

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَنِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَلِدِ آدَمَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضَى بِأَنْ يُصْلَى عَلَيْهِ

In The Name Of Allah The Most Compassionate Very Merciful
All Praise Due To Allah And Peace And Blessings Be Upon His Beloved Messenger

Riyadus Saliheen – Hadeeth No. 66

Characteristics of the Wise

Allah Almighty states in the Holy Quran:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِيَعْلَمُ صَادِقَاتٍ

.Indeed, nothing is hidden from the sight of your Lord
(Al-Fajr 89, Verse 14)

Tafseer:

{إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِيَعْلَمُ صَادِقَاتٍ} يَرْصُدُ أَعْبَادَ الْعِبَادَ فَلَا يَغُوْتُهُ مِنْهَا شَيْءٌ يُبَارِزُهُمْ عَلَيْهَا

Assuredly your Lord is ever on the watch, watching over the deeds of servants, nothing of which escapes Him, that He may then requite them for these [deeds].
(Tafseer Jalalain)

Hadeeth:

عَنْ أَبِي يَعْلَى شَدَّادِ بْنِ أَوْسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: أَلْكَيْسُ مَنْ دَانَ

نَفْسَهُ، وَعَمِلَ لِيَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَالْعَاجِزُ مَنْ أَتَّبَعَ نَفْسَهُ هَوَاهَا، وَتَبَّأَنَ عَلَى اللَّهِ -

(ترمذى، كتاب صفة القيامة والرقاء والورع، باب ماجاء فى صفة اوانى الموت، ٤٠٧ / ٢٤٦٧) حديث

Sayyiduna Abu Ya'la Shaddad ibn Aus – may Allah be pleased with him – reported: The Messenger of Allah – may Allah send peace and blessings upon him – said, "A wise man is he who subdues his Nafs and does noble deeds to benefit him after death; and the foolish person is the one who follows his temptations and desires of his Nafs seeking from Allah the fulfillment of his vain desires".

(Tirmidhi)

Commentary:

(وعن شداد ابن أوس) يُكْنَى أَبَا يَعْلَى الْأَنْصَارِيَّ. قَالَ عُبَادَةُ بْنُ الصَّامِتِ وَأَبُو الدَّرْدَاءِ: كَانَ شَدَّادُ مِمَّنْ أُوتِيَ الْعِلْمَ وَالْحَلْمَ. (قال: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ -: "الْكَيْسُ مَنْ دَانَ نَفْسَهُ")، أَيْ: جَعَلَهَا دَنِيَّةً مُطِيعَةً لِأَمْرِهِ تَعَالَى، مُنْقَادَةً لِحُكْمِهِ وَقَضَائِهِ وَقَدْرِهِ. وَذَكَرَ النَّوْوَيُّ أَنَّهُ قَالَ التِّرْمِذِيُّ وَغَيْرُهُ مِنَ الْعُلَمَاءِ: مَعْنَى دَانَ نَفْسَهُ حَاسِبَهَا. أَيْ: حَاسَبَ أَعْمَالَهَا وَأَخْوَالَهَا وَأَقْوَالَهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا، فَإِنْ كَانَتْ حَيْرَةً حَمَدَ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ شَرَّاً تَابَ مِنْهَا، وَاسْتَدْرَكَ مَا فَاتَهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يُحَاسِبَ فِي الْعُقُبَى، كَمَا رُوِيَ: حَاسِبُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُحَاسِبُوكُمْ وَقُدْ قَالَ تَعَالَى: {وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدِ} [الحشر: 18] ("وَعَمِلَ لِمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ. وَالْعَاجِزُ") أَنَّ الْكَيْسَ هُوَ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْقَوِيُّ، وَالْعَاجِزُ هُوَ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْضَّعِيفُ، وَهُوَ ("

مَنْ أَشْبَعَ نَفْسَهُ هَوَاهَا") ، أَيْ : جَعَلَهَا تَابِعَةً لِهَوَاهَا مِنْ تَحْصِيلِ الْمُسْتَهِيَاتِ وَاسْتِعْمَالِ اللَّذَّاتِ وَالشُّبُهَاتِ ، بَلْ مِنْ ارْتِكَابِ الْمُحَرَّمَاتِ وَتَرْكِ الْوَاجِبَاتِ (" وَتَمَنَّى عَلَى اللَّهِ") أَيْ : يُدْنِبُ ، وَيَتَمَنَّى الْجَنَّةَ مِنْ غَيْرِ إِسْتِغْفَارِ وَالْتَّوْبَةِ .

