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## ETYMOLOGY OF LOVE

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ  
غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

*“Say, (O Muhammad) If you love Allah, then follow me, Allah will love you and will forgive your sins; Indeed Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.”*  
**Suratu Aali Imran 3:31**

- ↳ Love, one of our most-oft-used words, remains an enigma. There may have been more written about love than about any other subject, yet it remains intangible. We know that love is an integral part of human life, that we need it for our well being, but there seems to be no guaranteed way to find it. At first glance we might think that we need love in the same way that we need eat and drink, to breathe and sleep. We know that love fulfils our need to be cared of, our need for intimacy. So we pursue love in a manner that is often narcissistic and indulgent – we look for someone who will love us because we crave it; we may want to love someone so we can feel good about ourselves.
- ↳ But if love is another need like food and water, why is it so illusive? Why is attaining love difficult for so many people? And when do we find it, it doesn't come easily; it always comes with some pain and frustration. We may succeed at love for a time, but when we fail, the pain is intense. These are obstacles we face when we look at love as just another one of our bodily needs. Yes, we do need love just as we need food and water, but there is a difference. Food and Water are elements of the earth that sustain our human bodies, where as love is the language of Allah which sustains our soul. *“So set your face upright for deen as a human being of pure faith, the fitrat (nature) of Allah upon*

*which He originated human beings, there is no changing of Allah's creation, this is the right deen but most people do not know...." 30:30*

- ↪ True love bears little resemblance to the love we read about in novels or the love we hear about in songs. True love is transcendence, linking our physical selves to Allah and there fore to everyone else around us. *"I have turned my face towards Him who created the heavens and the earth..." Suratul Anaam 6:79*

### **So what is love?**

- ↪ Etymology of love – ‘ahabba’ used to describe state of a camel who when it kneels refuses to stand up again just as a muhibb will not move his/her heart away from remembering his/her beloved. ‘habb’ – seeds of plants for love is the seed of life. “Love is perpetual turning towards the Beloved with a heart distraught with love.” “Love is the heart’s agreement wit the wishes of the Rabb.” “Love is called ‘mahabba’ because it obliterates everything but the beloved from the heart.
- ↪ Love is a subsistent relationship which is based on resemblance and similarity – essentially it is need which is the root of love –it has different degrees of strengths and weaknesses – it entails self sacrifice - by extension we love the things related to the loved one – Mathnavi of Rumi – the love of the stork and the raven
- ↪ In philosophy love is the ‘elixir’ – the philosopher’s stone which changes one matter into another by melting down, combining and perfecting. It is love that makes a heart a heart, otherwise it is just clay and water. It is love which awakens sleeping powers, and frees the chains and fetters just like the splitting of an atom releases atomic power. Love develops the spirit, it inspires and builds. A hen will fold it's wings and will run away even from a

young child. But, when the same hen has chicks, love takes over. The same wings which were folded by its side are now lowered in defence of its young. Previously, it ran away from the child, but now it clucks noisily and attacks where possible to protect its young. Love makes a young man or woman who when single thought of nothing but themselves suddenly move like lightning at the slightest cry of their child from the cradle. It is love that turns a miser into a generous person, and an impatient person into a tolerant one.

↳ “When love beckons to you, follow him, though his ways are hard and steep. And when his wings enfold you, yield to him though the sword hidden among his pinions may wound you.....Like sheaves of corn He gathers you to himself, he threshes you to make you naked, he sifts you to free you from your husks, he grinds you to whiteness, he kneads you until you are pliant, and then he assigns you to his sacred fire, that you may become sacred bread for God’s sacred feast. All these things shall love do to you **so that you may know the secrets of your heart and in that knowledge become a fragment of life’s heart.**” Khalil Gibran

↳ We see the effect of the love of Allah in those close to Him – e.g. Dua of Sayyida Aasiya in Qur’an, Dua Kumayl, Imam Ali’s search for shahada, Dua ‘Arafa, Munajaat of Imam Ali Zaynul ‘Aabideen (A.S.) – “Ilaahiy! Who would want another in place of You after having tasted the sweetness of Your love?..... I ask from You love for You, love for those who love You, love for every amal (deed) which will bring me near You, and that You make Yourself more Beloved to me than anything other than You.....”

↳ When two people love each other, each feels free to look after the other’s affairs. Love empowers the beloved to manage the

affairs, and influence the life of the lover – “wa ufawwizhu amriy ilallah..”

## **CONTEMPLATION**

- ↳ The human being is programmed within his/her fitrat to love perfection. ‘fitrat is the basic consciousness which is common to us all. The source of the word ‘fitr’ in the ‘Arabic language is from ‘fatar’ which relates to a crack or break in the ground when a seed is germinated and a plant begins to grow out of the earth. If we allow ‘fitr’ to manifest itself it tells us clearly what is right and wrong. *“So set your face upright for deen as a human being of pure faith, the fitrat (nature) of Allah upon which He originated human beings, there is no changing of Allah’s creation, this is the right deen but most people do not know...”*  
**Suratur Room – 30:30.** “No man can reveal to you aught but that which already is half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge. The teacher, if he is indeed wise, does not bid you to enter in his house of wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.” Khalil Gibran
- ↳ We are lovers of absolute perfection– He alone is absolute perfection. How does one go about loving Allah? He says - Follow the footsteps of the Prophet (S.A.W.).
- ↳ First Step is contemplation (Prophet (S.A.W.) known to spend his time meditating in the cave of Hira) – contemplation consists of three things – Zhikr (remembrance), Fikr (reflection), and Himma (energy whose extent is dependant upon one’s yearning), We are what we think, all that we are arises with our thoughts. With our thoughts we make our world. “Sow a thought, reap an action, sow an action, reap a habit, sow a habit, reap a character, sow a character, reap a destiny.”
- ↳ Descartes said – “I think, therefore I am”. He doubted everything but his own existence and he worked his own philosophical work

upon this doubt – Gide said – “I feel therefore I am” Camus said – “I revolt therefore I am”.

