THE COMPENDIUM

of Knowledge and Wisdom
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I B N  R A J A B A L - H A N B A L I

T U R A T H P U B L IS H I N G
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Publishers Preface

In the name of Allah, most merciful and compassionate. Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and His blessings be upon His Messenger (Allah bless him and give him peace), the seal of prophethood, and his family and his companions and all those who follow him.

Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, who was Zayn ad-Din `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Ahmad ibn `Abd ar-Rahmân (Rajab) as-Sâlâmî (730 AH/1335 CE–795 AH/1392 CE), was born in Damascus, Syria.

The author was an expert on chains of transmission and this forms the initial part of the study of each hadith. Then he moves on to examine the various narrations and supporting narrations, and fiqh rulings, supplementary material from the Companions, the Followers and the Followers of the Followers, and the salihûn and `ulamâ’ up until his own day. As is the case with most of the works of major scholars, Ibn Rajab quotes from great `ulamâ’ of all the madhâhabs.

We would like to acknowledge the work of the International Centre for Islamic Studies of Australia in first commissioning this translation and its first major edit, and to express our thanks to them for allowing us the honour of publishing it. Then after the work of the translator we would in particular like to thank Mawlana Shams ad-Duha for his painstaking work on editing the book and in sourcing the hadith which it comprises, and Muhammad Ansa for his proofreading and indexing, and Abdallateef Whiteman for his layout and cover design. Mufti Abdullah Marufi for typing the Arabic and Shaykh Muhammad Akram for his help on sourcing biographical material on Ibn Rajab.

YAHYA BATHA
Praise belongs to Allah Who perfected the din for us and made the blessing on us complete and Who made our ummah – and to Allah belongs the praise – the best ummah. He sent among us a Messenger from ourselves reciting His ayat to us, purifying us and teaching us the Book and the Wisdom. I praise Him for His many blessings. I witness that there is no god but Allah alone without partner, and this act of witnessing is the best protection for someone who seeks protection by it. I witness that Mu^ammad is His slave and His Messenger whom He sent as a mercy to all creatures. He made it obligatory for him to explain what has been sent down to us, and so he elucidated all the important matters for us. He singled him out with concise comprehensive speech (jawami‘ al-kalim) so that he often expressed separate pieces of wisdom and sciences in one phrase or in half a phrase, may Allah bless him and his companions with a blessing which will be a light for us in every darkness, and may He grant him much peace.

Allah, glorious is He and exalted, sent Mu^ammad with concise comprehensive speech. He singled him out to receive astonishing wisdoms, as has been narrated in the two Sahih books from Abü Hurayrah from the Prophet that he said, “I was sent with concise comprehensive speech.” Az-Zuhri said, “Concise comprehensive speech, according to that which has reached us, is that Allah, exalted is He, united many issues for him, [issues] which used to be written in books before him [separately] in one or two issues and so on.”

Imam Ahmad narrated the hadith of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘As that he said, “The Messenger of Allah came out to us one day and it was as if he were someone saying farewell. He said, ‘I am Mu^ammad, the unlettered Prophet,’ saying it three times, ‘and there is no prophet after me. I have been given the first parts of speech and its conclusions and its comprehensive concision’,” and he mentioned the rest of the hadith.

1. Sahih al-Bukhārī and Sahih Muslim are referred to as the two Sahih books (Sahihayn).
2. Al-Bukhārī (7013) and Muslim (523)
3. Imam al-Bukhārī mentions this comment by az-Zuhri after narrating the aforementioned hadith.
4. Narrated by Imam Ahmad in his Musnad (2:172). Al-Haythami says in Majma‘ az-Zawa‘i‘id (1:169) that the chain of this hadith has ‘Abdullāh ibn Lah‘ah who is a weak nar-
Abu Ya‘lā al-Mawsili narrated the hadith of ʿUmar ibn al-Khattāb from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “I have been given concise comprehensive speech and its conclusions and speech has been made extremely concise for me.”

Ad-Dāraquṭnī narrated from the hadith of Ibn ʿAbdās from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “I have been granted concise comprehensive speech and speech has been made extremely concise for me.” We narrate from the hadith of ‘Abd ar-Rahmān ibn ʿIshāq al-Qurashi, from Abū Bardah from Abū Mūsā al-ʿAshʿarī that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘I was granted the openings of speech and its conclusions and its comprehensive concision.’ So we said, ‘Messenger of Allah! Teach us something of that which Allah, mighty and majestic is He, has taught you.’” He said, “So he taught us the tashahhud.”

In Sahih Muslim there is from Saʿīd ibn Abī Bardah ibn Abī Mūsā from his father from his grandfather that the Prophet ﷺ was asked about al-bitʿ (a Yemeni intoxicant made from honey) and al-mizr (an intoxicant made from a grain such as sorghum but possibly barley or wheat). He [Abū Mūsā] said, “And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was given concise comprehensive speech with its conclusions. He said, ‘I forbid you every intoxicant which intoxicates [and holds you back] from prayer.’”

Hishām ibn ʿAmrān related in the book al-Malāʾath with a chain of transmission from Abū Sālim al-Ḥabashī that he said, “I was told that the Prophet ﷺ used to say, ‘I have been preferred over whoever [of the Prophets] was before me with six things, without boasting.’ Among those he mentioned was concise comprehensive speech, and he said, ‘I was granted concise comprehensive speech. The People of the Book used to make it a portion [which they recited] during the night until the morning, and my Lord expressed it for me in one ʾayah:}

“Everything in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah. He is the Al-Mighty, the All-Wise.”

The concise comprehensive speech with which he was singled out is of two kinds:

1. That which is in the Qur’ān such as His words, exalted is He:

   ﴿سُبُحُ ﻟِﻠﱠﻪِ ﻣَﺎ ﻓِي اﻟﺴﱠﻤَﺎوَاتِوَاﻷَْرْضِوَﻫُﻮَاﻟْﻌَﺰِﻳﺰُاﳊَْﻜِﻴﻢُ﴾

   “Allah commands justice and doing good and giving to relatives. And He forbids indecency and doing wrong and tyranny.”

   Second, that which is [the Prophet’s] speech which is published and to be found in the sunnah [collections] which are traced back to him. The men of knowledge compiled collections of his comprehensive words. Hāfiz Abū Bakr ʿAbdullāh ibn as-Sunjī compiled a book which he called al-Jāz wa al-kalim min as-sunan al-ṣaḥīḥ – “The Succinctness and Concise Comprehensive Speech in the Transmitted Sunnahs”. The Qāḍī Abū ʿAbdullāh al-Qudāʾī gathered together some of the succinct and concise comprehensive speech in a book which he called ask-Shihāb fi l-hikam wa{l-thābit “The Flaming Torch of Wisdom and Culture”. Some other people compiled books in the same fashion as he had done and increased [the number of hadith] greatly over the number he had mentioned. Al-Khattābī indicated in the beginning of his book Gharīb al-hadith “Unusual hadith” a small number of the comprehensive hadith.

   The Imam and Hāfiz Abū ʿAmr ibn as-Salāḥ dictated at an assembly a book which he called al-Hadith al-kulliyah “Universal Hadith” in which he collected the comprehensive hadith about which it is said that the din revolves around them, and those succinct and comprehensive phrases of a similar meaning. This session of his comprises twenty-six hadith.

   Then the faqīḥ, the Imam who did without the world, the exemplar, Abū Zakariyyā Yahyā an-Nawawī took these hadith which Ibn as-Salāḥ had disdained and increased them to forty-two hadith calling his book al-ʿArbūʿatu “The Forty”. These forty which he collected became very famous and are memorised a great deal. Allah produced great benefit because of the blessing of the compiler’s intention and his good purpose, may Allah, exalted is He, show him mercy.

   A group of seekers of knowledge and din repeatedly asked me to attach a commentary to these aforementioned hadith. So I asked Allah, exalted is He, to choose [by means of the duʿāʾ called istikhāra] whether I should write a book comprising a commentary on those meanings of the hadith which Allah, exalted is He, makes easy [for me], and qualifying them with whatever explanations of their principles and their structures Allah, glorious is He, would open up for me. I ask Him for help in what I intend to do and the grace of a correct intention and purpose in what I want to do. I depend in all my affair upon Him, and I disclaim any power [to avert evil] or strength [to do good] except by Him.
One of those who explained these forty hadith took their compiler to task for leaving out the hadith, “Attach inheritances to their people, then whatever of the inheritance is left behind is for the nearest male [relative].” [This critic] said, “…because it gathers together the principles of the laws of inheritance which are a half of knowledge, and so ought to have been mentioned among these comprehensive hadith just as is the hadith ‘Clear proof is demanded of the claimant and the oath is the right of the one who denies [the claim]’ because it collects together the rules of passing judgement.” So I decided to add this hadith to the forty hadith which the Shaykh had compiled, and add other hadith of concise comprehensive speech which comprise various sciences and wisdoms, until the number of the hadith became fifty.

