

The Pleasure of Worship

Sheikh 'Abdul Bari ath Thubayty

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First Khutbah

Praise be to Allah. Praise be to Allah, Who says in the Holy Hadith, **“Every deed of the son of Adam is for him except fasting; it is for Me, and I shall reward [the fasting person] for it.”** I praise Him, Glorified be He, and I thank Him. He says: **“... and with Allah is the best of rewards.”** [Surah Ale ‘Imran: 195]

I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, Who has no partners. He says: **“And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allah’s Forgiveness, he will find Allah OftForgiving, Most Merciful.”** [Surah an-Nisa’: 110]

And I bear witness that our master and prophet, Muhammad, is His servant and messenger, who said, **“Fasting is a shield [i.e. it protects one from falling into sin].”** May Allah bestow His peace and blessings upon him and upon his family and Companions.

Now then! I advise you and advise myself to fear Allah. Allah, Exalted be He, says: **“O you who believe! Observing fast is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become pious.”** [Surah al-Baqarah: 183]

There are many things in which people take pleasure and find delight, but such pleasures and delights are transient and short-lived, and some of them even end in remorse and regret. The true pleasure is the spiritual pleasure; it is the pleasure that the heart finds in worship, which makes a Muslim experience the highest degree of happiness and joy. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **“He has found the taste of faith who is content with Allah as his Lord, with Islam as his religion, and with Muhammad as his Prophet.”** In this hadith, the Prophet ﷺ informs us that faith has a taste that the heart can feel, just as the tongue tastes food and drink. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said, **“There are three qualities that whoever possesses will taste the sweetness of faith ...”** Faith, then, has sweetness and pleasure that make the heart happy and the soul calm and peaceful, and it is with this feeling of pleasure that the servant can reap the true fruits of his deeds and find eternal happiness. Such feeling of pleasure sets the heart right, makes it successful, joyful, and sound, and causes it to find peace and tranquillity. Nothing else could give the servant this feeling, even if he got all that can cause pleasure to people.

All the delights of the world provide only one type of pleasure which soon fades away, except for the worship of Allah, Might and Majesty be to Him, which results in three types of pleasure: the pleasure you feel while performing the act of worship, the pleasure you feel when you remember performing it, and the pleasure you will have when you are rewarded for it. When the heart finds the sweet taste of worshipping Allah in all purity to Him, nothing else will be better, sweeter, or more pleasurable than this taste. Indeed, loving Allah and drawing nearer to Him by doing what He loves overwhelm the heart with total delight and never-ending pleasure.

Experiencing the delight of worship and obedience to Allah and the pleasure of talking privately to Him, one of the righteous predecessors once said, *“I was in a state in which I said: ‘If the people of Paradise have this feeling, then they will be living in great bliss.’”* Describing how faith creates pleasure and blissful joy in the heart, another one of the righteous

predecessors said, "The heart experiences moments when it is thrilled and elated with joy. Nothing in this worldly life is akin to the delights of the hereafter except the bliss of faith and true knowledge."

The Prophet ﷺ always found comfort and peace of mind in performing prayers. He would say: **"Prayer has been made the comfort of my eyes."** Standing in prayer at night provides pleasure and sweetness that none can taste or describe except for those who spend the night worshipping Allah. One of the righteous predecessors said, *"I rejoice at the night when it falls, for the night is the delight of my life and the comfort of my eyes and it makes me able to talk privately to the One I love. I feel sad when the dawn breaks, because the daily chores distract me from all that joy."*

One also finds pleasure, joy, beauty, and majesty in reciting the Qur'an. When the words of Allah are recited and reach the ears, the souls become humble, the hearts become soft, and the body becomes calm, out of fear, submission, love, and joy. For those who love Allah, there is nothing sweeter than the words of their Beloved, for He is the delight of their hearts and the only One they seek. How can a lover feel that he has had enough of the words of the One he seeks? 'Uthman ibn 'Affan رضى الله عنه said, *"If your hearts were purer, they would never feel they had enough of Allah's words."*

There is also pleasure in giving charity. This the pleasure that Abud-Dahdah رضى الله عنه found when he spent the best and most precious of his property in the cause of Allah, then he came to his wife and said, *"O Umm Ad-Dahdah! Get out of the farm, for I sold it for the sake of Allah."* Upon that she said, *"What a profitable deal!"* She went out of the farm all delighted and overjoyed, for instead of the farm Allah has given her a great reward and made her feel the pleasure of spending in His cause and taste the sweetness of faith which makes the servant elated with joy while giving away his most precious property.