↳ One in love sees nothing but his/her beloved – Why then do we not see Allah in everything when all creation does His tasbeeh? – *“Whatever is in the heavens and the earth do the ‘subhaan’ of Allah...” Suratul Jumu’a - 62:1* . Constant attempt to try to prove to us that our world is THE existence – thoughts, contemplation manipulated so that they do not move from here – the written and oral word all focused to maximise every aspect of physical existence – the more the sophisticated way of living – the more the want for better – exploiting the aspect of love of perfection. Nowhere is education – even in the most noble of institutions does one find the name of Allah – call Him by any name – to Him belong all the Asmaul Husna. Subtle persuasion that why should we sacrifice the observable, tangible reality for an unobservable, intangible concept – religion/Allah therefore becomes an added burden – a hazard. Slow indoctrination – e.g. communism in Russia – crude example of induction to children....

↳ Qur’an says – *“And do not follow that of which you have no knowledge – surely the hearing, the sight and the heart, all of these shall be questioned about that.” Suratul Israa 17:36* Message is contemplate – do not just accept – Can we accept that the world is the be all and end all of existence? If we accept this then we should but only maximise our present living – but if our contemplation tells us that existence means both the world and the hereafter, then the policy – way of life will change. *“Establish salaa, and give Zakaa”* – Salaa relates to Allah – Zakaa to His creation – *“Islam is obedience to the Creator and serving His creation.”*

- ↪ Origin of life – Allah is ghayb – “Eyes do not perceive Him” End of life – consequences after death – aakhirah is ghayb How do we remove the veils?
- ↪ We removed the veils of the laws and mysteries of the world we live in by using our brains, intellect and senses combined we removed the veils. Our advancement in science, technology increased although basics remained the same – progress in variables– e.g. forefathers lived in caves, we in high tech buildings – basic need of shelter is the same. We increased the potential of our limbs etc.. The intellect made devices through hypothesis, thesis, theory and application which extended the potential. E.g. machinery to travel increased the potential of our feet... But there is a limit to this progress –
- ↪ Question – If the brain – intellect – can increase the potential of the body – what about the nafs? How can we raise it towards perfection and extend its potential so the veils of ghayb are removed? Can the intellect do this? Where does it go when it is exhausted and cannot find answers? *“And when my abd asks you about Me, indeed I am near, I answer the call of the caller when he/she calls so they should answer Me and believe in Me so they may be rightly guided.” Suratul Baqara – 2:186* *“O you who believe! Answer (the call of) Allah and His rasul when he calls you to that which gives you life; and know that Allah intervenes between man and his heart, and that to Him you shall be gathered.” Suratul Anfaal – 8:24*

## SELFLESS LOVE AND SELFISH LOVE

↪ There are two words used for the human being in the Qur'an – 'bashar' and 'insaan' – By 'bashar' it is talking of the two legged creature that contains physiological, biological, and psychological characteristics shared by all human beings whilst 'insaan' is that unusual and enigmatic being which is the subject matter for poets, philosophers and religion. Accordingly we are all bashar but not necessarily insaan. "Bashar is a 'being' whilst 'insaan' is a becoming" – Ali Shariati. To be able to love – one needs to be an insaan.

↪ **1<sup>st</sup>** criterion of insaanियat – to be a muhsin – "And Allah loves the muhsineen" 2:195, 3:134, 3:148, 5:13, 5:93. When one can love selflessly - The two types of love – selfish love and selfless love – are diametrically opposed. Selfish love is conditional love; you love on the condition that your needs will be met, and if the person you have chosen to love doesn't serve your needs, you reject that person and love is bound to be mercurial. When the person you love wants help you may give it. But once the price becomes too high, if you feel you are giving more than you are receiving, you may simply stop loving. Selfless love, though, means of rising above your own needs. It means going outside of yourself, truly connecting with another person's soul and, therefore with Allah. Conditional, selfish love dissipates when its conditions are not met, but unconditional, selfless love is constant and eternal. Conditional love does not encourage growth, for it is simply a temporary need being fulfilled. Just as you need to eat again a few hours after a meal, someone who loves conditionally will constantly need more helpings of assurance, caring, and acceptance. But unconditional love is the foundation of human growth. It is comprehensive – it spills over and affects not just your immediate needs but all around you. In



other words **when the 'I' becomes a 'we'** When one is not an individual who is separated from others but a limb or organ of the body of society so that when one part is in pain – one too hurts. “I have been sent if only to raise the akhlaq of human beings to perfection.” “Thought the world’s wont, like the bud is to be close fisted, yet you, like the spring breeze should be an opener of knots.” – Hafiz.

↳ Most of us are ready to love selflessly, but we have learned not to trust other people, sometimes with good reason. The only way to let go, is to trust Allah. Every single thing on earth is worth of our awareness and respect, and every person is like a diamond. While a diamond may appear solid, beneath the surface lies a beauty and grace that are unequalled. It is precious and regardless of how it looks on the outside, regardless of its surroundings. We should treat each person that we meet accordingly. We must respect his innate value and totally dedicate ourselves to helping him by whatever means necessary. If his outer layer appears solid, we should encourage him to clean himself. If his edges seem rough, we should help educate and empower him to polish himself by accessing his inner resources A man in the presence of Imam Husayn (A.S.) said “Goodness is wasted when done to those who are not worthy of it” Imam said to him – “That is not true, for benevolence is like a torrential rain which comes down everywhere and equally waters wasteland as well as orchards.” Imam Ali Zaynul Aabedeen (A.S.) said to his son – “My son! Do not hold back your kindness from anyone who seeks your charity and benevolence, for even if he were not worthy of that kindness you would prove worthy of it by responding positively to his request.”

