest catastrophe (i.e. the Day of Recompense, etc.), the Day when man shall remember what he strove for, and Hell-fire shall be made apparent in full view for (every) one who sees, then, for him who Tagha (transgressed all bounds, in disbelief, oppression and evil deeds of disobedience to Allah). And preferred the life of this world (by following his evil desires and lusts), verily, his abode will be Hell-fire; but as for him who feared standing before his Lord, and restrained himself from impure evil desires, and lusts, then verily, Paradise will be his abode. [Surah An-

Naazi'aat. Aayaat 34-41]

It is obligated on the one who hears this from Allaah [i.e. the affairs stated about the nafs in the Qur'an and Sunnah] that he is more careful or cautious about his nafs than an enemy that wants to kill him, or take his wealth, or violate his honour. If someone says: "Why do you obligate – on me – this precaution about the Nafs until you place it in a situation that is more severe than an enemy whose enmity is certainly very manifest? It should then be said to him, "The enemy of yours who wants to kill you, or wants to take your wealth or violate your honour, if he overcomes you with what he does to you, then indeed Allaah will expiate some of your sins and raise your status, but this will not be the case with the nafs because if the nafs overcomes you by way of that which you desire – that which you have been forbidden, then this contains destruction for you in this Dunya and the Aakhirah- disgrace and severe punishment in the Dunyah, an evil state in the sight of Allaah and destination in the Aakhirah.

Therefore the sensible and sane person - may Allaah have mercy upon him – compels or obligates caution on his Nafs and strives against it in a manner more severe than striving against an enemy who wants to take his wealth and his life. So, he strives against his nafs in times of anger and in times of happiness. This is how our prophet disciplined us in various hadeeth, saying: The Mujaahid is the one who strives against his Nafs in obedience to Allaah – The Mighty and Majestic".

When a person hears the statement, "Be more careful [or cautious] about your Nafs than an enemy who wants to kill you", he might be amazed as to how can be the case?! Say to him, "If someone kill you or took your wealth, Allah will expiate your sins, because have you not heard about the hadeeth about the Mufliis?!

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ أَتَذَرُونَ مَا الْمُفْلِسُ قَالُوا الْمُفْلِسُ فِينَا مَنْ لَا دِرْهَمَ لَهُ وَلَا مَتَاعَ فَقَالَ إِنَّ الْمُفْلِسَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي يَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِصَلَاةٍ وَصِيَامٍ وَزَكَاةٍ وَيَأْتِي قَدْ سَتَمَ هَذَا وَقَذَفَ هَذَا وَأَكَلَ مَالَ هَذَا وَسَفَكَ دَمَ هَذَا وَضَرَبَ هَذَا فَيُعْطَى هَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ وَهَذَا مِنْ حَسَنَاتِهِ فَإِنْ فَبَيْتِ حَسَنَاتُهُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُقْضَى مَا عَلَيْهِ أَخَذَ مِنْ خَطَايَاهُمْ فَطُرِحَتْ عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ طُرِحَ فِي النَّارِ

Abu Huraira [radiyallaahu-anhu] reported that the Messenger of Allaah [sallal laahu-alayhi- wasallam] said, "Do you know who is bankrupt?" They said, "The one without money or goods is bankrupt." The Prophet said, "Verily, the bankrupt of my Ummah are those who come on the Day of Resurrection with prayers, fasting, and charity, but also insulted this one, slandered that one, ate the wealth of this one, shed the blood of that one, and hit this one. So, this one will be given from his good deeds and hat one is given from his deeds. And if his good deeds run out before justice is fulfilled, then their sins will be cast upon him and he will be thrown into the Hellfire."

[Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2581]

"So, you will take his deeds and if he has no more deeds to give away, your sins will be given you him and he'll be in the fire; but as for when our own nafs overcome us by way of that which is haraam, then we gain nothing".