These are the extra hadith over and above what the Shaykh compiled: “Attach inheritances to their people”, and the hadith, “The same things are made ḥarām by suckling which are made ḥarām by blood kinship”, and the hadith, “When Allah makes a thing ḥarām, He also makes the price paid for it ḥarām”, and the hadith, “Every intoxicant is ḥarām”, and the hadith, “The son of Adam has not filled a vessel worse than his belly”, and the hadith, “There are four [things]; whoever has them is a hypocrite”, and the hadith, “If you were to rely on Allah as He ought to be relied upon, He would provide for you as He provides for the birds”, and the hadith, “May your tongue remain moist with the remembrance of Allah, exalted is He.” I have called this book, Jami’ al-‘ulum wa-l-hikam fi sharh khamsina hadithan min jawami’ al-kalim “A Collection of Sciences and Wisdoms in Commentary on Fifty Hadith from the Concise Comprehensive Speech.”

You should know that my sole intention is to explain the prophetic expressions which comprise these universal hadith. For that reason I will not qualify the Shaykh’s words in which he introduces the narrators of these hadith such as the Companions ð nor his expressions in ascribing [the hadith] to the books to which he ascribes them. I will only produce the meaning which indicates that, since I have told you that my intention is only to explain the concise and comprehensive words of the Prophet ð and what disciplines, wisdom, gnoises, judgements and parts of the Shari‘ah they comprise. Before speaking in explanation of the hadith, I will briefly indicate its chain of transmission, so that its authenticity, strength or weakness is known. I will mention some of those hadith which are related in the same sense, if there are any hadith in that category other than the hadith which the Shaykh mentioned. If there are no other hadith in that category, or if no others in it are authentic, then I will draw attention to all of that. By Allah there is success and He is the One from whom help is sought and upon whom one depends, and there is no power [to avert evil] nor strength [to do good] except by Allah.

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13 Hadith 43 in this compilation.
14 Hadith 33 in this compilation.
15 Hadith nos. 43-50 in this compilation.
The Amīr al-Mu’mīnīn Abū Ḥāfīẓ ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb said, “I heard the Messenger of Allah saying, ‘Actions are only by intentions, and each man has only that which he intends. Whoever’s emigration is for Allah and His Messenger, then his emigration is for Allah and His Messenger. Whoever’s emigration is for some worldly gain which he can acquire or a woman he will marry, then his emigration is for that for which he emigrates’.”

Yahyā ibn Sa‘īd al-Anṣārī alone narrated this hadith from Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm at-Taymī from ‘Alqamah ibn Abī Waqqās al-Laythī, from ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. There are no other authentic paths of transmission for it apart from this one, as ‘Alī al-Madīnī and others said. Al-Khaṭṭābī said, “I know of no disagreement among the people of hadith about that,” even though it is narrated as a hadith of Abū Sa‘īd and others, and it is said that it has been narrated by numerous paths, but none of that is authentic according to the people who memorise [hadith]. Later a great number of people narrated it from al-Anṣārī. It is said that more than two hundred narrators transmitted it from him, and it is even said that it was seven hundred. Among the great ones who narrated it were Imam Mālik, ath-Thawrī, al-Awzā‘ī, Ibn al-Mubārak, al-Layth ibn Sa‘d, Hammād ibn Zayd, Shu‘bah, Ibn ‘Uyaynah and others.

The people of knowledge agreed that it is authentic and accepted it totally. Al-Bukhārī began his Ṣaḥīḥ with it and established it in the position of the introduction to it, by which he indicated that every action not intended for the sake of the face of Allah is invalid and fruitless in the world and in the next world. For that reason ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī said, “If I were to...
This hadith is one of those around which the ḍi‘n revolves. It is narrated that ash-Shāfi‘i said, “This hadith is one third of all knowledge, and it is involved in seventy sections of fiqh.” Imam Ahmad said, “The foundations of Islam are based on three hadith: the hadith of ‘Umar, ‘Actions are by intentions’, and the hadith of ‘Ā‘ishah, ‘Whoever innovates in this affair of ours that which is not from it then it is rejected’, and the hadith of an-Nu‘mān ibn Bashir, ‘The ḍi‘lāl is clear and the ḍarām is clear’.” Al-Ḥākim said, “They narrated to us from ‘Abdullāh ibn Ahmād [ibn Hanbāl] from his father that he mentioned his words, ‘Actions are by intentions’ and his words, ‘The creation of any one of you is gathered in the belly of his mother for forty days’ and his words, ‘ Whoever innovates in our ḍi‘n whatever is not of it then it is rejected,’ and then he said, ‘These hadith ought to begin every compilation, because they are the foundations of the hadith.’”

Ishāq ibn Rahwān said, “Four hadith are among the foundations of the ḍi‘n: the hadith of ‘Umar, ‘Actions are only by intentions’, and the hadith, ‘The ḍi‘lāl is clear and the ḍarām is clear’, and the hadith, ‘The creation of any one of you is gathered in the belly of his mother for forty days’ and the hadith, ‘Whoever makes anything in our affair which is not of it, then it is rejected.”

‘Uthmān ibn Sa‘īd narrated from Abū ‘Ubayd that he said, “The Prophet gathered together all the business of the next world in one expression: ‘Whoever innovates in our affair that which is not from it, then it is rejected’ , and he gathered the business of the world in one expression: ‘Actions are only by intentions’. These two enter into every chapter.”

Abū Dāwūd said, “I thought about the hadith which are narrated with chains of transmission and found them to be four thousand hadith. Then I thought further and found that the pivot of these four thousand lies in four hadith: the hadith of an-Nu‘mān ibn Bashir, ‘The ḍi‘lāl is clear and the ḍarām is clear’, the hadith of ‘Umar, ‘Actions are only by intentions’, the hadith of Abū Hurayrah, ‘Allah is good and wholesome and only accepts what is good and wholesome, and Allah commands the mu‘minūn with that with which He commands the Messengers…’ and the hadith, ‘A part of the excellence of a man’s ḍi‘n is his leaving alone that which does not concern him.’” He said, “Each one of these four hadith is one quarter of knowledge.”

Abū Dāwūd also said, “I recorded five hundred thousand hadith of the Messenger of Allah from which I chose those which comprise this book,” —meaning Kithāb as-Sunan— “in which I collected four thousand eight hundred hadith, of which four hadith are sufficient for a man’s ḍi‘n: the first of which are his words, ‘Actions are by intentions’, second, his words, ‘A part of the excellence of a man’s ḍi‘n is his leaving what does not concern him’, third, his words, ‘The mu‘min will not be a mu‘min until he is only contented for his brother with that with which he is contented for himself’, and fourth, his words, ‘The ḍi‘lāl is clear and the ḍarām is clear.’”

In another narration he said, “Fiqh revolves around five hadith: ‘The ḍi‘lāl is clear and the ḍarām is clear’, and his words, ‘There is [to be] no causing harm nor returning harm’, and his words, ‘Actions are by intentions’ and his words, ‘The ḍi‘n is sincere’, and his words, ‘That which I have forbidden you, avoid it, and that which I have commanded you, do that of it which you are able.’”

In another narration he said, “The principles of the sunnahs in every field are four hadith: the hadith of ‘Umar, ‘Actions are by intentions’, and the hadith, ‘The ḍi‘lāl is clear and the ḍarām is clear’, and the hadith, ‘A part of the excellence of a man’s ḍi‘n is his leaving alone that which does not concern him’, and the hadith, ‘Do without the world and Allah will love you, and do without what is in people’s hands and people will love you.’”

Hāfiz Abū‘l-Ḥasan Tāhir ibn Mu‘āwīd al-Mu‘āfīrī al-Andalusī wrote:

The pillars of the ḍi‘n for us are four expressions from the Best of Creation:

Beware of ambiguities,
do without,
and leave what does not concern you
and act with intention.

His saying, “Actions are only by intentions” and in another narration, “Actions are by intentions”, both of which necessarily imply restriction [of the meaning to the sense of “only”] according to the authentic position, but it is not our aim here to address that nor to say a lot about it.