↳ Imam Husayn (A.S.) in a sermon said “....The most generous of human beings is the one who gives to someone in need who

cannot return the kindness and the most forgiving is the one who forgives despite possessing the power to retaliate...Allah takes away the sorrow and darkness of the world and the hereafter from everyone of you who brings relief to a suffering soul.. for Allah loves the muhsineen.” (Kashf al gumma vol ii Al-Irbili)

↳ Insaniyat is not confined to monetary help or to providing relief from physical suffering and hardship. Rather, spiritual guidance, moral guidance has a higher and greater value. Imam Ali (A.S.) has said – “If Allah were to guide a single person through you, that is better for you than everything under the sun.” (Safinatul Bihar vol ii – Shaykh Abbas Qummi) e.g. Habib Al-Najjar – Suratu Yaseen

## **TAWBA**

- ↪ *“Indeed Allah loves the tawwabeen (those who turn to Him in repentance) and the mutatahhireen.” Suratul Baqara 2:222*
- ↪ Tawba is one of the characteristics that sets apart a ‘bashar’ from an ‘insaan’. It is not something that is just verbal, but a psychological and spiritual state which causes a revolution of the mind.
- ↪ Unlike inanimate things, living things have the ability to change the course they follow – roots of tree meet a stone- change course – animal meets obstruction, changes course – similarly for the human being tawba is a change of course – not a simple as that of plants and animals but much more complex.
- ↪ It is an internal revolution against the self – between the animalistic and angelic – when a person sinks deeply in sin and the angel within him/her is not satiated – a reaction occurs – it’s intensity depending on the action (sin) and the nature of the person’s conscience. . E.g. pilot who bombed Hiroshima in lunatic asylum, Bushr ibn Artas – cruel general of Muawaiya’s army – became mad.
- ↪ An ‘insaan’ is constantly in a state of tawba. If you leave a clear mirror in a place where you think the air is pure, you will find a film of dust settling on it in a short while in the place where you had previously thought there was no dust in the air. However, if a wall is dirty an extra stain will not show up on it easily and if it is blackened then it will not show anything. Prophet (S.A.W.) continually uttered tawba – Umme Salama narrates that 2 months before his death before he did anything he would say “Glory be to Allah! I seek forgiveness from Him and I turn to Him” When asked he said he had been commanded to – later realised it was the commandment in Suratun Nasr.

- ↪ A man came to Imam Ali (A.S.) saying: "Astaghfirullah rabbi wa atubu ilayh" I seek forgiveness from Allah and I turn repentant towards him. Imam realised he was not serious and said: "Do you know what tawba is?" "Tawba has a high position. It has six conditions for it's acceptance out of which the last two are the conditions for completion. 1) To show remorse and regret at what has been done. 2) A definite resolution not to repeat the sin again. 3) To return what belongs to others. 4) Wajibats that are qadha must be restored. 5) To rid oneself of all the flesh that has grown by haram means. 6) To let the body which has tasted the sweetness of sins, also taste the pain of fasting in the day and worshipping in the night. This means that one must cleanse oneself physically and spiritually for tawba to be accepted.
- ↪ In the Qur'an Allah says: *"O my servants who have been unjust against yourselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah, Indeed Allah forgives sins altogether."*
- Suratuz Zumar 39:53**
- ↪ In Hadith e Qudsi Allah says: The groan (of tawba) of sinners is dearer to me than the Glorifications (of me). So you should sigh and groan in these precious nights."
- ↪ The following dua is quoted from Imam Husayn (A.S.) "My Master, when I look at my sins, I am overcome with fear, but when I look at your Grace, I am filled with hope."
- ↪ Tawba must be done immediately. The poet Rumi tells of a man who planted a bramble bush on a public foot path. When it started growing he was asked to uproot it and he said there was no hurry for it was yet not much of a hindrance. He kept on offering the excuse year after year. The bramble bush grew thicker, and it's roots grew stronger. The thorns grew sharper and more dangerous while the man grew weaker and unable to remove it. Rumi meant that sins take root rapidly. As one gets

older one becomes more helpless against them. Today is better for tawba than tomorrow - In fact now is better than later.

↪ *"O you who believe, do tawba to Allah with tawbatan nasuh, maybe your Rabb will remove from you your evil and cause you to enter gardens beneath which river flow....."* **Suratut Tahreem 66:8**

Tawbatan Nasuh means several things – tawbah which ‘advises’ people invites them to simulate and counsels - tawba which is done solely for Allah just as pure honey free from wax is called ‘asal nasuh’ – nasuh is called nasahah which means tailoring because tawba sews together the body of faith torn by sins.

↪ Last minute tawba is not acceptable as was the case of Firown. *"Finally when he began to drown, he said - I believe that there is no god except He in whom the Bani Israil believe and I am of the Muslims."* **Suratu Yunus 10:90**

As long as he was alive Firown acted like a tyrant and nothing convinced him. He tortures the Bani Israil, ridicules Prophet Musa (A.S.) and chases them as they leave. When he is at the point of drowning in the sea and there is no escape, he does tawba and expresses his belief in Allah. His tawba is only due to helplessness in a calamity. So the answer was: *"What! Now! When you previously rebelled and were one of the mischief makers?"* **Suratu Yunus 10:91** In other words why did you not do tawba an hour before when you were quite free to do so? For then, it would have been a true change of heart. What criminal in the world is not repentant at the moment of punishment? It is only when he/she shows repentance before being caught that one can say that there is a spiritual change.

↪ Tawba is not acceptable in the hereafter. This is because the hereafter is the fruit of the deeds of the world. Death is like the fall of the fruit from the tree. As long as the fruit was part of the tree, it is dependant on air, water and nourishment that the tree

obtains. Even an hour before falling, there is a chance for the fruit to become more ripe and sweet. As soon as it falls its chances of development come to an end for it.