So, Imaam Al-Aajurree [rahimahullaah] said: One should strive against his Nafs in times of happiness as well as when he is happy. In supplication: [وَأَسْأَلُكَ كَلِمَةَ الْحَقِّ فِي الرِّضَا وَالْغَضَبِ – I ask You (O Allaah) to make me true in speech in times of pleasure and anger]. (1) The one who does not utter except the truth during anger and pleasure, then this is a proof of his strong Eemaan and that indeed he is in control of his Nafs. (2)

Fadhaalah Ibn Ubayd [radiyallaahu-anhu] said that during the farewell Hajj the Prophet [sallal laahu alayhi wasallam] said, "Should I not inform you regarding who the believer is? He is the one who the people feel safe with regards to their wealth, the Muslim is the one who the people are safe from his tongue, the Mujaahid is the one who strives against his soul in obedience to Allaah and the Muhaajir is the one who abandons sin and sinful behaviour". (3)

This hadeeth is one of the commands and teachings of the Prophet [sallal laahu alayhi wasallam] during the farewell hajj. In this hadeeth there a clarification of the meanings of these lofty nouns, namely Al-Imaan, Al-Islaam, Al-Jihaad and Al-Hijrah; a clarification regarding those who are deserving of these names in reality and their perfect outcomes in this worldly life and the hereafter.

The (complete) believer is that one who the people feel safe with regards to their blood and wealth, for indeed when Imaan is firmly established in the heart and the heart is filled with it, it then compels a person to fulfil the rights of Imaan, and the most important of it is to preserve the Amaanaat [trusts, moral responsibility or honesty and all the duties which Allah has ordained], truthfulness in mutual dealings and having fear of Allaah which stops a person from oppressing the people physically and financially. Whoever is as such, the people will know this about him, feel safe with him with regards to their blood and wealth, and trust him due to that which they know about him with regards to fulfilment of trusts.

And the Muslim is the one who the Muslims are safe from his tongue and hand. This is because real Islaam is to submit to Allaah, perfect one's servitude to Allaah and fulfil the rights of the Muslims. A person's Islaam will not be perfect until he loves for the Muslims what he loves for himself, and this cannot be accomplished until they are safe from the evil of his tongue and hand, because it is the basis of this obligation owed to the Muslims. Therefore, the one whom the Muslims are not safe from his tongue and

hand, then how can he fulfil the obligation which he owes his Muslim brothers. Whoever unleashes his hand and tongue by way of harm and transgression against the Muslims, then where is his fulfilment of true Islaam? Therefore, their safety from his evil by way of speech and deeds is a symbol of the perfection of his Islaam.

And in this hadeeth there is evidence to show that a Mu'min [true believer] is higher in status than a Muslim, because the one who the people feel safe with regards to their blood and wealth, they will also be safe from his tongue and hand, for they would not have trusted him had they not been safe from him. However, not everyone who the people are safe from his tongue and hand is a believer, because indeed one might abandon oppression, but the people are still not safe from him; rather he abandons oppression out of fear of something he hates, due to desiring something or out of extreme fear of something that is in opposition to what he desires, and not that he abandoned oppression due to the Imaan in his heart.

And the Mujaahid is the one who strives against his soul in obedience to Allaah, because the soul inclines towards laziness and is diverted from good, commands evil and is quickly affected during calamities; therefore it is in need of patience and striving to make it adhere to obedience to Allaah, keep it firmly upon that, make it strive against disobedience and turn it away from it, and strive to exercise patience during calamities.
(4)

Striving against the Nafs is four levels as follows:

