

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

A farewell word by our Shaikh ‘Abd Allāh bin Aḥmad bin Lamḥ al-Khawlānī, may Allāh grant us and him success before his departure towards Yemen.

On the authority of Abū Hurairah [may Allāh be pleased with him] that the Prophet ﷺ said:

The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allāh than the weak believer, and there is goodness in both. Be keen and eager in regards to what benefits you, and seek the help of Allāh and do not become incapacitated. And if something was to afflict you, then do not say if only I had done [differently], such and such what have happened - rather, say it is the decree of Allāh and He does what He wills. For indeed, ‘if only’ opens [the door to] shayṭān’s deeds¹.

[Reported by al-Imām Muslim in his Ṣaḥīḥ, 2664]

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه، قال: قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم:

المؤمن القوي خيرٌ وأحبُّ إلى الله من المؤمن الضعيف، وفي كلٍّ خير، احرص على ما ينفعك، واستعن بالله ولا تعجز، وإن أصابك شيء فلا تقل لو أني فعلت كان كذا وكذا، ولكن قل قدر الله وما شاء فعل، فإنَّ لو تفتح عمل الشيطان.

‘The strong believer is better and more beloved to Allāh than the weak believer, and there is goodness in both’ - this is a motivational sentence that incites the listener to go out and seek something. It is a great sentence. He ﷺ is saying that one type is better than the other and followed it by ‘be keen and eager in regards to what benefits you’. Being keen and eager regarding something means you seek it so that it does not miss you. When we are keen and eager regarding something, for example; the Ṣalāh, [knowledge based] meetings or other [beneficial] deeds - we are essentially striving to attain these matters and not miss them. Hence, he ﷺ is saying ‘be keen and eager in regards to what benefits you’ so that you don’t miss it.

The strength that the strong believer has stems from the determination inside him - and not from the strength of his muscles. It comes from the strength of Īmān and the internal determination. This strength pushes the male and female believer towards [performing] the Ṣalāh; fasting; worshipping; remembrance; ordering with good and forbidding evil; reading and memorising the Qur’ān; learning Islamic knowledge; being a good neighbour; maintaining ties of kinship and any other deed that brings one closer to Allāh, subḥānahu wa ta’ālā. They have determination for these matters and as a result are more beloved to Allāh, subḥānahu wa ta’ālā. These believers are

¹ Al-‘Allāmah ibn al-‘Uthaymīn [may Allāh have mercy on him] said in his commentary on this part of the ḥadīth: ‘His [the shayṭān] deeds’ is what he casts into the hearts of mankind from sorrow, regret and distress, for indeed the shayṭān loves that. (See: ‘al-Qawl al-Mufīd ‘alā Kitāb at-Tawḥīd’ Vol. 2 Pg. 372)

better and more beloved to Allāh than the believers with lesser determination. For example, they love to memorise the Qur’ān; however, they are not very determined. They memorise a day and abandon it for ten days - until they have forgotten what they memorised. As for the determined person, he memorises every day and at the end of the week he has a good amount of memorised content. Thus, he ﷺ is saying that **the strong believer** in his determination, will and Īmān **is better and more beloved to Allāh than the weak believer** whose determination and will are weak. He tells himself that he wants to perform the night prayer for example - but he does not do it due to weakness.

Then, he ﷺ said ‘**and there is goodness in both.**’ This sentence is a refutation against the khawārij since the believer does not depart from Īmān due to falling weak in regards to performing the obligatory matters or due to falling into some sins and prohibitions. For indeed, he is still within the fold of Īmān. Allāh says in His Noble Book:

وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا

And if two groups among the believers fight each other, then make peace between them both... [49:9]

Al-Imām al-Bukhārī pointed to the fact that Allāh named them as believers despite them falling into a sin.¹

Then, he ﷺ said ‘**be keen and eager**’ so that you may become strongly determined. From where does this strength come to you? It comes from being keen and eager in relation to what brings about a benefit. ‘**Be keen and eager in regards to what benefits you.**’ What is it that brings about a benefit? The relative pronoun ‘what’ refers to all matters that bring about a benefit which subsequently becomes a cause for increasing your Īmān. This increase paves the way for doing good deeds and abandoning sins and prohibited actions.

This is what benefits - so be as keen and eager as possible. Where is this determination to be found? It is found inside the believer; however, it alone is not sufficient. Thus, he ﷺ said in the ḥadīth itself: ‘**Be keen and eager in regards to what benefits you, and seek the help of Allāh.**’ This because whoever is not aided by Allāh, they will not be able to worship Him. For this reason we say in every unit of our Ṣalāh: ‘**You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help**’ seeking Allāh’s help in this great worship. If Allāh does not grant a person success, then he is unable to act, he is unable to even say ‘Subḥān Allāh’ because he was not assisted nor given success to do so.

For this reason, you may find a person worshipping Allāh ‘azza wa jalla with different types of worship such as the five daily prayers; memorising the Qur’ān; seeking knowledge etc, all because he was given the success to do so. On the contrary, a healthier person with more wealth and possessions does not even perform the Fajr Ṣalāh nor does he memorise anything from the Qur’ān. Rather, he does not even read it, nor does he care about remembering [Allāh] or attending circles of knowledge. What is the difference between the two? Both have body parts such as eyes, a tongue, ears and hands and all of the senses including the intellect and comprehension - however, one has alongside this human body aid and assistance from Allāh ‘azza wa jalla. Thus, he ﷺ

¹ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb al-Imān, Bāb: ‘Wa in ṭāifatani min al-mu’minīna iqtatalū’

said: **'and seek the help of Allāh'** so that you accomplish what you're determined to accomplish. This is because merely being determined is not sufficient and will not lead to attaining what is good and beneficial, as 'Abd Allāh ibn Mas'ūd [may Allāh be pleased with him] said: **'How many are those who wish good but do not attain it!'**¹