↪ Imam Ali (A.S.) is reported to have said in a hadith quoted in Usulul Kaafi - in the chapter of Tawba in the book of Eiman wal Kufr - "If I were to say - I am sorry my Rabb, God will instruct the recording angels to forget that which they have written of my sins. If I was to say - I am sorry my Rabb, I will not repeat this offence, God will instruct parts of my body to conceal my sins. If I were to rectify the consequence of my actions, God will instruct the earth to conceal the sins that I committed over it. And if I were to spiritually atone in like then when I meet God there would be nothing to give witness against me regarding any sin."

↪ Imam Ali Zaynul Aabedeem (A.S.) in Dua Tawba says: "...Accept my tawba as You have promised and pardon my evil deeds as You have guaranteed and grant me Your love as you have laid down and you have my agreement, my Rabb - that I will never return to what You dislike and my guarantee that I will not go back to what you disapprove and my promise that I will give up all acts of disobedience to You."

↪ A hadith from the ma'sumeen states that when all eyes will be crying on the day of Qiyama there will be two sets of eyes which will not cry. Those that cried in tawba for their sins and those that kept awake at night in ibada.

## **SABR**

↪ “...And Allah loves the *saabireen*.” **3:146**

↪ Sabr is derives from one of the many attributes of Allah. Sabr takes on many characteristics – It means not only patience but also constancy, endurance, perseverance, self-restraint, forbearance, and steadfastness. The word Sabr and it’s derivatives occur 103 times in the Qur’an.

↪ For a Muslim sabr is proactive rather than reactive. It is a time to perform. The performance may be the length of time one can persevere even in the face of calamity and difficulty. Sabr is attained through effort – it is not automatic and needs a great deal of concentration and willpower but it is the miftah –al-faraj (the key to relief).

↪ Sabr enables an insaan to be free – Imam Ja’fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) – “ A free human being is free in all circumstances. Should a misfortune befall him, he bears it with sabr. If calamities strike, they do not shatter him. If takes captive and subdued, he turns hardship toe ease as was the case of Yusuf.....Sabr is followed by khayr, so be a saabir and reconcile yourself to sabr in order to be rewarded.”

↪ “Sabr means restraining the self from complaining about hidden anguishes.” It means not complaining to creation – complaining/turning to Allah is not opposed to sabr. “*Indeed I make complaint of my anguish and sorrow to Allah.*” **Suratu Yusuf – 12:86**

↪ Khwaja Nasiruddin Tusi – “Sabr means restraining the self from agitation when confronted with something undesirable. Sabr restrains the inner being from anguish, the tongue from complaint, and the bodily members from untoward movement.”

↪ “Whoever of the mu’mineen that has sabr with a tribulation that befalls him, has the thawab of a thousand shuhada.” “When the

mu'min enters his grave, salaa is on his right hand, zakaah on his left, virtue faces him whilst sabr shelters him. When the two angels given the task to question him enter, sabr says to salaa, zakaah, and virtue – take care of your companion and if you fail to assist him, I will take care of him.” Imam Ja’fer As-Sadiq (A.S.)

↳ The Prophet (S.A.W.) said: “Sabr is of three kinds: Sabr at the time of hardship, Sabr in regard to obedience, Sabr in regard to disobedience.” One who has sabr at times of hardship....Allah writes for him/her 300 degrees (of elevation), the elevation of one degree over the other being like the distance between the earth and the heavens. One who has sabr with regard to obedience, Allah writes for him/her 600 degrees (of elevation), the elevation of each degree above the other being like the distance between the earth’s depth and the ‘arsh (throne). One who has sabr in regard to disobedience, Allah writes for him/her 900 degrees (of elevation), the elevation of each degree above the other being like the distance between the earth’s depths and the furthest frontiers of the throne.” The above hadith illustrates that sabr in regard to disobedience is superior to all other levels of sabr, for it not only possesses greater number of degrees but also the range between its degrees is greater than those of the other kinds.

↳ Sabr in regard to disobedience is realised outwardly by avoiding sins and keeping away from places where they might be committed. Inwardly it is by preventing the nafs from inclining towards them for the very beginning of a sin is a mere thought. This sabr is helped by remembering Allah’s threat of punishment in this world and the next for disobedience. It is also helped by having yaqeen (certainty). Anyone who puts his/her hand in the fire knowingly only does so because he/she wishes to burn him/herself. It does not as a rule happen. Why do we avoid fire? Because our knowledge tells us it is dangerous and we are sure



of this knowledge. In the same way those who strive to perfect their nafs, have yaqeen in the 'burning' power of sins and therefore avoid them. It is said that sabr is the commander of the mu'min's defence against sins.

↳ THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SABR (PATIENCE) AND RIDHA (ACCEPTANCE) Sabr is restraining the nafs and preventing it from giving in to any resentment, in spite of the suffering that it may experience - in the hope that the affliction will come to an end - as well as restraining oneself from behaving badly out of impatience. Ridha on the other hand, is feeling at ease in accepting the qadha (decree) without question though it may be bitter, and being unconcerned with the time when any suffering may stop, even though it is being experienced now. One with ridha accepts whatever he/she receives from Allah as if a gift from a friend. e.g. if a friend gives the gift of palatable food one will accept it and appreciate it. If the same friend gave a gift of a bitter medicine (for he/she knew of it's benefits), one will accept it in the same manner and appreciate it.