There are different understandings of his words, “Actions are by intentions” and many of the later [scholars] claim that it means “Actions are correct by, or judged according to, or are acceptable by intentions.” According to this what is meant by actions are the actions of the Shari‘ah which require intentions. As for what does not need intention, ordinary everyday acts such as eating, drinking, dressing, etc., or for example, returning trusts and guarantees such as deposits and things which have been forcibly expropriated, then none of these things require intentions, so that all of these are excluded from the general actions mentioned here.

Others say that ‘actions’ here are general and that nothing is excluded from them, and someone said that this is the majority opinion, by which he seems to have meant the majority of the earlier generations. That is in the words of Ibn Jarir at-Tabarī and Abū Tālib al-Makki and others of the earlier generations, and it is what is apparent from the words of Imam Ahmad. He said in the narration of Hanbāl, “I prefer that everyone who does an act such as prayer, fasting, ṣiyālah or any type of good action, that an intention should precede the doing of it. The Prophet said, ‘Actions are by intentions’ and this applies to every single affair.”

2 All of the hadith mentioned above will follow in this compilation.
Al-Fadl ibn Ziyād said, "I asked Abū 'Abdullāh – meaning Ahmad [ibn Hanbāl] – about intention in action, and I asked, 'How is the intention?' He said, 'One struggles with oneself – if one means to do an action – not intending it for people.'"

Ahmad ibn Dāwūd al-Ḥarbī said, "Yazīd ibn Hārūn narrated 'Umar's hadith 'Actions are by intentions' while Ahmad was sitting, and Ahmad said to Yazīd, 'Abū Khalīd, this is suffocation (khunāq)."

According to this statement some said that what is to be understood from the words is, 'Actions happen or actually take place according to their intentions,' so that he informs us that a voluntary action only comes about by an intention from the one who does it, which is the cause of the action and of its existence. Then his words after that, "and for each man there is only that which he intends," informs us about the Shari'ah judgement which is that for the one who does the action the intention is his portion of the action. If it is good then his action is good and he will have its reward, but if it is corrupt then his action is corrupt, and the burden of it will be upon him. It is possible then that the meaning of his words, "actions are only by intentions" is that "actions are right, corrupt, acceptable or rejected, rewarded or unrewarded according to the intentions" and thus inform us of the judgement of the Shari'ah that the action's rightness or corruption is according to the rightness of the intention or its corruption, as in his words "actions are according to results", i.e. their rightness, their corruption, their acceptability or their lack of it are according to the results.

His words after that, "and for each man there is only that which he intends," informs us that nothing comes about from someone's action except that which he intends by it. If he intends good, good will come about from it, and if he intends evil, evil will come about from it. This is not purely a repetition of the first phrase, because the first phrase points out that the rightness or the wrongness of an action is according to the intention which brought it into existence, whereas the second phrase points out that the reward of the one who does the action for the action is according to his right intention, and that his punishment for it is according to his wrong intention. It is also possible that his intention is merely permissible (mubāh) so that the action would be permissible, and thus he would not obtain any reward or receive punishment for it. Thus the action in itself – its rightness, wrongness or permissible – is according to the intention which motivates it and brings it into existence, and the reward for the one who does the action, his punishment and his [merely] being safe, are according to his intention by which the action became right, wrong, or permitted.

You should know that linguistically intention means a type of purpose and will, even though there are distinctions made between these expressions, but this is not the place to mention that.

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3 Possibly "the strangling cord" (khunāq). By that he may be describing the difficulty of struggling with oneself to make sure one’s actions are with the correct intention and purpose.

4 Sūrah Al 'Imrān: 152

5 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 68

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Intention

In the words of the people of knowledge, intention has two meanings:

First: to distinguish some acts of worship from others, for example to distinguish the midday prayer from the afternoon prayer, and to distinguish the fast of Ramadān from other fasts, or to distinguish acts of worship from ordinary everyday acts, such as distinguishing the ghusl performed after sexual intercourse from bathing in order to cool oneself or for the purpose of cleanliness, etc. This meaning of intention is found a great deal in the language of the fuqahā' in their books.

Second: to distinguish the purpose of the action, whether it is for Allah alone without partner, or for Allah as well as for other than Him. This is the intention about which the gnostics speak in their books when they talk about sincerity and its consequences, and it is the one which is to be found a great deal in the words of the right-acting first generations.

Abū Bakr ibn Abī'd-Dunyā compiled a work which he called, Kitāb al-ikhālah wa'l-niyyah "The Book of Sincerity and Intention" by which he meant only this [second meaning of] intention, which is also the intention which is repeatedly mentioned in the words of the Prophet ﷺ sometimes with the expression 'niyyah' (intention), sometimes with the expression 'irḍāh' (will), and sometimes with an expression close to that. It has been mentioned many times in the Book of Allah ﷺ also without use of the term 'intention' but with expressions close in meaning to that.

Those who distinguish between 'intention', 'will', 'purpose' and similar words do so because of their view that 'intention' only has the first meaning which the fuqahā’ mention. Some of them say, "The intention is specific to the act of the one who intends, and will or wanting is not specific to that, just as a person might want Allah to forgive him but not intend it." But we have mentioned that intention in the language of the Prophet ﷺ and the early generations of the ummah was in the main only used for this second meaning, and it was at that time used to mean 'will' or 'want'. For that reason it is very often expressed by the term 'will' in the Qur'ān, as in His words, exalted is He:

"Among you are those who want the dunyā and among you are those who want the akhīrah."

And His words ﷺ:

"You desire the goods of the dunyā, whereas Allah desires the akhīrah."

And His words:
And His words:

وَاﺻْＢِرْﻧَﻔْﺲَكَّﻣَﻊَاﻟﱠﺬِﻳﻦَيَﺪْﻋُﻮنَرَﺒﱠﻬُﻢﺑِﺎﻟْﻐَﺪَاةِوَاﻟْﻌَﺸِﻴﱢﻳُﺮِﻳﺪُونَوَﺟْﻬَﻪُوَﻻَﺗَﻌْﺪَﻋَﻴْﻨَﺎكَ ﻋَﻨْﻬُﻢْ

"Restrain yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, desiring His face. Do not turn your eyes from them, desiring the attractions of this world."

And His words:

ذَﻟِﻚَﺧَﻴْﺮٌﻟﱢﻠﱠﺬِﻳﻦَيُﺮِﻳﺪُونَوَﺟْﻪَاﻟﻠﱠﻪِوَأُوْﻟَﺌِﻚَﻫُﻢُاحضرُونَ

"That is best for those who seek the pleasure of Allah. They are the ones who are successful."

And His words:

وَمَا آتَﻴْﺘُﻢْرﱢﺑَﺎًﻟﱢﻴَﺮْﺑُﻮَﻓِﻲأَﻣْﻮَالِاﻟﻨﱠﺎسِفَﻼَﻳَﺮْﺑُﻮﻋِﻨَـﺪَاالﻠﱠﻪِ وَمَﺎ آتَﻴْﺘُﻢْرﱢﺑَﺎً ﺗُﺮِﻳﺪُونَ

"What you give with usurious intent, aiming to get back a greater amount from people’s wealth, does not become greater with Allah. But anything you give as zakāh, seeking the Face of Allah – all who do that will get back twice as much."

Also it is expressed in the Qur’an with the expression ibtigh¥’ – “desiring” – as in His words, exalted is He:

إﻻﱠاﺑْﺘِﻐَﺎءَوَﺟْﻪِرَﺑﱢﻪِاﻟْﻠﱠﻪِوَأُوْﻟَﺌِﻚَﻫُﻢُاحضرُونَ

"...desiring only the Face of their Lord Most High."

And His words:

وَلَا ﺗَﻄْﺮُدِاﻟﱠﺬِﻳﻦَيَﺪْﻋُﻮنَرَﺒﱠﻬُﻢﺑِﺎﻟْﻐَﺪَاةِوَاﻟْﻌَﺸِﻴﱢﻳُﺮِﻳﺪُونَوَﺟْﻬَﻪُ

"Do not chase away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face."

And His words:

اذْكَرْ ﺧَﻴْﺮٌلﱢﻠﱠﺬِﻳﻦَيُﺮِﻳﺪُونَوَﺟْﻪَاﻟﻠﱠﻪِ وَأُوْﻟَـﺌِﻚَﻫُﻢُ ﺍحضرُونَ

"As for anyone who desires this fleeting existence, We hasten in it whatever We will to whoever We want. Then We will consign him to Hell where he will roast, reviled and driven out. But as for anyone who desires the akhirah, and strives for it with the striving it deserves, being a mu’mín, the striving of such people will be gratefully acknowledged."