Firstly: striving in the path of learning Allaah's Sharee'ah – learning the religion ordained by Allaah, exercise patience whilst learning and seeking understanding. If you do not strive to acquire IIm, your soul will remain upon ignorance; and even if you perform acts of worship and preoccupy yourself in worship, you'll do so based on acts of worship that are unacceptable, because one of the conditions of worship is Al-Mutaaba'ah [i.e. adherence to the authentic Sunnah of the Messenger], and one cannot be acquainted with Al-Mutaaba'ah except through IIm. And due to this, it has been reported in a hadeeth: "Whoever Allaah wishes good for, He grants him understanding in the religion". In another narration: "Whoever follows a path towards acquiring knowledge, Allaah will make easy for him the path to paradise". Therefore, one must acquire a portion of knowledge every day, and let not a day elapses except that you gain a portion of knowledge. Everyday the Prophet used to supplicate – after the fajr prayer-saying: "O Allaah! I ask you for beneficial knowledge, good provision and deeds that are accepted". This shows that seeking knowledge is a daily pursuit.

Secondly: striving against the soul to act upon the knowledge you have acquired

and adhering to it. This is the purpose of knowledge, because the purpose of knowledge is to act. If one does not act upon the knowledge he has acquired, then even if does not harm him, it will not benefit him. The Prophet sought refuge with Allaah against the knowledge that does not benefit. Therefore, after a person strives to acquire knowledge, he must strive to act upon it.

Thirdly: A person should call to knowledge [i.e. convey what he has learnt].

Fourthly: He should exercise patience in this path.

And the Muhaajir is the one who abandons sins and sinful behaviour.

This is obligated on every Muslim and its obligation is not lifted from anyone who has reached the age of responsibility, because Allaah has forbidden the servants from committing what He has forbidden and obligated on them to obey Him and His Messenger [sallal laahu alayhi wasallam]. This Hijrah is based on leaving something and proceeding towards another thing; therefore, a person abandons – by way of his heart – love of other than Allaah and turn towards love of Allaah, abandons servitude to other than Allaah and turns towards servitude to Allaah etc

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said,

“The strong are not the best wrestlers, rather the strong are only those who control themselves when they are angry.”

If one says, “By way of what should I strive against my soul until I overcome it?” It is said to him, “Strive against it until it fulfils the duties obligated by Allaah and keeps away from what Allaah has forbidden”. If the person says, “Describe for me the traits that the soul tends to incline towards, which are not good, so that I can be cautious of them, hate them and strive against them if I know that there is something of these traits in my soul”; then it is said to him, “The (evil of the) soul is deserving of being hated for the sake of Allaah [The Mighty and Majestic], and whoever hates (the evil) of his soul for the sake of Allaah, it is hoped that he will be saved from being hated by Allaah, just as it has been reported from Imaam Fudayl Ibn Iyaadh [rahimahullaah] that he said, ‘Whoever hates (the evils) of his soul for the Sake of Allaah is saved from being hated by Allaah’”.

If someone said, “Clarify the ugly traits of the soul for me”; so it is said to him, “They are traits that may have already settled in the soul and it does not love to be separated from them. They are numerous traits and if a person examines his soul he

might find them as well.

Indeed, it is a soul that follows [evil or excess] desires and is engaged in the [evil or excess] pleasures of the worldly life. It Has prolonged hope for that which is shot lived and does not show little concern for a lifespan that will inevitably come to an end. It has a fervent desire to love this worldly life and when it loves it [by preferring it over the afterlife], the heart becomes hard and turns away from an abode whose bliss will never come to an end [i.e. paradise]. It loves traits which it knows will harm it tomorrow. It laughs and rejoices, enjoys itself with that which its Lord has forbidden. It grieves – morning and evening – for that which was not decreed for it of those things it hopes for from the worldly life. It is a soul facilitated with ease to seek after the [good] things of the worldly life. It finds enjoyment in falling short in good deeds which its Lord calls to [or commands]. It has a desire to spend wealth in obedience to Allaah, but Satan threatens it with poverty, so it inclines towards that which Satan calls to. Allaah promises it forgiveness and bounty, but it neither has certainty about it nor pleased with it. It has firm hope in the promises of the people, but reluctant when the threat of its Lord reaches it. It pleases the people at the expense of Allaah’s anger and hesitates to please its Lord. Allaah calls it to have patience during calamities – a means of consolation and means to solace, but it does not accept. It pretends in the presence of the people that it fulfils obligations, but fulfils little of that which Allaah obligates on it. It abandons disobedience after being able to do so out of being shy of the people, but has little shyness whilst Allaah [The Most Great] watches it. It gives little thanks to the innumerable blessings of Allaah. It utilises the blessings of Allaah [The Most Generous] – day and night – as an aid to disobey Him. It finds it easy to sit with idle people, but finds it difficult to sit with the scholars. It obeys [or follows] a deceiver, but disobeys the most sincere advisers. It hastens to evil desires, but delays repentance today and tomorrow.

Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Al-Hasan [rahimahullaah] said, ‘Whoever realises these traits in his soul and other than them, he should hasten to discipline it through good behaviour in order to return it to that which is more worthy regarding fear of Allaah [The Mighty and Majestic]- in private and public – having great regret, refrain from the repugnant traits which he knows for sure is with him and continue upon rectification throughout his lifespan’”. And Allaah is the Bestower of this affair.

If someone says, “What directs to the subject matter related to disciplining the soul?” It is said to him, “The Qur’aan, the authentic Sunnah and the statements of the upright scholars of the Muslims”. If he says, “Mention it”, say, “Yes, InShaaAllaah. Allaah [The Exalted] said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا] – O you who believe! Protect yourselves and

your families from the Fire (Hell)]”. [Surah At-Tahreem. Aayah 6]

So whoever hears this, then it is obligated on him to seek knowledge of it and not to be heedless of it. Have you not seen that Allaah urges and commands you to discipline your souls and your families?! Therefore, acknowledge – may Allaah have mercy upon you – this from Allaah and adhere to the knowledge regarding it.

I am going to give a similitude whose affair is not hidden from you. Know that the example of the soul is like a fine foal from a horse and the beholder is amazed when he looks at it due to its good appearance and beauty. The people who have insight regarding its affair say, “Benefit will not be acquired from it until it is trained properly and disciplined, then it will be of benefit- good enough to gallop and be of service, and thus its rider praises the outcomes of its training and discipline. But if not disciplined, its good appearance and beauty will be of no benefit and its rider will not praise its outcomes when in need of it.

If the owner of this foal accepts the advice of those who have insight regarding its affair, he will know that their speech is sound and then gives it to a horse trainer to train it. And the horse trainer cannot be worthy of being a trainer unless he is well-acquainted with the method of training as well as having patience. If he has knowledge of horse training as well as knowledge of the right course of action, the owner will benefit from it; but if the trainer neither has knowledge of horse training nor knowledge of how to discipline a horse, he will ruin this foal, exhaust himself and the rider will not praise its outcomes.

If the trainer has knowledge of horse training and how to discipline a horse, but he has no patience to bear the difficulty accompanied with the training, wishes for comfort in the affair and negligent regarding the right course of action required of him, then he will ruin this foal and treat it badly, and thus it neither becomes worthy of service nor good enough to gallop, so its appearance will not be in conformity with its true reality.

If the owner of the foal was its trainer, he will become regretful when regret will be of no benefit due to his [prior] negligence. And at a time in which a service is needed, he looks at another horse whose service is sought and received, and gallops when required; then he seeks the service of his horse and requires it to gallop, but neither receives a response to the service nor does the horse accept to gallop. All of that is due to his negligence whilst training the horse and his lack of patience after acknowledging it. Then he began to blame himself, saying, ‘Why was I negligent and why did I fall short? Indeed, my lack of patience has brought on me everything I hate’”. And Allaah’s Aid is

sought! Give thought to this similitude – may Allaah have mercy upon you – and understand it, so that you will be successful and saved.

[Sharh Adabun Nufoos: <https://al-badr.net/sub/358%5D>]