## TAQWA

- ↪ “...And so Allah loves the *muttaqeen*. **3:76, 9:4, 9:7**
- ↪ Taqwa is defined in most translations in English as ‘piety’ or ‘God fearing’. In short it is the ability to refrain from all that is forbidden and to perform all that is Wajib. It is an active force which strengthens a person's spiritual power enabling him to refrain from sin and evil even whilst living in a society which is sinful. It is a vaccine through which a person is immunised from the germs of kufr, shirk, a shield against sins and a sign that a person is master of his own self.
- ↪ The basis of taqwa is the obedience of Allah with Ikhlas (sincerity). Imam Ali (A.S.) says: Do not pretend to obey Allah; but obey him sincerely and faithfully. Let this desire of obedience be engraved in your mind and be deep rooted in your hearts. Let it rule over your words and deeds."
- ↪ “Obey Allah to the degree that you need Him. Disobey Him to the degree and capacity to which you can bear the fire of Jahannam.” Imam Ali (A.S.) An invitation to contemplation – How much do I love Him and how much do I need to be loved?
- ↪ There are two types of fears. One is fear through ignorance and the other is fear through knowledge. e.g. When a child is afraid of going into a dark room alone his fear is through ignorance for it is his imagination which is **False Evidence** **Appearing Real**. When a toddler reaches out towards a snake slithering in front of him, and his mother rushes to save him for fear of him being bit, her fear is that of knowledge.
- ↪ Taqwa is fear of Allah through knowledge. The more we understand the Greatness of Allah and the more we observe and realise that there is none like Him; the greater the awe (respect, fear). It is only then that we will await adhan in the morning for

salaa rather than the adhaan waking us up. However, this fear must be accompanied by hope.

↳ Hazrat Luqman, the wise told his son: "O my son! Have such fear of Allah, that when you come to Him with the good deeds of both the worlds, He would still punish you; and have such hope in Allah, that if you came to Him with the sins of both the worlds He would still have mercy for you."

↳ Imam Muhammad Baqir (A.S.) has said: "There is no mu'min who does not have two lights (beliefs) in his heart. The light of fear and the light of hope. Were one of these to be measured it would not exceed the other..."

↳ Difference between hope and delusion (false hopes) Imam Ja'fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) has said: "There are some people who commit sins and say we are hopeful. They remain in this condition until death comes to them. They are a people who have been swept away by delusion. They lie, they are not hopeful, for indeed one who has hope for something strives for it....."

↳ "...Lead your life as a muttaqi. Make taqwa a habit of your life. Wipe out your sins with its help. It will cure your moral diseases. Make it a means to provide for you His Grace and blessings. Take a lesson from those who have disregarded it and let not your life be a warning to those who want to understand how people without taqwa have fared in this world." Imam Ali (A.S.) Sermon 196 -Nahjul Balagha

Taqwa achieved through stages –

↳ **1<sup>st</sup> stage** – contemplation and self reflection (tadhakkur and tafakkur) – *“O you who believe, remember Allah, remember Him a lot (frequently).” Suratul Ahzaab 33:41* “All things have a limit except zikrullah” – Prophet (S.A.W.) Contemplate on Ayaat 18 – 24 of Suratul Hashr every morning after Fajr Salaa. It is said that Shaytan does not have control over 5 types of people – 1. One who takes refuge in Allah, 2. One who does tasbeeh of Allah 3.

One who wishes for others what he wishes for himself 4. One who is not anxious about a misfortune before it strikes. 5. One who is content.

↪ **2<sup>nd</sup> Stage** – self examination and stipulation (musharataah) – Binding oneself to the resolve of keeping away from muharramaat. Try to make resolutions on an hourly, daily basis – experimenting in different ways to stick to them...

↪ **3<sup>rd</sup> Stage** – Guarding against evil – (muraqabaah) - Since every action is a grossified thought then to begin by trashing any thought that may result in evil – even mubah acts that may lead to sins to be abandoned –

↪ **What takes us away from taqwa** – 1. Customs and traditions 2. Assuming worldly values greater than divine values . “The love of the world is the source of all transgressions.” – Imam Ali (A.S.) “The example of the world is that of seawater, the more a thirsty person drinks from it, the thirstier he becomes until it kills him.” – Imam Ja’fer As-Sadiq (A.S.) Signs of attachment to the world – 1. Unremitting sadness 2. Unfulfilled desires 3. Unachievable hope.

↪ "If you are eager to have the life of the lucky ones, desire the death of martyrs, wish for salvation on the day of Qiyama and want guidance when lost, then start the study of the Qur’an. This is because the Qur'an is the word of Allah, that which saves you from Shaytan and helps you increase your good deeds."

### **Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)**

↪ It is not enough to acquire information on a subject of study, but it is important to be able to absorb, understand and practise upon the information in order to call it 'knowledge'. The following ahadith from the Prophet (S.A.W.) may throw some light on the right way of acquiring knowledge. "The treasures of knowledge are opened by asking questions. May Allah bless you. Ask questions because four persons are rewarded - The one who

asks, the one who answers, the one who hears and the one to whom it is related." "Scholarly discussions enliven dead hearts provided they lead to Allah and His commands." "Teach others what you know so that the foundation of your knowledge may become strong and seek knowledge from others so that the level of your information may increase."

↳ *"If you are in doubt about what We have sent down to Our servant (Muhammad), then produce a sura like it and call your witnesses other than Allah if you are truthful"*

**Suratul Baqara 2:23** The challenge above still stands today. The Qur'an is no ordinary book. There is no one topic, nor one subject, there is no beginning, middle nor an end, there is no introduction or conclusion and no particular theme.....**but** wherever one picks it up to read, it shows itself as Qur'an. Linguists and literature experts have tried to analyse the Qur'an. None has been able to give an answer or explanation to the various shades of expression, the style, the rythm...And never will there be an answer for only that which is evolutionary (changes with age) can be answered, that which is revealed and therefore ageless (immortal) can never be answered by man.

↳ Correct recitation of the Qur'an is desirable and recitation is highly recommended but it is only one aspect of the Qur'an. There are many aspects of the Qur'an e.g. Tafahhum - Understanding, Ta'allum - Learning, Tadabbur - Pondering, Tafseer -Commentary.....