And His words:

وَمَﻦَآﺗَﻴْﺖُﻢْرﱢﺑَﺎًﻓِﻲاﻵْﺧِﺮَةِنَﺰِدْﻟَﻪُﻓِﻲﺣَﺮْثِﻪِوَمَﻦَآﺗَﻴْﺖُﻢْ ﹴﻓِﻲاﻵْﺧِﺮَةِمِﻦَنﱠﺼِﻴﺐٍ

"As for anyone who desires the ¥khirah, We will increase him in his cultivation. If anyone desires to cultivate the dunyã, We will give him some of it but he will have no share in the akhirah."

And His words, exalted is He:

مَﻦَآَرَادَااﻵْﺧِﺮَةَوَﺳَﻌَﻰﻟﻬَﺎسَﻌْﻴَﻬَﺎوَﻫُﻮَمُﺆْﻣِﻦٌفَأُوْﻟَـﺌِﻚَﻛَﺎنَ ﺳَﻌْﻴُﻬُﻢْ ﻣْﺸَﻜُﻮراً

"As for anyone who desires the life of the dunyã and its finery, We will give them full payment in it for their actions. They will not be deprived of their due. But such people will have nothing in the akhirah but the Fire. What they achieved here will come to nothing. What they did will prove to be null and void."

And His words:

اﻟﱠﺬِﻳﻦَﻟَﻴْﺲَ ﻟَﻬُﻢْﻓِﻲاﻵْﺧِﺮَةِإِﻻﱠاﻟﻨﱠﺎرُوَﳊَِﻂَمَﺎﺳَﻨَﻌُﻮاْﻓِﻴﻬَﺎوَبَﺎﻃِﻞٌمﱠﺎﻛَﺎﻧُﻮاْﻳَﻌْﻤَﻠُﻮنَ

"Do not chase away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face."

And His words:

أَيُرِيدُ ﺣَﺮْثَااﻵْﺧِﺮَةِنَﺰِدْﻟَﻪُﻓِﻲﺣَﺮْثِﻪِوَأَيُرِيدُ ﺣَﺮْثَااﻟْﺪﱡﻧْﻴَﺎ

"If anyone desires to cultivate the akhirah, We will increase him in his cultivation. If anyone desires to cultivate the dunyã, We will give him some of it but he will have no share in the akhirah."

And His words, exalted is He:

مَﻦَآَرَادَااﻵْﺧِﺮَةَوَﺳَﻌَﻰﻟﻬَﺎسَﻌْﻴَﻬَﺎوَﻫُﻮَمُﺆْﻣِﻦٌفَأُوْﻟَـﺌِﻚَﻛَﺎنَ ﺳَﻌْﻴُﻬُﻢْ ﻣْﺸَﻜُﻮراً

"As for anyone who desires the life of the dunyã and its finery, We will give them full payment in it for their actions. They will not be deprived of their due. But such people will have nothing in the akhirah but the Fire. What they achieved here will come to nothing. What they did will prove to be null and void."

And His words:

إِﻻ ﺗَﻄْﺮُدِاﻟﱠﺬِﻳﻦَيَﺪْﻋُﻮنَرَﺒﱠﻬُﻢَبِاﻟْﻐَﺪَاةِوَاﻟْﻌَﺸِﻴﱢﻳُﺮِﻳﺪُونَوَﺟْﻬَﻪُ

"Do not chase away those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His Face."

And His words:
...when you give desiring only the Face of Allah.\(^7\)"

And His words:

"There is no good in much of their secret talk, except in the case of those who enjoin \textit{sadaqah}, or what is right, or putting things right between people. If anyone does that, seeking the pleasure of Allah, We will give him an immense reward.\(^8\)"

He denies that there is any good in much of what people discuss together except for when they command the well-recognised good actions, of which He singles out \textit{sadaqah} and putting things right between people because of the universal benefit in them. It indicates that confidential discussions for that purpose are good. As for the reward for it from Allah, He singles it out for whoever does it desiring the good pleasure of Allah. He only regards commanding the well-recognised good actions such as \textit{sadaqah} and putting things right between people, etc., good even if one does not desire the face of Allah by it because of the unlimited benefit which is a consequence of it, so that people attain good and excellence because of it. As for commanding [the well-recognised good actions], then if someone intends the face of Allah by it and desires His good pleasure, it is good for him and he will be rewarded for it. However, if someone does not intend that there is no good in it for him and no reward for doing it. This is contrary to the case of someone who prays for it. However, if someone does not intend that there is no good in it for him and no reward for doing it. This is contrary to the case of someone who prays

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15 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 272
16 Sūrat an-Nās: 114
17 Ibn Hibbān.
has no expectation,” meaning that there is no reward for someone who does not anticipate a reward for his action from Allah ﷺ.

With a weak chain of transmission from Ibn Mas’úd there is that he said, “Words do not benefit unless there is action, and words and actions do not benefit unless there are intentions, and words, actions and intentions are no use unless they accord with the Sunnah.”

Yahyá ibn Abi Kathír said, “Know intention, because it is more far-reaching than action.” Zubayd al-Yání said, “I prefer to have an intention in everything, even eating and drinking.” He also said, “Make an intention for every thing by which you mean good, even going to the rubbish dump.”

Dáwúd at-Tá’i said, “I think that all good is only united in good intention, and it is sufficient good for you if you do not become worn out.” Dáwúd said, “Solictious concern for the well-being of others (birr) is the aspiration of someone who fears [Allah], and even if all of his limbs are connected to love of the world, one day his intention will return him to his origin.”

Súfyan ath-Tháwri said, “I have not concerned myself with anything more difficult for me than my intention, because it fluctuates.”

Yúsuf ibn Asbát said, “Purifying the intention of its corruption is more difficult for people of action than long exertion.”

Someone asked Náfí ibn Júbyr, “Will you not come to the funeral prayer?” He said, “As you are! Not until I form my intention.” They say that he thought for a little and then said, “Proceed.”

Mu’tárrif ibn Abdulláh said, “Rightness of the heart comes from right action. Right action comes from right intention.”

Someone of the early right-acting generations said, “Whoever is pleased to perfect and complete his action then let him make his intention good, because Allah ﷺ rewards the slave when his intention is good even if it is only [in the giving of] a morsel of food.”

Ibn al-Mubárak said, “Many a small action is exalted by intention, and many a great action is lessened by intention.”

Ibn ‘Ájlán said, “Action is not right without three [things]: fearful awareness (taqúd) for the sake of Allah, good intention, and hitting the mark.”

Al-Fudáyí ibn ‘Iyád said, “Allah ﷺ only wants from you your intention and your will.”

Yúsuf ibn Asbát said, “Preferring Allah ﷺ is better than being killed in His way.”

Ibn Abí’d-Dunyá narrated all of that in Kitáb al-ikhlás wa’l-niyyah “The Book of Sincerity and Intention”. He also narrated in it with an interrupted chain of transmission from ‘Umar that he said, “The best of actions is to perform of Sincerity and Intention.” He also narrated in it with an interrupted chain from it, then it is rejected,” and the hadith, “The balád is clear and the haram

is clear”, because all of the din can be reduced to doing those things which are commanded, giving up those things which are forbidden and desisting from doubtful things, all of which the hadith of an-Nu’mán ibn Basír contains. That is only made complete by two matters:

First, that the action in its outward form should accord with the Sunnah, which the hadith of ‘Á’ishah implies, “Whoever innovates in our affair that which is not from it, then it is rejected.”

Second, that by the action one inwardly intends the face of Allah ﷺ as is implied by the hadith of ‘Umar, “Actions are only by intentions.”

About His words, exalted is He:

So let him who hopes to meet his Lord act rightly and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord.”

One of the gnostics said, “They are distinguished in terms of merit by their intentions, not by fasting and prayer.”

His words, “So whoever’s emigration is for Allah and His Messenger, then his emigration is for Allah and His Messenger. Whoever’s emigration is for something of the world which he obtains or a woman whom he marries, then his emigration is for that for which he emigrates.” When he said mentioned that actions are in accordance with intentions, and that for the one who acts his portion of his action is his intention whether good or bad, and these two comprehensive expressions encompass every matter, then he mentioned an example of an action after that whose outward form is single, but whose rightness or corruption differ according to intention, and so it is as if he was saying that all other actions follow the example of this one.