Sayyiduna Abu Ya'la his nickname is Abu Ya'la (al-Ansari) Shaddad ibn Aus – may Allah be pleased with him – Sayyiduna 'Ubaadah ibn al-Saamit and Abu al-Darda' – may Allah be pleased with them – said, "Sayyiduna Shaddad was one of those who were blessed with knowledge and prudence" reported: The Messenger of Allah – may Allah send peace and blessings upon him – said, "A wise man is he who subdues his Nafs subdued and obedient to the commandments of the Almighty, submitting to His Devine Wisdom, Judgment and Decree. Imam Nawawi – may Allah be pleased with him – mentioned that Imam Tirmidhi and other scholars – may Allah be pleased with them – said, "Subduing oneself means taking account of one's life i.e. where one scrutinizes his actions, state and words in his worldly life. If he finds something good he praises Allah Almighty and If there was any wrong deed he repents from it and rectifies it before he is held accountable for it in the hereafter; as it is narrated (in the Hadeeth): Take account of yourself before you are taken to account. Allah Almighty states in the Holy Quran: And every soul must see that what is sent forth for tomorrow'. (Al-Hashr 59, Verse 18) and does noble deeds to benefit him after death; and the foolish person Indeed the strong believer is a wise person and a weak believer is a foolish person.

He is the one who follows his temptations and desires of his Nafs by following his carnal desires seeking the fulfilment of desires, pleasures and indulging in suspicious activities, even committing unlawful acts and abandoning necessary actions seeking from Allah the fulfillment of his vain desires" continues to sin and still hopes for Paradise without seeking forgiveness and without repentance. (Mirqaat al-Mafaateeh under Hadeeth No. 5289)

Desire of Paradise Without Action is a Sin & Seeking Intercession without a Connection is Deceit:

Sayyiduna Ma'roof al-Karkhi – may Allah be pleased with him – said:

Seeking Paradise without action is a sin, whereas seeking intercession without having a former connection is nothing but deceit. To hope for the Mercy of Allah Almighty while at the same time disobeying the commands of Allah is utter ignorance and foolishness.

(Ashe'at al-Lama'at Vol. 4, p. 251)

False Hopes:

Imam Hasan Basri – may Allah be pleased with him – said:

If some people depart from this world only with the hope that Allah Almighty is the Most Forgiving, while they never did any good, then to assume that Allah Almighty will forgive them, is a lie. If they were hopeful of such Mercy, then they would most definitely have worked towards it.

He also said:

O Allah's servants, stay away from such false hopes which is the way of the fools. I swear by Allah! Neither Allah gives anything on account of these false hopes in this world nor will He give in the hereafter.

(Ibid)

Accountability:

Imam Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazzali – may Allah be pleased with him – writes in Ihya as follows:

توبه ابن الصمة وكان بالرقة وكان محاسبا لنفسه فحسب يوم فإذا هو ابن ستين سنة
فحسب أيامها فإذا هي أحد وعشرون ألف يوم وخمسمائة يوم فصرخ وقال يا ويلتي ألقى
الملك بأحد وعشرين ألف ذنب فكيف وفي كل يوم عشرة آلاف ذنب ثم خرمغشيا عليه
فإذا هميت

Sayyiduna Ibn al-Semmeh – may Allah be pleased with him – once took the account of his Nafs for the entire life. He came to a conclusion, that his was 60 years. When he calculated the days in his life, it yielded the result to 21,500 days. He then cried and said, “My word, how do I face the Ultimate King with 21,000 sins? (if I take into account that I committed only one sin a day) whereas the daily sins that I commit amount to 10,000 sins!”

He then collapsed on the floor and passed away.

(Ihya Uloom al-Deen)

The Piety of Sayyiduna ‘Utbah:

Once he was passing by a place and fell unconscious. He said upon recovery, “This is the place where I had committed a wrong in my youth.”

(Tambeeh al-Mughtareen p. 54)

The Consequences of Letting One’s Nafs Run Wild:

Hadrat Sayyiduna Jafer Khuldi – may Allah be pleased with him – reports that once Hadrat Sayyiduna Khayrun Nisaaj – may Allah be pleased with him – was once asked how he attained the title “Khayrun Nisaaj” which meant someone who was an expert tailor.

Hadrat Sayyiduna Khayrun Nisaaj – may Allah be pleased with him – replied that this was not actually his name or title. They then asked him how he had gained this name and title.