↳ We are told by the Ma'sumeen that there will come a time when Muslims will stop responding to the Qur'an. Imam Ali (A.S.) says: "Nothing shall remain of it except it's name" - In **Suratuz Zumar 39:23**, Allah tells us how we should respond to the Qur'an. *"Allah has revealed the best of narrations, a book consistent in it's parts with repetitions, at which the skins shudder of those*

*who fear their Lord; then their skins and their hearts incline towards the remembrance of Allah.....”*

↪ At the time of the Prophet (S.A.W.), when ayaat were revealed the Muslims used to memorise them and act upon them. e.g. When the following aya of **Suratul Hujurat 49:2** was revealed: *“O you who believe, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet...”* A companion of the Prophet (S.A.W.) who was hard of hearing and used to speak loudly stopped coming to the masjid. When the Prophet (S.A.W.) enquired about his absence, he was told that it was the compliance of this aya that stopped him coming to the masjid. The Prophet (S.A.W.) explained to him that the order in the aya was for those with normal hearing.

↪ *“Indeed this Qur’an guides you to the path which is the most upright (most clear)...”* **Suratu Bani Israil 17:9** *“We have revealed to you the book which clarifies every matter..”* **Suratun Nahl 16:89**

↪ The best path in life is the one which is dictated by his innate being \_ fitrat (based on the fitrat of Allah) and not on the sentiments of any individual or society. Every aspect of each part of creation is equipped with a blue print for defining the nature of its existence. *“Our Rabb is He who gave everything its creation, then guided it.”* **Suratu Taha 20:50**

## JUSTICE

- ↪ *"...And so Allah loves the doers of justice. 5:42, 49:9, 60:8*
- ↪ *"....And your Lord is not unjust to anyone...." 18:49* Justice means to put everything in its rightful place. Sometimes it is confused with equality. Equality is not a condition for justice. If Allah did something that was unfair, then 4 possibilities arise: i) Allah does it knowingly - which would make Him Dhalim (unjust) ii) Allah does it unknowingly - which would make him Jahil (ignorant) iii) Allah has been forced to do it - which makes Him Mohtaaj (reliant on others) iv) Allah does it as an amusement - which does not make Him Hakim (wise) Since Allah is not Dhalim, Jahil, Mohtaaj or unwise as Allah is Perfect, then the question of Allah being unjust does not arise.
- ↪ *"...In Your hands is all good, Indeed You have power over everything." Suratu Ali 'Imran 3:25* In Islam evil does not exist. Evil is the absence of good. Just like a shadow which is not an existence in itself but appears because of the absence of light. When mankind interferes with the perfect laws laid down by Allah, this causes the absence of good - and thus evil is present. *"....Mischief has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what mankind has done..." Suratur-Rum 30:41*
- ↪ Allah does not interfere, as He says in the Qur'an : *"..For never shall you find a change in the course of Allah; and never shall you find in the course of Allah any alteration.." Suratul Fatir 35:43*
- ↪ The Qur'an mentions two other types of justice. These are: 1. Individual justice - Protecting the soul and refraining from all unworthy actions. In other words acquiring 'Taqwa'. 2. Social justice - To maintain the rights of others and seeing and treating others as equal, before the divine law.

- ↪ Social justice is having justice in connection with other individuals in society, so we do not hinder growth, do not imprison them, enslave them, exploit all their physical and mental powers in our own interests. With reference to the Bani Israil - Firawn tells Musa (A.S.) - *"What is your answer, Musa? These are my servants and slaves."* **Qur'an 23:48** Firawn was open about his exploitation and enslavement - today human beings deprive others of their rights and freedom under the pretext of defending peace and liberty. Social justice can only be secured when there is spiritual justice.
- ↪ Usul is the same since the time of Adam (A.S.) – Furu (Sharia') changed with population increase coming at it's perfection with the Prophet (S.A.W.) – *"This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed my favour upon you..."* **Suratul Ma'ida 5:3** Code of instructions useless without someone to implement them – Prophets sent to implement – Qur'an says – with justice *"Indeed we sent our Prophets with clear arguments and sent down with them the book and the balance so that human beings would conduct themselves with justice....."* **Suratul Hadeed 57:25**
- ↪ If furu was only salaa, sawm – for individual purposes then no Prophet would have been opposed – no Aamma would have been killed. But all were killed – the opposition was not to the idealism but the reality it produced. They revolutionalised hearts – e.g. salaatur tahajjud vs salatul jamaa'
- ↪ After the Prophets and in the ghaybat of Imam who will implement rules? Bill Clinton, Tony Blair, Boris Yeltsin, Rushdie? It is naaibi Imam ! It is injustice not to recognise their merits!
- ↪ *"Are those who know and those who do not know alike? Only those with understanding are mindful!"*  
**Suratuz - Zumar 39:9**
- ↪ "The Ulema are the inheritors of the Prophets"**Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)**



- ↪ Imam Khumayni (A.R.) said: "History is full of evidence that since the death of the Prophet (S.A.W.) until this day the only people who have taken care of Islam and have defended the faith from attack are the Ulema (Islamic Scholars)."
- ↪ Why was the Prophet (S.A.W.) sent to Arabia? Qur'an says in 57:25 he is sent so that human beings conduct themselves with justice...What dhulm in 'Arabia that surpassed all other dhulm in the world – the oppression of women – *“And when the female infant buried alive is asked, for what sin was she killed”* **Suratut Takweer 81:8,9**
- ↪ Spiritual justice is freedom from one's own shackles - prison (desires....) as against social freedom which is freedom from the bonds of others. Self purification is spiritual freedom. The most significant programme of the Prophets was to provide spiritual freedom. *“Those who follow the rasul .....and he removes from them their burdens and shackles which were upon them.....”* **Qur'an 7:157**
- ↪ Fatima Kalbiya had four sons- Abdullah, Ja'fer, Uthman, & Abbas. She was thus known as Ummulbaneen (mother of sons). On the day of 'Ashura, Abbas sent his brothers to fight before himself. Imam made Abbas the standard bearer of his small army. His devotion to Imam was such that he followed Imam like a shadow. When all other companions and relatives had been martyred, he asked for permission to fight. Imam asked him to bring some water. Abbas took a water-skin and proceeded towards the river. He succeeded in fighting his way to the water and filling the water-skin. The enemy concentrated on preventing the water to reach the camps. They surrounded him. His arms were severed. He strove to grasp the water-skin with his teeth but a blow by a club threw him to the ground. When Imam got to where Abbas had fallen, Abbas was on his last breath. He was 34 years of age.