The essence of emigration is abandoning the land of shirk [where others than Allah are associated as partners with Him] and moving to the abode of Islam, just as the Emigrants, before the Opening of Makkah [to Islam], would emigrate from it to the Madinah of the Prophet ﷺ and already those of them who had done so had before that emigrated to the Negus in the land of the Ethiopians. Thus, the Prophet ﷺ informed us that this emigration differs ac-
According to the different purposes and intentions behind it. Whoever emigrates to the abode of Islam from love of Allah and His Messenger and out of desire to learn the din of Islam, and to be able to practise his din openly whereas he had been unable to do that in the abode of shirk, then this is the one who truly emigrates for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. It is sufficient for him as honour and as a boast that he attains what he intends of emigrating for the sake of Allah and His Messenger.

With this meaning in mind, he confined himself in the main clause of the conditional sentence to repeating the conditional clause word for word (“then his emigration is for Allah and His Messenger”), since the attainment of that which he intended by his emigration is the limit of what can be sought in this world and the next. Whoever’s emigration is from the abode of shirk to the abode of Islam to attain some worldly thing or a woman whom he wishes to marry in the abode of Islam, then his emigration is for the purpose for which he emigrates: the former is a trader and the second courts a wife, and neither of them are emigrants.

In his words, “…so that which he emigrates,” there is contempt and scorn for that worldly matter which he seeks, since he did not mention it by name. Also, emigration for Allah and His Messenger is single without any multiplicity, and for that reason he repeated the main clause in the wording of the conditional clause. There are limitless types of emigration for worldly affairs: sometimes a person will emigrate in order to seek some permitted worldly thing, and sometimes for something forbidden. The individual worldly things which are intended by emigration are innumerable, and so for that reason he said, “Then his emigration is to that for which he emigrates,” meaning, “whatever it may be.”

It has been related from Ibn `Abbas in commentary of His words, exalted is He:

إذا جاءك المومنات وما جاءت فاستحيجوني

“When women who have imân come to you as muhâjirûn, submit them to a test…”

He said, “When a woman used to come to the Prophet ﷺ he would make her swear an oath by Allah that she had not emigrated because of dislike for her husband, and by Allah she had not emigrated preferring one land over another, and by Allah she had not emigrated seeking something of the world, and by Allah she had only emigrated from love of Allah and His Messenger.” Ibn `Abî `Hâtim and Ibn Jarîr narrated it, al-Bazzâr in his Musnad, and at-Tirmidhî narrated it in some copies of his book in an abbreviated form.

Wâ`î narrated in his book from al-`A`mash from Shaqiq - Abû Wâ’il - that he said, “A nomadic Arab from the area proposed to a woman called Umm Qays but she refused to marry him unless he emigrated, so he emigrated and she married him, and we used to call him, ‘The Emigrant for the sake of Umm Qays.’” He said, “So `Abdullâh – meaning Ibn Mas`ûd – said, ‘Whoever emigrates desiring something, then it [his emigration] is for it [that for which he emigrates],’”31 The context here implies that this did not happen in the time of the Prophet ﷺ but in the time of Ibn Mas`ûd [after the death of the Prophet ﷺ], however it has been narrated by way of Sufyân ath-Thawrî from al-`A`mash from Abû Wâ’il from Ibn Mas`ûd that he said, “Among us there was a man who proposed to a woman called Umm Qays, but she refused to marry him unless he emigrated, and so he emigrated, and we used to call him ‘The Emigrant for the Sake of Umm Qays.’” Ibn Mas`ûd said, “Whoever emigrates for something, then it [his emigration] is for it [that for which he emigrates],”32

It has become well known that the story of the emigrant for the sake of Umm Qays was the reason for the words of the Prophet ﷺ, “Whoever’s emigration is for the sake of some worldly thing which he attains or a woman whom he marries...” and many of the later scholars mention that in their books but we have not seen any sound source with an authentic chain of transmission for that, and Allah knows best.

All of the other actions are like emigration in this context, their soundness or corruption are according to the intention which causes them, such as jihâd and Hajj, etc. The Prophet ﷺ was asked about the different intentions people have for jihâd and what they intend by it, such as showing off, showing their courage, tribalism, etc., and which one of them is in the way of Allah? He said, “Whoever fights so that the Word of Allah be uppermost is in the way of Allah.” Every worldly motive they had asked about was omitted.

In the two Sahîh books it is narrated from Abû `Abdullâh al-`A`shârî that a nomadic Arab came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, “Messenger of Allah, one man fights for spoils, and one man fights for fame, and another man fights so that his position will be seen, so who is it that is in the way of Allah?” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Whoever fights so that the Word of Allah is uppermost is in the way of Allah.” In a version of Muslim’s there is that, “He ﷺ was asked about a man who fights from bravery, one who fights defensively and another who fights to show off, which of them is in the way of Allah?…” In another version of his there is [mention of], “a man who fights out of anger or [another who] fights defensively.”33

An-Nasâ`î reported a hadith of Abû Umâmah that he said, “A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, ‘What do you think of a man who goes on a military expedition seeking reward and fame, what will he get?’ So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Nothing!’ Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Truly, Allah only...

30 Strät al-Mumtahanah: 10
32 According to al-Haythahî in his book Mumtahen az-zawîd, the narrators are authentic. Hâfîz Ibn Hajar said that the chain of transmission is authentic, and that it is in accordance with the conditions of the two Shaykh, al-Bukhârî and Muslim.
33 Al-Tabarînî in al-Kabîr (9:103) and Sa`îd ibn Man`ur.
34 Related by the group: al-Bukhârî, Muslim, Abû Dâwûd, at-Tirmidhî, an-Nasâ`î and Ibn Mâjah.
accepts that which is sincere and by which His face is desired.”

Abū Dāwūd narrated a hadith of Abū Hurayrah, “That a man asked, ‘Messenger of Allah! A man wants goods?’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘There is no reward for him.’ The man repeated it three times while the Prophet ﷺ kept saying, ‘There is no reward for him.’”

Imam Ahmad and Abū Dāwūd related the hadith of Muʿādh ibn Jabal that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There are two types of military expeditions. As for someone who desires the face of Allah, obeys the imam [the amīr], spends of his precious substance, is lenient to his companions and avoids making corruption, then [both] his sleep and his vigilance are rewarded.” As for someone who goes on a military expedition boastfully, showing off, seeking reputation, disobeying the imam and creating corruption in the land, then he will not return with sufficiency.

Abū Dāwūd related the hadith of ‘AbdAllāh ibn ‘Amr that he said, “I said, ‘Messenger of Allah, tell me about jihād and military expeditions.’ He said, ‘If you fight steadfastly and anticipating a reward, then Allah will raise you up as one who is steadfast and anticipating a reward. If you fight showing off and vy ing [with each other as to who will attain the most spoils], then Allah will raise you up showing off and vy ing. In whatever state you fight or are killed, then Allah will raise you up in that state.’”

Muslim related the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ that he said, “I heard the Prophet ﷺ saying, ‘The first person to have judgement passed on him on the Day of Rising will be a man who was killed as a martyr (shahīd) and he will be brought, and He will show him His blessings and He will acknowledge them. He will say, ‘So what did you do for them?’ and he will say, ‘I fought for You until I was killed as a martyr (shahīd).’ He will say, ‘You lie! But rather you fought so that it might be said, ‘[He was] daring,’ and that has been said.’ Then the command will be given and he will be dragged on his face until he is thrown in the Fire.’”

In the hadith there is that when this hadith reached Muʿāwiyah he wept until he fainted. When he recovered he said, “Allah and His Messenger told the truth. Allah ﷺ says:

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\text{أن كان يведен الحياة الدنيا ورتبه وف إليه أعمالهم فيها وهم فيها لا يخفون أولئك الذين ليس لهم في الآخرة إلا النار}
\]

[Then there will be] a man to whom Allah was enormously generous giving him all kinds of wealth. He will be brought and He will show him His blessings and He will acknowledge them, and He will say, ‘So what did you do for them?’ He will say, ‘I didn’t leave any way in which You love wealth to be spent but that I spent it in for You.’ He will say, ‘You lie! But rather you did it so that someone might say, ‘He is very generous,’ and that has been said.’ Then the command will be given and he will be dragged on his face until he is thrown in the Fire.”

40 Muslim (1905).
41 Surah Hūd: 15:16
42 Ahmad (2535), Abū Dāwūd (2515), Ibn Mājah (252).
43 At-Tirmidhī (265).
44 Ibn Mājah (252).

As for those who desire the life of the dunyā and its finery, We will give them full payment in it for their actions. They will not be deprived here of their due. But such people will have nothing in the ḥākīmah but the Fire.”

A warning has been transmitted against learning knowledge for any other purpose than the face of Allah, as Imam Ahmad, Abū Dāwūd, Ibn Mājah related from the hadith of Abū Hurayrah ﷺ related from the Prophet ﷺ that he said, “Whoever learns knowledge of that type by which the face of Allah is sought and only learns it to obtain some of the world’s goods, then he will not find the odour of the Garden on the Day of Rising,” meaning, its scent.