After saying **'and seek the help of Allāh'**, he ﷺ said: **'and do not become incapacitated'**. Why did he say that? Because there are deterrents along the way that may make it difficult - such as occupation; poverty; illnesses; busyness; poor memory and other hindrances. Therefore, beware of becoming incapacitated and abandoning what you are not able to do now. As the proverb goes *'If one cannot attain something in its entirety, then he should not abandon the bulk of it either'*. Take it one step at a time and do not say that you are unable as this is a grave mistake. **'Seek the help of Allāh and do not become incapacitated'** because becoming incapacitated is a matter that we were ordered to seek refuge from with Allāh subḥānahu wa ta'ālā, as is mentioned in the authentic ḥadīth: **"O Allah! I seek refuge in You from incapacity, laziness, cowardice, old age, and stinginess; and I seek Your protection against the torment of the grave and the trials of life and death."**²

Thus, we repeat and say **'be keen and eager in regards to what benefits you, and seek the help of Allāh and do not become incapacitated'**. Being keen and eager is having a strong Īmān, determination and willpower. What can one deduce from his ﷺ saying **'do not become incapacitated'**? It alludes to having patience. When an ant picks up a grain and carries it and then drops it many times along the way, it does not give up. The reason behind that is its patience which pushes her not to become incapacitated. So, his ﷺ saying **'do not become incapacitated'** is an indicative of the importance of patience. *'Patience is like its name, bitter in its taste - however, its conclusion is sweeter than honey.'*³ Therefore, it is imperative that in order not to become incapacitated one must be patient. **'Seek the help of Allāh and do not become incapacitated'** meaning be a patient individual. Where does this patience come from? It comes from Iḥtisāb [expecting the reward from Allāh]. You have to have patience in order to attain that which benefits you and have Iḥtisāb that by being patient Allāh will reward you with a great reward.

In conclusion, the Prophet ﷺ is ordering, encouraging and guiding us in this ḥadīth to be determined in regards to what benefits us from the likes of Islamic knowledge; memorising the Qur'ān and aḥādīth of the Prophet ﷺ. Likewise, having concern for Islamic sciences, understanding and perfecting them and not becoming incapacitated if some interruption takes place. If you're interrupted from that, then return right away. If you happen to forget, repeat again. If you feel like you've lost interest in some forms of worship, then do not cease. Rather, continue and keep returning to it [if interrupted] and seek refuge in Allāh from the accursed shayṭān. If you happen to become weak in any form of worship from its different kinds like the Ṣalāh or supplications or morning and evening remembrances - then strive to return back to them with force. You must not give up, rather call yourself to patience and hope for reward from Allāh. Likewise, if you become weak in maintaining ties of kinship, or memorising aḥādīth, or ordering with good and forbidding evil, or advising [for the sake of Allāh] or compiling etc. Do not

¹ Silsilat 'ul Aḥādīth aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah 2005, of al-Imām al-Albānī [may Allāh have mercy on him]

² Ṣaḥīḥ, Muslim 2706

³ Madārij as-Sālikīn, 2/188

become incapacitated. Return to it and bear patient and expect the reward from Allāh. *'We found that the best parts of our lives were with patience.'*¹

We are in severe need of having a great amount of patience. This is due to the believer having to face many trials and tribulations of different kinds. Trials that cause temptations and divert a person from his goals and weaken his determination and Īmān. To elaborate, matters that could weaken a believer's Īmān are affairs of the house, his family, his neighbours, his occupation, or the fatigue that results from living expenses that come from all angles. However, the solution lies with what the Prophet ﷺ advised with. The strong believer who has a strong and grounded heart as well as determination does not become incapacitated even if some hindrances come his way - rather, he stays patient. Look at the strong determination of 'Alī bin Abī Ṭālib [may Allāh be pleased with him] in regards to what the Prophet ﷺ taught him. He ﷺ directed him [and his wife Fāṭimah] to say before going to sleep 33 times Subḥān Allāh; 33 times al-Ḥamdu lillāh and 34 times Allāhu Akbar.² Alī bin Abī Ṭālib [may Allāh be pleased with him] said that he did not abandon this remembrance even during the battle of Ṣiffīn. This indicates the strength of his determination, despite the conditions of war he did not abandon it. Some people, if they go to play football for example after Fajr, they may end up not reading the morning remembrances - whereas Alī bin Abī Ṭālib [may Allāh be pleased with him], despite the tremendous pressure, did not abandon what was beneficial to him. This is the strength of the strong believer who is better and more beloved to Allāh 'azza wa jalla.

What is worth remembering is that the more a person's Īmān grows stronger, the more Allāh loves him, and if Allāh loves him more He aids him more. As it comes in the ḥadīth qudsī, on the authority of Abū Hurairah [may Allāh be pleased with him] that the Prophet ﷺ said: Indeed, Allāh the Most High says: ... **And My servant continues to draw near to me with nawāfil [supererogatory deeds] until I Love him. When I Love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, and his sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him; and were he to seek refuge with Me, I would surely grant him refuge.**³ The intent here is that these limbs are given success.

15 Dhū l-Qi'dah 1442,
Makkah, the sacred land of Allāh subḥānahu wa ta'ālā.

Prepared & translated by the one in need of his Rabb
Shafiq bin Faḍlillāh (may Allāh forgive him and his parents)
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¹ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Kitāb ar-Riqāq, Bāb: aṣ-Ṣabr 'an Maḥārim Allāh

² Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 5362; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2727

³ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 6502