## TRUST

- ↪ “...And so Allah loves those who trust (Him).      **3:159**
- ↪ Human beings have many faculties at their disposal. Eiman (faith) is not often seen as a basic human faculty – it is often seen as an absence of reason. However, it is a skill in it’s own right, which when cultivated, allows the human being to experience the ultimate. We are all born with eiman – it is neither acquired nor taught – it is a natural state.
- ↪ “We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to carry it and were afraid of it and the human being carried it...” **Suratul Ahzab 33:72** This trust is a task that the morally conscious never forget.
- ↪ Trust is the basis of faith. e.g. fairy tale told to child – not to be confused with childhood naivety or gullibility – it is a faculty that recognises truths that are infinitely incomprehensibly greater than ourselves.
- ↪ Look again at the child – as he/she grown older – trusts less at face value – because faith is being obscured by reason – not only that but trust has been constantly abused – after years of experiencing hypocrisy and being lied to – he/she learns to even mistrust his/her inner beliefs. To protect him/herself, he/she begins to use reason alone to process ideas and establish a value system. In effect, he/she silences the inner voice within him – ‘hadi e batin’ – inner guide.
- ↪ We are able to trust those who say there are black holes in space or the oddities of subatomic particles – but to trust or innate beings and thus Allah we demand ironclad proofs – reason may tell us HOW to live but trust in Allah tells us WHY to live – How do we cultivate trust and therefore eiman and love for Allah? We need to unite trust with reason!

- ↪ “Tawakkul means entrusting all matters to Allah and relying upon His trusteeship.” “tawakkul upon Allah means the severance of the abd of all hopes and expectations from others creations of Allah.” This is not to say that we can function on trust alone. Once we experience eiman through trust – reason becomes a tool to help us express the essence of Allah Trust is not passive – it does not mean sitting back and accepting events as they happen. . e.g. camel tied and then trust for safekeeping, dawa and dua. It means knowing that however much effort one invests, all blessings originate from Allah and ‘trusting’ that Allah always does what is good and right. True trust does not waver – even if things do not workout the way we like. It is not blind faith of ignorance – rather it is the uncompromising belief in the absolute truth. Trust in Allah is the purest expression of love for Him. e.g. Ibraheem in the fire, sacrifice of Ismail in Mina, Abu Talib’s children in protection of Prophet (S.A.W.), when Shimr asked by Yazid – how was the battle?
- ↪ Signs of mutawakkileen – 1. Fears and hopes on none but Allah (upholds the truth even in presence of those who are feared. 2. Never worries Because of confidence in Allah (in His hands is khayr) – heart is tranquil despite chaos around. 3. Does Not become disturbed or does not panic in any situation.
- ↪ *“Whatever Allah grants to human beings out of His mRahma, there is none to withhold it, and what He withholds there is none to send it forth after that, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.”*
- Suratul Fatir 35:2**
- ↪ Where can the human being find a refuge that is beyond the realm of Allah’s power? Trusting in something/one other than Allah will have nothing save disappointment and humiliation. Trust in Allah gives self confidence th\t strengthens the will and removes all trace of doubt in eiman.

↪ The first shaheed in the family of Abu Talib on the day of 'Ashura was Ali Akber bin Husayn bin Ali, whose mother was Layla binte Abu Murrah bin Urwah bin Masood Al-Thaqafi. It is reported he was then 18 or 25 years old. When he proceeded to the battlefield, Imam raised his hands towards the heavens and said: "O Allah! Be witness over these people, for this young man who advances towards them resembles your Prophet most in his looks, manners and speech, and whenever we longed to see your Prophet, we looked at his face.....They (the enemy) invited us to help them and have turned into our enemies.". Ali Akber attacked the enemy , fighting fiercely. It is reported that he killed 120 of the enemy before returning to his father asking for some water to be able to gain more strength to fight. Imam wept, for he could not give his son water. Ali Akber returned to the battlefield and continued. Then one Munziq bin Murrah Al-Abdi struck him hard over his head and threw him down. The enemies rushed tearing him to pieces with their sword. When Imam reached his young son he said:" O my son! Dust be upon the world when you are gone."

## SHAHADAT

↪ "...Indeed Allah loves those who fight in His way in ranks as if they were a firm and compact wall." **Suratus Saff 61:4**

(Most of the following notes have been abridged from the book 'The Martyr' by Shaheed Murtadha Mutahhari)

↪ There are certain words and expressions to which, in general use or particularly in Islamic terminology, a certain sense of dignity, and sometimes even sanctity, is attached. "Student," "teacher," "scholar," "inventor," "hero," "reformer," "philosopher," "believer," "mujahid," "truthful one," "wali," "Imam," and "prophet" are some of the words of this category. A sense of dignity, even sanctity, is attached to these words in general usage, especially in Islamic discourse. It is evident that a word as such has no sanctity. It becomes sacred because of the sense which it conveys. The sanctity of a sense depends on a particular mental outlook, and on values which are cherished generally, or by a particular group of people.

↪ In Islamic terminology there is a word which has a special sanctity – the word 'shaheed'. Only one who is killed in an effort to achieve the highest Islamic objectives and is really motivated by a desire to safeguard true human values attains this position, which is one of the highest to which one can aspire.

↪ The Qur'an says: "*Think not of those who were slain in the way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive, finding their sustenance with their Rabb.*" **Suratu Aali Imran 3:169**

↪ All those who have served humanity in one way or another, whether as scholars, philosophers, inventors, or teachers, deserve the gratitude of all mankind. But none deserves this to the extent that the shuhada do, and that is why the people of all sectors of the society have a sentimental attachment to them. All other servants of humanity are indebted to the shuhada. The

shaheed can be compared to a candle whose job it is to burn out and get extinguished in order to shed light for the benefit of others. The shuhada are the candles of society. They burn themselves out and illuminate society.