Hadrat Sayyiduna Khayrun Nisaaj – may Allah be pleased with him – explained, “I had made a promise to the Almighty that I would never feed my Nafs sweet dates. I continued to abide by this promise for a long time. However, one day, I could not resist myself and decided to buy some sweet dates and sat down to eat these dates. As I had only finished one date, suddenly a person appeared in front of me and gave me a very dirty look. He then shouted at me, ‘O Khair! You are the slave of mine who had run away.’ I was extremely shocked when I

heard this claim and wondered what was happening. I then realised that perhaps this was the name of one of his servants who had run away, and he felt that I was that person. In fact, at that moment, my complete facial features had also turned out to be like those of his slave who had run away. This person continued to claim that I was his slave who had run away. When his voice became louder, others also gathered, and everyone shouted that I was Khair the servant of this person.

“I also immediately understood the reason that I was being punished in this manner. After all, I had made a promise to Allah Almighty and I had broken that promise. He then took me to his tailor shop and when the other servants saw me, they also shouted at me that I was indeed a bad person for having run off without permission. They then asked me to join them in preparing the clothes they were sewing.

“The owner pointed out a certain set of clothing and I was shocked because when I started to sew this set of clothing, it was like I was already an expert in this field. I then spent many months in the company of these workers sewing different sets of clothing.

“One night, I spent a large portion of the night in Nafil Ibadah. Finally, I went into Sajdah and made a Du'a, ‘O Allah! Please pardon me as I will never break my promise again’. I continued to make Du'a in this fashion the entire night and in the morning, I noticed that my face had returned to its original form. These people then released me from this work and from that moment onwards, people knew me as Khayrun Nisaaj.”

(Uyunul Hikaayah)

Look at the immense Ibadah that used to be performed by the eminent Awliyah. For them to spend a complete night in Ibadah was a common thing, while for us to spend the entire night in Ibadah is nothing short of a miracle. It also proves

the immense power which they wielded against their Nafs or carnal desires and never allowed this to come in their way of obeying Allah Almighty. It also proves beyond a shadow of doubt that Allah Almighty chooses to teach His special servants a lesson in this world so that in the Hereafter they are people without fear or sadness.

Those Who Subdued Their Nafs:

Hadrat Sayyiduna Ebrahim Khawwaas – may Allah be pleased with him – mentions that once he experienced immense trial and tribulation on a certain journey. However, he maintained patience and did not utter a word of complaint. He mentions that when he arrived in Mecca Shareef, his Nafs began to inform him that he indeed completed a very important task.

In other word, his Nafs tried to make him believe in self-conceit. However, while he was making Tawaaf, an old female shouted at him, “I was also with you in that jungle, however, I had deliberately not spoken to you so that it does not disturb your concentration. Therefore, remove this (self-conceit) thoughts from your mind.”

Shaikh Abul Husain Muzayyin – may Allah be pleased with him – was once walking in a wild and barren area in spiritual penitence. He had no covering on his head and he was also barefoot. He began to think to himself that in this year, no one besides him had endured such trial and tribulation. The moment he thought in this manner, suddenly someone touched him in the back and said to him, “How long will you be trapped in these false thoughts?”

Another Saint has stated that, “To refrain from the Nafs is itself connection with the truth and to be connected to the Nafs is to refrain from the truth.”

Another Saint has mentioned that, “Indeed that Allah Almighty has given Ma’rifah to every servant of His. As much Ma’rifah as a person has been given,

in like manner, he had been given the power to display patience in times of trial and tribulation as per his state of Ma'rifah."

It is mentioned that Hadrat Sayyiduna Samnun – may Allah be pleased with him – was considered among the eminent Awliyah. One day while he was making Tawaaf, someone approached him and asked, "O Shaikh! I ask you through the Barakah of standing in the Divine Court of the Allah Almighty, how did you find Allah?" When he heard the person mentioning about standing in the Divine Court of Allah, he fell unconscious. When he regained his senses, he replied, "My dear friend! I have made four things compulsory upon me. What was alive within me (the desires of the Nafs), I have destroyed it. That which was dead within me, (the heart and the inner being), I have revived it and made it come alive. That which was hidden from my eyes, (the Hereafter), I have placed it in front of me and that which was in front of me (a comfortable life), I have made it disappear. That which is considered as destroyed, (piety), I have turned it into something which is Baaqi (forever). And that which was to remain forever within me (desires of the Nafs), I had made it Faani (in other words, I have made it disappear). That which used to make people fearful, I have chosen to like it and that which was liked by people, I have run away from it."

