

CHAPTER 1

باب الإخلاص وإحضار النية في جميع الأعمال والأقوال والأحوال البارزة والخفية

Chapter On Sincerity And The Presence Of Intention In All Deeds, Words And Conditions, Both External And Internal

قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ﴾

Allāh ﷻ says, 'They were commanded only to worship Allāh, devoting their religion exclusively for Him and turning away from other religions, to establish *ṣalāh* and to pay *zakāh*. This is the way of the true religion.' (Sūrah al-Bayyinah, 5)

قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿لَنْ يَنَالَ اللهُ لُحُومَهَا وَلَا دِمَائُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوَى مِنْكُمْ﴾

Allāh ﷻ says, 'Their flesh and blood will never reach Allāh, but it is your piety that will reach Him.' (Sūrah al-ḥaj, 37)

قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿قُلْ إِنْ تَخَفُوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ أَوْ تُبْدُوهُ يَعْلَمُهُ اللهُ﴾

Allāh ﷻ says, 'Say, 'Whether you hide or reveal what is in your hearts, Allāh knows it.' (Sūrah Āl 'Imrān, 29)

Introduction

Ikhlaṣ (sincerity) means to worship Allāh ﷻ with the sole objective of attaining His closeness. A person should not worship Allāh ﷻ to boast, seek praise or solicit compliments from people.

Ikhlaṣ is a precondition for the acceptance of an action as Allāh ﷻ only accepts actions done for His pleasure. Good actions done with ulterior motives are rejected by Allāh ﷻ. One should, therefore, evaluate one's intention before commencing any action and correct it if necessary.

Scholars advise that a person should make multiple intentions for any action. For example, if one intends going to the *masjid* for *ṣalāh*, one should, together with the intention of performing *ṣalāh*, make the following intentions: teaching others about Islām, meeting and greeting people, removing dirt and impurities from the *masjid*, assisting the old and infirm, and removing obstacles from the path.

Intentions are made from the heart and therefore it is not conditional to utter them verbally. This is supported by other *aḥādīth* which state that Allāh ﷻ considers the actions and intentions of a person rather than his outward appearance and form.

The importance of intention can be gauged from the statements of the pious. Yaḥyā ibn Abī Kathīr ﷺ said, “Consider your intention because it is more far-reaching than your action.” Sufyān al-Thawrī ﷺ said, “I have not been concerned with anything more difficult than my intention because it fluctuates.” ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak ﷺ said, “Many small actions are exalted by an intention and many great actions are diminished by an intention.”

Ḥadīth 1

وعن أمير المؤمنين أبي حفص عمر بن الخطاب بن نفيل بن عبد العزى بن رياح بن عبد الله بن قرط بن رزاح بن عدي بن كعب بن لؤي بن غالب القرشي العدوي ﷺ ، قال : سمعت رسول الله ﷺ ، يقول : ((إنما الأعمال بالنيات ، وإنما لكل امرئ ما نوى ، فمن كانت هجرته إلى الله ورسوله ، فهجرته إلى الله ورسوله ، ومن كانت هجرته لدنيا يصيبها ، أو امرأة ينكحها ، فهجرته إلى ما هاجر إليه)) . متفق على صحته . رواه إماما الحديث ، أبو عبد الله محمد بن إسماعيل بن إبراهيم بن المغيرة بن بريد بن أبي مريم الجعفي البخاري ، وأبو الحسين مسلم بن الحجاج بن مسلم القشيري النيسابوري ﷺ في صحيحها اللذين هما أصح الكتب المصنفة .

‘Umar¹ ﷺ narrates: I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ saying: “Actions are gauged by intentions. Each person will receive (the reward for) what he intended. One who emigrates to Allāh and His Messenger his emigration is indeed to Allāh and His Messenger. One who emigrates to acquire something of the world or to marry a woman, his emigration is to that to which he emigrated.” (*Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd*)

Vocabulary and Definitions

النِّيَّاتِ (intentions) is the plural of *al-Niyyah*. According to the lexicon, *al-Niyyah* means to intend something and according to the *sharāḥ*, it refers to an intention when doing an action.

1 ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb ﷺ was from the Quraish and served as their ambassador to the various tribes during the era of ignorance. He accepted Islām in the 6th year of prophethood and this was a great victory for the Muslims because it gave them courage and strength. He participated in all the expeditions with the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. The pledge of allegiance for *khilāfah* was taken at his hands in 13 *Hijrī*. Great conquests took place during his rule as *Amīr al-Mu‘minīn*. He was martyred in 23 *Hijrī* after the fire worshipper Abū Lu‘lu’ stabbed him while he was performing the *Fajr ṣalāh*. May Allāh ﷻ have mercy upon him and may He be pleased with him.