At-Tirmidhī related a hadith of Ka‘b ibn Malik that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Whoever seeks knowledge in order to argue with foolish people, or to compete with people of knowledge, or to turn people’s faces towards him, then Allah will put him in the Fire.” Ibn Mājah related the same meaning from a hadith of Ibn ‘Umar, Hudhayfah and Jābir, may Allah be pleased with them, from the Prophet ﷺ and the wording of Jābir is, “Do not learn knowledge in order to compete with people of knowledge or to argue with foolish people or to do well in assemblies. For whoever does that, then [be aware of] the Fire! The Fire!” Ibn Mas‘ūd said, “Do not learn knowledge for three reasons: to argue with foolish people, or to dispute with fuqahā’, or to turn people’s faces towards you. Seek from your words and your actions that which is with Allah because it endures and what is other than it will go away.”

A warning is transmitted about acting for the sake of other than Allah,
in general, as Imam Ahmad related from a hadith of Ubayy ibn Ka‘b that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Tell this ummah the good news of high rank, might, exaltation, din and firm establishment in the land. Whoever of them does the work of the next life for the sake of the world will have no portion in the next life.”

Know that there are a number of types of acting for other than Allah: sometimes it is pure showing off such that someone only intends to be seen by people for some worldly purpose, which is the state of the hypocrites in their salāh, as Allah ﷺ says:

وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةَ قَامُوا كَانُوا يُؤْوَرُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يُذْكَرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلاً

“When they get up to pray, they get up lazily, showing off to people, and only remembering Allah a very little.”

Similarly Allah, exalted is He, describes the kāfirūn as merely showing off, in His words:

وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِن دَارَهُمْ بَيْظَاً وَرَتِيعُ النَّاسِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سُبْبِ اللَّهِ

“Do not be like those who left their homes in arrogance, showing off to people and barring them from the way of Allah.”

This unalloyed showing off is unlikely to issue from a mu‘min in the salāh or the fast, but it may issue from him in the obligatory sadaqah (the salāh) or the Ḥajj and other outward actions or in those actions whose benefits go beyond the person themselves, because sincerity in them is very difficult. The Muslim does not doubt that this action is void and its perpetrator deserves the abhorrence of Allah and punishment.

Sometimes an action can be for the sake of Allah but there is some showing off in it. If the showing off occurs in its fundamental parts then authentic texts show that it is invalid and void.

In Sāhil Muslim there is from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah, blessed is He and exalted, said, ‘I am the most independent of partners from the ascription of partnership. Whoever does an action in which he associates others than Me as a partner with Me, then I abandon him and his partner.’” Ibn Mājah also related it and his wording is, “Then I am free of it and it is for the one whom he associated as a partner.”

Imam Ahmad related from Shaddād ibn Aww, that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Someone who prays showing off has ascribed a partner [to Allah], and someone who fasts showing off has ascribed a partner [to Allah], and someone who pays sadaqah showing off has ascribed a partner [to Allah]. Truly, Allah ﷺ says, ‘I am the best divider of the shares for the one who associates anything with Me, because all of his action, whether it is much or little, is for his partner whom he associated as a partner with Me; I have no need of it.’”

Imam Ahmad, at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah narrated the hadith of Abū Sa‘īd ibn Abī Fadlāh – and he was one of the Companions – that he said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘When Allah gathers together the first and the last on the Day about which there is no doubt, a crier will call out, ‘Whoever associated a partner in an action which he did for Allah then let him seek his reward from other than Allah because of all partners Allah is the One Who has least need of the association of partners.’”

Al-Bazzār narrated in his Musnad the hadith of ad-Dahhāk ibn Qays, that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Truly, Allah ﷺ says, ‘I am the best partner, for whoever associates a partner with Me, then it is for My partner.’ People! Purify your actions for the sake of Allah because Allah only accepts actions that are purely for His sake. Do not say, ‘This is for Allah and for kindred,’ because it is for kindred and none of it is for Allah. Do not say, ‘This is for Allah and for your sakes,’ because it is for your sakes and none of it is for Allah.”

An-Nasā’ī narrated with a good chain of transmission from Abū Umámah al-Bāihilī that, “A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, what do you think about a man who goes on a military expedition seeking reward and renown?’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘There will be nothing for him. The man asked him about it three times and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ kept saying, ‘There will be nothing for him.’ Then he said, ‘Truly, Allah only accepts actions which are purely for Him and by which His face is sought.’”

Al-Hākim narrated a hadith of Ibn ‘Abbās that he said, “A man asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, I take a stand by which I intend the face of Allah, and I want my stand to be seen?’ The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not reply to him, until there was revealed:”

فَمَنْ كَانَ يُرْجُو إِلَيْهِ رَبَّهُ فَلْيُلْعَبْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يَشْرَكْ بِعَدَاءٍ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

Intention

45 Ahmad (5:134).
46 Sūrat an-Nisā‘ : 141
47 Sūrat al-Mā‘ūn: 46
48 Sūrat al-Anfāl: 47
49 Muslim (2985).
50 Ibn Mājah (492).
51 Ahmad (4:1256).
52 Ahmad (5:496), at-Tirmidhī (3154), Ibn Mājah (1923). Ibn Hibbān.
53 Ad-Dāraquṭnī (1:51), al-Bayhaqī in as-Shu‘ab (6836)
54 An-Nasā’ī (1:5140).
55 Al-Hākim (2:1111).
“So let him who hopes to meet his Lord act rightly and not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord.” 56

Among those from whom this same sense is narrated – that when any showing off is mixed with an action it is invalid – are a whole party of the first right-acting generations, among whom were ‘Ubaidah ibn as-Samit, Abūd-Dardā’, al-Hasan, Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyab and others. Among the mursal 57 hadith which al-Qāsim ibn Mukhaymirah narrated from the Prophet ﷺ is that he said, “Allah does not accept an action in which there is showing off to the weight of a mustard seed.” 58

We know of no disagreement among the first right-acting generations about this, even if there is some disagreement among the later generations. If someone mixes an intention, which is not showing off, with his intention for jihād, for example taking a wage for the service, or taking something from the spoils, or trading [while on the expedition], then the reward of the jihād will be decreased by that amount but it will not be entirely invalidated. In Sahīh Muslim, there is from ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr 59 that the Prophet ﷺ said, “When the warriors gain spoils they hasten with two-thirds of their reward [in this world], but if they do not gain anything then they have a complete reward [in the akhirah].” 60 We have previously mentioned a number of hadith which show that whoever intends to gain some worldly goods by his jihād has no reward, which are interpreted to refer to someone who has no other intention but worldly gain in his jihād.

Imam Ahmad said, “The reward of the merchant, the hired man, the one who leases [possibly riding animals for jihād] depend on how pure their intentions are for the military expeditions, but they are not the same as the one who struggles with himself and his own wealth without mixing anything else with it." He also said about someone who takes a prize for jihād that if he does not embark for the sake of the dhimārs there is no harm in him accepting them. It is as if he goes out for the sake of his din, and then if he is given see that he takes it.

Similarly, it is related that ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr said, “When one of you decides to join a military expedition and then Allah provides him with supplies, there is no harm, but when he is refused a dirham he remains at home, then there is no good in that.”

Similarly, al-Awāzī said, “If the warrior’s intention is the military expedition, then I do not see any harm in it. The same is said of someone who takes something for the Hajj so that he might go on the Hajj with it either for himself or for someone else.” It has been narrated that Mūjāhid said that the Hajj of the camels’ attendants [who accompany the party to look after their camels], the Hajj of someone employed [perhaps to accompany someone else on Hajj], and the Hajj of the trader [who trades during the Hajj] “are complete, and

nothing is deducted from their reward,” which is based on the interpretation that their original intention was the Hajj rather than the earnings.

As for when the action is originally for the sake of Allah, and later the intention to show off creeps into it, then if it is a transitory thought which he rejects there is no disagreement that it will do him no harm. If he gives himself up to it, then there is a question as to whether that invalidates his action or whether it does not harm him, and whether he will be rewarded according to his original intention. There is some disagreement among the people of knowledge of the first right-acting generations about that, which Imam Ahmad and Ibn Jarīr at-Tabarī narrate. They both thought that the weightier point of view was that his action is not invalidated because of that and that he will be rewarded because of his former intention, which is the point of view narrated of Hasan al-Baṣrī and others.