↪ Parvin (a famous Iranian potess writes): “The onlooker said to the candle, tonight I have decorated my room. Last night I didn't sleep with excitement, I sewed the dress and put it on. I stitched the pearls on the design, I decorated it with flowers. You can't even reach even reach to the dust of my art, for I have sacrificed my mind and body for it. The candle laughed and said: I was the one who saved you from darkness, for letting you stitch your pearls on the dress. I have filled my lap with pearl like tears, I cried like the rain clouds of spring, and thus watered the flowers on your dress. I am happy with my burning out, For I am enlightening your house, although there is no hope for me, I illuminated your walls and created hope for you. For the manifestation of your beauty, I have strengthened your heart,. The fruits of my life have burnt out, but I provided the fruits of your delight. The works you describe- you did not do them – I did them.”

↪ The Qur'an compares the Prophet (S.A.W.\_ him to an illuminating lamp. This expression combines the sense of burning and enlightening. *"O Prophet! Surely we have sent you as a witness (shaheed), a bearer of good news and a warner; and as a guide to God by his permission and as an illuminating lamp."* **Suratul Ahzaab 33:45-46**

↪ What is the basis of the sanctity of shahadat? It is evident that merely being killed can have no sanctity.. We know that there are several kinds of death: Natural death, Accidental death, criminal death, suicide and shahadat.

↪ Shahadat is the death of a person who, in spite of being fully conscious of the risks involved, willingly faces them for the sake

of a sacred cause, or, as the Qur'an says fi sabil Allah (in the way of Allah).

- ↪ Shahadat has two basic elements: Firstly it must be for a sacred cause – in the way of Allah and secondly the sacrifice is made consciously. Usually in the case of shahadat, an element of crime is involved. As far as the victim is concerned, the death is sacred; but the action of the killers is a heinous crime.
- ↪ The sacred cause that leads to shahadat or the giving of one's life has become a law in Islam. It is called jihad. Islam is not a religion directing that should one slap your right cheek, you should offer him your left cheek, nor does it say, "Pay unto Ceasar that which is Ceasar's, and unto God that which is God's."
- ↪ "Certainly, jihad is a door to Janna, which Allah has opened for His chosen friends." Imam Ali (A.S.)
- ↪ In the early days of Islam, many Muslims had a special spirit, which may be called the spirit of longing for shahadat. Imam Ali was the most prominent of such people. Apart from Imam Ali, we know of many other people who longed for shahadat. e.g. Khathima, Amr bin Jamuh, Hujr bin Adi, Qays bin Musahhar, Hamza....



## REMEDIES FROM THE QUR'AN FOR THE HEART

### HEART AILMENTS

1. Place right hand on the place of pain and recite 3:145
2. Recite and/or write 50:37 on water and drink it.
3. Recite and/or write 3:8&9, 13:28, & 10:22 on water and drink it. Also may be worn as tawidh.
4. Recite and write Suratul Rahmaan (55) with saffron, wash with water and drink it.
5. Recite Suratul Inshirah.

### BROKEN HEART

1. Write Suratul Fatiha on an earthenware plate, wash with water and drink it.
2. Recite 13:28

### LOVE IN A RELATIONSHIP

1. Recite Suratul Yaseen 7x on 7 separate almonds through palm of the right hand and give to spouse.
2. Recite بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ 786x on water and give spouse to drink.
3. Recite Suratun Nisa (4) 7x daily.
4. Recite Suratul Jumua' (62) on Friday.
5. Recite Suratul Quraysh (106) on roses and give both parties to smell.
6. Recite Suratul Muzzammil 41x on a sweet thing and give spouse to eat.
7. Recite 3:31 3x on water and give spouse to drink.



8. Recite 12:29&30 on a sweet thing and give to both parties to eat.
9. Recite 38:32 on a sweet thing and give both parties to eat for 7 days.
10. Recite 5:54 on a sweet thing and give to both parties to eat.
11. Recite Suratul Qadr (97) with hand on hair of spouse.
12. Recite 8:62&63 on a sweet thing and give to both parties to eat.
13. Recite 36:83 on a sweet thing and give to both parties to eat.
14. Recite 33:40 on some fragrant flowers and a sweet thing and give spouse to smell/eat.
15. Recite Ayatul Kursi 2:255 equal in number to the total number of both their names.
16. Recite 9:129 30x on Friday night thinking of spouse.

#### **LOVE IN THE QUR'AN**

**Habbaba – 49:7 Ahbabta – 28:56, 38:32 Uhibb – 6:76**

**Tuhibb – 2:216 Tuhibbuna – 3:31, 3:92, 3:152, 7:79, 24:22, 75:20, 89:20**

**Tuhibbunaha – 61:13 Tuhibbinahum – 3:119**

**Yuhibb - 2:190,195,205,222,276 3:32,57,76,134,140,146,148,159 4:36,107,148**

**5:13,42,64,87,93 6:141 7:31,55 8:58 9:4,7,108 16:23 22:38 28:76,77 30:45**

**31:18 42:40 49:9,12 57:23 60:8 61:4**

**Yuhibbuhum – 5:54 Yuhibbuna – 3:188, 9:108, 24:19, 59:9, 76:27**

**Yuhibbunakum – 3:119 Yuhibbunahum – 2:165**

**Istahabbu – 9:23 16:107 41:17 Yastahibbuna – 14:3**

**Hubba – 3:14, 100:8 Hubban – 12:30 Hubbihi – 2:177, 76:8**

**Ahabba – 9:24, 12:8, 12:33 Ahibbaau – 5:18**

**Mahabba – 20:39**

## **LOVE**

Reason is powerless in the expression of Love.

Love alone is capable of revealing the truth of Love and being a lover.

The way of our prophets is the way of Truth.

If you want to live, die in Love;

Die in Love if you want to remain alive.

**Jalaluddin Rumi**