He then disappeared from that place.

It is mentioned that one day, Shaikh Abu Rabee – may Allah be pleased with him – was sitting among the pious in the Haram Shareef. In this group there were different types of Awliyah. There were some who had travelled the earth, and this was clearly seen in their appearance. However, when Shaikh Abu Rabee – may Allah be pleased with him – listened to these people, he felt very small and insignificant.

One day, while he was sitting alone, he thought to himself that he would also have to do something which would create the same personality within himself.

At the same time, he also understood that he was just at the beginning and did not know what this would create within himself. He then thought that the best thing to do would be to continue making the Tawaaf. One day, someone among these Faqeers asked him, “How long will you continue to go around and around like the animal which continues to pull out water from a well? Will you be able to achieve anything from this?” Shaikh Abu Rabee – may Allah be pleased with him – replied, “I have no idea. In fact, I am also unaware of recognizing the heart and do not understand how to gain control over it, but I have certainly heard the Divine Order of Allah to make Tawaaf of His House and that is what I have decided to do all the time.” It is through this consistent hope and belief in one’s Ibadah that one can achieve amazing results.

It is mentioned that once Shaikh Abu Yaqub Basri – may Allah be pleased with him – was in the Haram Shareef for ten days. He was extremely hungry because he had not eaten anything in these ten days. Obviously, a person would feel extremely weak and frail. He decided to go outside and see whether there would be anything on the floor which he could pick up and eat to satisfy his hunger.

On the road, he found an old turnip, but it was also rotten. He wanted to pick it up but internally, he felt a great disgust in doing this and thought that after staying hungry for ten days how could he lower himself to such a degree. He then threw this away and returned to the Haram Shareef.

After a few minutes, a person approached him. He sat in front of the Shaikh and said to him after opening a small parcel that this was for him. The Shaikh asked him what he meant by this even though he did know the man and had never met him before.

The person explained, “Ten days before, I was on a sea voyage and our boat came close to sinking. All the people on the boat took their Nazar (oath) so that they could be saved from this calamity. I also made the intention of the Nazr that if I

am saved from this disaster, I will enter the Haram Shareef and give five hundred Ashrafis to the first person I see in the Haram Shareef. You were the first person I noticed in the Haram Shareef.”

The Shaikh then asked him to fully uncover his parcel and when this was done, the Shaikh noticed some bread, some sweet dish, etc. The Shaikh then took a little in his hand and said to the person, “The rest of it you can distribute among your family members and this is a gift from my side.” Thereafter, the Shaikh turned to his Nafs and said, “O Nafs! Your sustenance was walking towards you ten days ago and yet, you travelled to the wilds looking for sustenance.”

(Roud Ar Riyaaheen)

The Company of a Fool (Story from the Masnavi of Rumi)

Once, Hazrat Isa – peace be upon him – was seen walking fast towards a mountain. A man called him from a distance and asked, “O Allah’s Messenger! Where are you going at this moment and what’s bothering you? I do not even see any enemy following you.”

Hazrat ‘Isa – peace be upon him – replied, “I am running away from a fool, do not disturb.”

He then said, “Are you not the very Messiah by whose blessings, even the blind and deaf get cured?” He replied, “Yes, I am the one.”

He said, “Are you not the very king appointed by Allah Almighty that if you recite Allah’s words, even the dead come to life?” He said, “Yes, I am the one.”

He then said, “Are you not the one who can make a statue of a bird from clay and then blow on it, and it begins to fly into space?” He replied, “Yes, I am the one.”

He asked in surprise, “If Allah Almighty has granted you so much power then what do you fear?”

Hazrat ‘Isa – peace be upon him – replied, “I swear by the Lord that when I recited His greatest Name on the deaf and blind they got cured, when I recited it on the mountains, even they moved, the dead came to life but I recited the same on the fools a million times and it did not have an impact on them.”

He asked, “Why is that so? Isn’t foolishness also a kind of ailment?”

He replied, “Yes, but it’s only cure is Allah’s wrath.”

Nafs’ Desire for Eggs:

Hadrat Sayyiduna Yusuf bin Husain – may Allah be pleased with him – narrates that he heard Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Turab Nakhshi – may Allah be pleased with him – state:

I never allowed my carnal desires to dedicate to me or to overpower me. I continued to fight against my Nafs. However, once during a journey, my Nafs fought against me and continued insisting that I eat bread and egg. As much as I resisted, it continued to force me to eat these items. I then travelled to a nearby city.