The evidence for this position is taken from something Abū Dāwūd narrated among his mursal hadith from ‘A‘ār al-Khurasānī that, “A man asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, all of Banī Salamah fight. Some of them fight for the sake of the world, some fight out of valour, and some of them fight out of desire for the face of Allah, so which of them are martyrs (shuhūd)?’ He said, ‘Each one of them, if his original intention is that the word of Allah should be the uppermost.’” 61

Ibn Jarīr mentioned that this disagreement is only with respect to actions whose ends are closing connected to their beginnings such as salāt, fasting and Hajj, but as for those where there is no direct connection such as recitation, dhikr, spending money and spreading knowledge, then they are cut off when the intention to show off occurs and renewal of the intention is needed. In that respect it has been narrated that Sulaymān ibn Dāwūd al-Ḥashimī said, “Often I narrate a hadith for which I have an intention, but when I come to part of it, my intention changes, so that one hadith requires many intentions.” This does not negate jihād, as is clear from the mursal hadith of ‘A‘ār al-Khurasānī, because jihād becomes obligatory when one is present in the ranks [of the fighting men] and it is not permitted to abandon it at that moment, so it becomes like the Hajj. 62

As for when someone does an action purely for Allah and then later Allah creates praise in the hearts of the mu’timinūn for that act of his, and he rejoices in the bounty of Allah and His mercy and is happy for that, it will not harm him at all. There is the hadith of Abū Dharr from the Prophet ﷺ to this purport, that he asked about a man who does a good action for the sake of Allah and for which people praise him, and so he said, “That is an early bringer of good tidings to the mu’timūn.” Muslim and Ibn Mājah narrated it” and he [Ibn

56 Surat al-Kahf: 105
57 A hadith in which a Follower narrates from the Prophet ﷺ without an intermediary narrator who was a Companion.
58 Ibn Jarīr at-Tabarī narrated it.
59 Muslim (1966).
Majah] had [the wording], “A man does an action for the sake of Allah for which people love him,” and it was in this sense that Imam Ahmad, Ishâq ibn Rahwayh, Ibn Jârîr at-Tabarî and others interpreted it.

Similarly, there is the hadîth which al-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah narrated from Abû Hûrayrah ṭaḥthat, ‘A man asked, ‘Messenger of Allah, what about a man who does an action which he keeps a secret, and then when it is discovered he is pleased with that?’ He said, ‘He has two rewards: the reward for [his having kept it] secret and the reward for [its becoming] public.’”

We will confine ourselves to this amount of discussion on sincerity and showing off, because it is enough.

In summary, however excellent are the words of Sahl ibn ‘Abdullâh at-Tustari, “There is nothing harder on the self than ikhlâs (doing something purely for the sake of Allah), because it has no portion from it.”

Yûsuf ibn al-Husayn ar-Râzî said, “The most difficult thing in the world is ikhlâs. How I struggle to remove showing off from my heart and it is as if it grows in it again with other colours.”

Ibn ‘Ubaynah said, “One of the supplications of Mutarrîf ibn ‘Abdullâh was, ‘O Allah, I ask Your forgiveness for that of which I repented to You and then returned to it. I seek Your forgiveness for that which I imposed on myself for Your sake and then did not fulfil it for You. I seek forgiveness for that which I claimed that I intended for Your face and then my heart mixed in with it that which You know.’”

SECTION [On intention according to the meaning used by the people of fiqh]

As for the meaning of intention which the people of fiqh use to distinguish acts of worship from ordinary everyday acts, and to distinguish one act of worship from another, because withholding oneself from eating and drinking is sometimes employed as a prophylactic measure for the protection of health, and sometimes because of an inability to eat, and sometimes in order to give up the appetites for the sake of Allah and so fasting requires an intention to distinguish it from these other reasons for giving up food.

Other acts of worship are similar in that respect, such as salât and fasting, of which some are obligatory and some optional. There are a number of different obligations. The obligatory prayers are five every day and night, but different fasts can be obligatory: Ramâdan, for expiating a serious wrong action, and for a vow which one failed to fulfil, and these are only distinguished by the intention. Similarly, sahâqah may be optional or obligatory. That which is obligatory is the zakâh. There is also that which is for expiation of a serious wrong action. These are only distinguished from each other by intention, all of which is comprised generally in his words ṭaḥthat “And there is only for each man that which he intends.”

There are well known differences among the people of knowledge about some of the above. For example, one of them did not require that someone have a specific intention for the obligatory prayer, but on the contrary it was enough for him that one intend the obligatory prayer of the moment even if he doesn’t have the name of the prayer present in his consciousness at that time. This is narrated as the view of Imam Ahmad. Based on that statement whoever misses a prayer from the day or the night and forgets which one it is must make up three prayers, the dawn prayer [a two râkîh prayer], the sunset prayer [a three râkîh prayer] and any one of the four râkîh prayers.

Similarly, a group of the people of knowledge took the position that the fast of Ramâdan also does not require a specific intention but that it is sufficient merely to have the intention to fast since the time [the month of Ramâdan] is not appropriate for any other fast. This is also narrated of Imam Ahmad. It is often narrated from some of them that the fast of Ramâdan does not require an intention at all because of its specific nature, so that in that way it is like returning deposits. It has been told about al-Awzâ‘î that the zakâh is like that too, and one of them interpreted his words to mean that it is sufficient to have the intention of sahâqah as [in the case of] the Hajj. Similarly, Abû Hanîfah said, “Even if someone were to give the entire nisâb without any intention it would discharge his obligation of zakâh.”

It has been narrated that the Prophet ṣaw heard a man calling out the talbiyâh ṭtas’s for the Hajj for [some other] man, and so he asked him, “Have you done the Hajj for yourself?” He said, “No.” He said, “This one is for you, then later perform the Hajj for the [other] man.” Some things have been said concerning the soundness of this hadîth, but in fact it is sound from Ibn ‘Abbâs and others.66 Ash-Shâfi‘î, Ahmad in what is well known of him, and others passed judgement based on it, that [the single obligatory] Hajj of Islam is discharged by having the intention of Hajj whether one intends it as an optional and voluntary act, or any other intention, and that a specific intention is not a precondition of the Hajj. That means that someone who performs the Hajj on behalf of another person and has not done it himself, then that Hajj is reckoned as his. It is similar if he performs Hajj because of a vow as an optional act and he has not performed the [single obligatory] Hajj of Islam, then it is transformed into it. It is well established that the Prophet ṣaw told his Companions during the Farewell Hajj after they had begun it with him and had done the tawâf and the sa‘y ṭma‘ámah and others that they should cancel their Hajj and make it an ‘Umrah.67 Some of them were performing the form of Hajj called qirân, and others the form called ifrîd68 so that their tawâf on arrival was just a

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64 Nisâb: the minimum portion of held wealth on which zakâh is due. Trans.
65 Labbâk Allâhumma labbâk… “At Your service O Allah, at Your service…”
66 Abû Dâwîd (1811), Ibn Majah (2903), Abû Ya‘lî (2440), Ibn Khuzaymah (3059).
67 Tawâf: circumambulation around the Ka‘bah. Trans.
68 Sa‘y going between between Safâ and Marwâh. Trans.
69 Al-Bukhârî (1598), and Muslim (1213) from Jâbd ṭawâf.
70 ‘Umrah: Hajj and ‘Umrah combined. Trans.
71 Ifrîd: Hajj performed alone. Trans.
As for purification, the disagreement about the stipulation of an intention for it is well known, which derives from the question of whether purification for the prayer is a separate act of worship or just one of the preconditions of the prayer, like removal of impurities and covering the private parts. Those who do not stipulate that there should be an intention do so because they consider it to be just like the other preconditions of the prayer. Those who stipulate that there should be an intention do so because they regard it as an independent act of worship, and because if it is an act of worship in itself, then it is not valid without an intention. This is the position of the majority of the people of knowledge, and proof of the soundness of that is the overwhelming majority of authentic sources from the Prophet ﷺ that state that, “Wudū' expiates wrong actions and errors, and that whoever does wudū' as it is commanded then it is an expiation for his wrong actions.”

This indicates that the wudū' which is commanded in the Qur’ān is itself an independent act of worship, since one of its consequences is expiation of wrong actions, and because wudū' without an intention does not expiate any wrong actions, about which there is total agreement, and it is not commanded and the prayer is invalid with it. For this reason, there is nothing in the nature of reward as that which is related about wudū' for any of the other preconditions of the prayer, such as for the removal of impurities and covering the private parts. Even if someone, as well as intending wudū', intends to cool himself and remove impurity or dirt, it fulfills what is required of him according to the texts transmitted from ash-Shafi‘i, and it is also the position of most of the companions of Ahmad, because this [extra] purpose is not haram or disapproved. For that reason, even if his purpose, along with removing the cause which obviates his wudū', is to teach wudū', there is no harm. The Prophet ﷺ sometimes used to do the prayer with the purpose of teaching it to people, and similarly the Hājji, as he said, “Take your rites from me.”