As I entered this city, someone saw me and shouted, “This is the thief! This is the thief grab hold of him!”

People suddenly surrounded me and started to whip me from all directions. When nearly eighty lashes had been given to me, suddenly a person who recognized me shouted to the people, “O people! This is the famous Saint of his era, Hadrat Sayyiduna Abu Turab Nakhshi – may Allah be pleased with him”.

When the crowd heard this, they all stopped and began to apologize to me. One person then took me to his house and placed hot bread and eggs in front of me. When I saw these items, I said to my Nafs, “O Nafs! Your desire has been fulfilled after been whipped. Therefore, only now you may eat.”

(Uyunul Hikaayah)

His Desire for Pomegranate:

Hadrat Sayyiduna Ebrahim bin Adham – may Allah be pleased with him – relates:

I once departed to perform the Hajj and during the journey, it became extremely cold. I then sought refuge inside a nearby cave. A few minutes later, I saw a huge lion entering the cave. When the lion saw me, it began to speak. It asked me, “Who allowed you to enter my house without anyone’s permission?”

I replied, “I am a traveler, and my goods have also been depleted. Tonight, I will remain in this place as your guest.”

After hearing my words, this lion then retired to one corner of the cave and it slept next to me the entire night. I also spent the entire night reciting the Qur'an. In the morning as I began to leave, this lion looked at me and said, “O Ebrahim! Do not be surprised and do not tell everyone that you spent the night with a lion. I swear by Allah Almighty that I have not eaten anything for three days now and if you were not my guest, I would have surely eaten you.”

I then gave thanks to Allah Almighty and departed from this cave.

After completing the Hajj, I then retired to a secluded place to continue making the Ibadah of Allah Almighty. At the same time, my Nafs had also wanted to eat a pomegranate for a long time and I continued to dissuade my Nafs from eating a pomegranate. This had continued for nearly twenty years. One night, my heart said to me, “If you do not satisfy your Nafs, then certainly it would create laziness within you. I then said that when I enter any inhabited area, I will satisfy the hunger of the Nafs.”

I then left and walked to a barren area. I saw a tree. I approached it and noticed that it was a pomegranate tree. There were plenty of pomegranates on this tree. I broke one pomegranate and noticed that it was extremely sour. I broke four of them and all of them were extremely sour. My Nafs kept telling me that I wanted to eat sweet pomegranate.

I went towards an inhabited area. I found a person in an orchard and asked him for a pomegranate. When he gave me one of these fruits, I also noticed that it was extremely sour and bitter. When I asked this person about it, he replied, “O Ebrahim! Whatever your Nafs wishes for you seem to be able to obey it. I swear by Allah Almighty that I have been in this orchard for nearly forty years, yet, until today, I cannot tell which is sweet and which is sour and which is bitter.”

I became surprised by this answer and continued on my journey. I met a young man who was full of sickness. He seemed to have sores and pimples on his body and even his flesh seemed to be falling out in certain places. He was saying, “Praise be to Allah Almighty who has given me goodness from that which you suffer from and has certainly given me greatness over other creatures.”

I was extremely surprised by this statement and asked him, “What can be a greater test than that which you are going through?”

He then looked at me and said, “O Ebrahim! It is better to suffer from this than to wish for pomegranate. However, I am also aware that you are such a slave who has been placed into a test. In other words, whatever you wish for, Almighty Allah, in His Divine Wisdom, has decreed the opposite. This is the reason that the fruits which were sweet became bitter and sour.”

When I heard these words, I fell unconscious. When I regained my senses, I asked the young man that when this is his greatness and esteem in the Divine Court of Allah Almighty why does he not make Du'a in the Divine Court of Allah Almighty for this sickness to be removed. He replied, “O Ebrahim! Almighty Allah is able to decree whatever He wishes for His slaves. Whatever He wishes, that is what happens. He also places the person in a test to see what type of reaction and behaviour is displayed by the slave. O Ebrahim! I also swear that even if Almighty Allah decrees that one of my joints be cut off, still I would increase in my love for Him.”

I then departed from this place.

(Al Qalyubi)

Lesson:

- ✓ This Hadith highlights the importance of the accountability of one's self. Mere desires which are not coupled with practical efforts are of no avail because Allah grants reward on good deeds and not on yearnings and desires which are not supported by noble actions.