One of the branches of knowledge into which intention enters is cases concerning oaths. The oath which arises from vain and useless talk (laghw) does not require expiation, and it (laghw) is defined as careless statements without any deep purpose in the heart, such as the saying, “No, by Allah!” and “Of course, by Allah!” during conversation. Allah, exalted is He, says:

لاَ يَوَاحِدُنَّ اللَّهَ ﺑِالْلَّغْوِ ﻓِي ﺐَيْنِ ﺑِكَ وَأَوُافِدَكَ ﺑٌِاَﻟْكَسَـبُ ﻓُؤُُكَمْ

“Allah will not take you to task for inadvertent statements (laghw) in your oaths, but He will take you to task for the intention your hearts have made.”

Similarly, in the matters of oaths, one must return, to the intention of the one who swears and his purpose in his oath. If he swears to divorce or to free a slave and then later claims that he intended something other than what the apparent outward sense of his expression conveys, he is believed with

72 Like the two rak`ahs for greeting the mosque. Trans.
73 To be in the state of ihram is the prerequisite of Hajj and `Umrah. It involves doing a ghf`d, donning the two cloths, praying two rak`ahs and making the intention for Hajj and/or `Umrah at or before the miqāl. The rules of Hajj and `Umrah apply once the ihram is completed.
74 Al-Bukhārī (1.422).
75 Al-Bukhārī (1.18), Muslim (246) from `Uthmān, and in other collections.
76 Sahih Muslim (1.297) from Jābir. 
77 Sūrat al-Baqarah: 225.
It has been narrated that Sumayt as-Sadūṣî said, “I proposed to a woman and they said to me, ‘We will not marry her to you until you divorce your wife.’ So I said, ‘I divorce her,’ three times, and so they married her to me. Then later they realised that my wife was still with me, and they asked, ‘Did you not divorce her three times?’ I said, ‘So-and-so was with me [as my wife] and I divorced her, and so-and-so and I divorced her, but as for this one, I did not divorce her.’ Then I went to Shaqîq ibn Thawr, who wanted to go in a deputation to Uthmân, and said to him, ‘Ask the Amir al-Mu’mînîn about this.’ He went and asked him. He (Uthmân) said, ‘It is according to his intention.’ Abû Ubayd narrated it in Kitâb at-Tâlîq “The Book of Divorce” and said that the people of knowledge have a consensus on situations like this.

Ishâq ibn Mansur said, “I asked Ahmad, ‘Do you know the hadith of Sumayt?’ He said, ‘Yes. As-Sadûṣî. He made that his intention, and Shaqîq mentioned it to Uthmân who said that it was according to his intention. If the one who had sworn was [in the position of being] the wrongdoer [in the dispute with the other person] and he intended something different from what his adversary made him swear to, then his [alleged] intention is not any use to him.’

It is narrated in Sahîh Muslim from Abû Hurayrah that the Prophet [May Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him] said, “Your oath is according to what your companion believes and affirms.” In another narration of his, “The oath is according to the intention of the one who demands the oath,” and this principle applies to the wrongdoer, but as for someone who has been wronged that [intention] will benefit him.

Imam Ahmad and Ibn Mâjah narrated a hadith of Sunâyd ibn Hanzâlah in which he said, “We went out intending to go to the Messenger of Allah and Wâ’il ibn Hujr was with us. An enemy of his seized him [on the way]. People found it difficult to swear an oath, and so I swore an oath that he was my brother, and so they let him go. We came to the Prophet [May Allah’s blessings and peace be upon him] and I told him that the other people had found it difficult to swear an oath and that I had sworn that he was my brother, and he said, ‘You told the truth. A Muslim is a Muslim’s brother.’

Similarly, intention is involved in divorce and freeing slaves. If someone expresses words which carry the possible interpretation of divorce or freeing a slave, then he must have an intention. Whether circumstantial indications, such as anger or a request for a divorce, will stand in place of intention or not is something on which there is a very well-known disagreement among the people of knowledge. Similarly, whether the divorce takes place inwardly just as if he had intended it, or whether he is merely obliged with it in outward judgement alone is another thing on which there is a famous difference of opinion. If he brings about the divorce by an open indirect allusion such as “it is the final decision” and the like, does he cause three divorces or one? There are two well-known different views on that. The clear position of Ahmad’s madhhab is that three divorces take effect by that if his intention is unspecific [to any number], but that if he intends less than three then whatever he intends comes into effect, but there are other narrations from him that in this latter case he is still obliged with three divorces.

Even if someone sees a woman and, thinking her to be his wife, he divorces her and then it becomes clear that she is a stranger, nevertheless, his wife is divorced since he intended to divorce his wife, which Ahmad stated. It is also said in another narration from him that she is not divorced, which is the position of ash-Shâfi’î. If it is the opposite, and he sees a woman whom he thinks a stranger and divorces her and then it becomes clear that it is actually his wife, then is she divorced? On this there are two views both of which are narrated from Ahmad, but the dominant position in the madhhab of ash-Shâfi’î and others is that she is divorced.

If he has two wives one of whom he forbids to go out and then he sees that one of his wives has gone out and thinks that it is the one whom he forbade, and so says to her, “So and so, did you go out? You are divorced!” Then people of knowledge have differed about it. Al-Hasan said, “The one whom he forbade is divorced because it was her he meant.” Ibrâhîm said, “They are both divorced.” Aṭâ’ said, “Neither of them are divorced.” Ahmad said, “The one whom he forbade is divorced,” and in one narration, “because he meant to divorce her.” On whether the [wife he actually] addressed is divorced there are also two [differing] narrations from him. The companions [of Ahmad] differed about the statement that she is divorced, as to whether it is only in legal ruling or also in the inward reality, on which they took two different paths.

It is inferred from his words, “Actions are by intentions, and each man has only that which he intends” that contracts and agreements by which someone intends inwardly to reach something harâm are invalid, such as contracts

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78 Both khadîyyah “a female camel loosed from the hobbling cord” and tâlîq “a she camel not having her fore shank and arm bound together” also mean “divorced”. Trans.
79 Muslim (1653).
80 Ibn Mâjah (2111), Ahmad (479).
of sale by which usury and the like are intended, as is the madhhab of Mālik, Ahmad and others, because by this contract he only intends usury and not a sale, “And for each man there is only that which he intends.”

There are very many issues connected to fiqh surrounding intention, but in what we have mentioned there is enough. Ash-Shafi’i said about this hadith, “It is involved in seventy chapters of fiqh,” and Allah knows best.

Intention is the purpose of the heart, and it is not necessary to express verbally that which is in the heart in any of the acts of worship. One of the companions of ash-Shafi’i narrated that his position was that one must verbally express the intention for the prayer, but meticulous scholars said that he was mistaken. Later fuqahā differ about verbally expressing the intention for the prayer and for other [acts of worship]. Some regard it as desirable, some as disapproved. We do not know of any special narration on these issues from the first right-acting generations except in the case of the Ḥajj alone, because Mujahid said, “When someone intends the Ḥajj he should name what he is embarking upon.” It is also narrated that he said, “He should name it in the talbiyah,” but this is not the issue we are discussing, because the Prophet used to mention his rites in his talbiyah saying, “Labbayk, ‘Umrah and Hajj.” But our discussion here is on the issue that one says while making the intention for iḥrām, “O Allah, I intend Hajj” or “Umrah” which some of the fuqahā regard as preferable, and about which the words of Mujahid are not explicitly clear. Most of the right-acting early generations including ‘Atā, Tāwus, al-Qāsim ibn Muhammad and an-Nakha’ī were specific that one should form a detailed intention at the beginning. It is narrated by an authentic path from Ibn ‘Umar that he saw a man while beginning his iḥrām saying, “O Allah, I intend Hajj and ‘Umrah,” and so he asked him, “Are you telling people? Does Allah not know what is in your self?”

Mālik was specific about this, that it is not recommended to name [aloud] that which one intends by one’s iḥrām. This is narrated by the author of the book Tahdhīb al-Mudawwanah who was one of his followers. Abū Dāwūd said, “I asked Ahmad, ‘Before the takbīr [of the prayer] do you say anything?’ And he said, ‘No.’” This implies that one does not articulate the intention verbally, and Allah, glorious and exalted is He, knows best.