Similarly, scholars and the custodians of the religion, who are preoccupied with acquiring religious knowledge, stay up late at night reading and studying despite all the challenges and difficulties, because of the pleasure they find in searching for knowledge. In fact, one of the righteous predecessors spent forty years on writing a single book. It is through knowledge and the pleasure of learning that scholars rise in higher ranks of virtue and perfection of character. Most people, however, are unaware of this sweetness and the great value that is associated with learning; otherwise, they would fiercely compete with one another to obtain such pleasure. As this pleasure is surrounded by hardships and most people are ignorant of it, they are unaware of its great value, and Allah chooses to bestow His great favours upon whom He wills from among His servants.

Servants of Allah! Taking pleasure in the remembrance of Allah brings about rest and inner fulfilment, and it is for this reason that the gatherings for remembering Allah are called the Gardens of Paradise. Indeed, there is nothing more delightful to the soul than the remembrance of Allah, Might and Majesty be to Him. Truly, there is no act of worship that is simpler to perform and more pleasurable, joyful, and delightful to the heart than the remembrance of Allah. Allah, Exalted be He, says: **"Verily, the Abrar (the pious believers of Islamic monotheism) will be in Delight."** [Surah al-Infitar: 13]

Such delight is not confined to the Day of Resurrection alone, but the pious are in delight in all the three abodes (i.e. this worldly life, the grave, and the hereafter). Is there any delight in this worldly life that is more sublime than that of righteousness, soundness of the heart, knowledge of the Lord, Blessed and Exalted be He, and love for Him?

It is a sign of suffering, deprivation, pain, and loss for a servant to be denied the pleasure of obedience and worship. Ibn Al-Jawzi (Rahimahullah) said: *"One of the monks of the Children of*

Israel said: 'O Lord! I have disobeyed You so many times, but You have never punished me!' It was said to him, 'I have punished you so many times, but you do not know it. Have I not deprived you of the sweetness of privately talking to Me?'" One of the righteous predecessors was asked, "Can a person who disobeys Allah feel the pleasure of obedience to Him?" He said, "No. Nor can the one who intends to do so."

Sheikh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (Rahimahullah) said: *"If you do not feel the sweetness and joy of a good deed that you have done in your heart, then doubt its sincerity, for the Lord, Exalted be He, is Appreciative of good deeds."* Ibn Al-Qayyim said: *"This means that Allah will definitely reward the good-doer for his deeds in this worldly life by granting him sweetness which he feels in his heart, in addition to great joy and comfort. If the servant does not experience this, then his deed has not been done purely for the sake of Allah."*

Permanent, lasting pleasure, servants of Allah, i.e. the pleasure which is not mixed with sorrow, not followed by pain, and not diminished by worry and sadness, is the pleasure of the hereafter. This is the best and greatest of all pleasures and delights. Allah says: **"And verily, the reward of the Hereafter is better for those who believe and used to fear Allah and keep their duty to Him."** [Surah Yusuf: 57]

The greatest pleasure and ever-lasting bliss is that of looking at the Countenance of Allah, the Most Generous, Blessed and Exalted be He. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ used to say in his supplication, **"... And I ask You [O Allah!] to grant me the pleasure of looking at Your Countenance, and the longing to meet You, without any harmful adversity or deluding trial."**

May Allah bless you and me with the Great Qur'an and make us benefit from its verses and wise words. I have said what you have heard and I ask forgiveness of Allah, the Most Great, for myself and for you. Ask Allah for forgiveness. He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Second Khutbah

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the Worlds. I praise Him, Glorified Be He, and thank Him for the blessing of fasting and for this religion. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah alone, Who has no partners, the Protector and Helper of the patient; and I bear witness that our master and prophet, Muhammad, is His servant and messenger, who was sent with guidance and clear light. May Allah bestow His peace upon him, his family, and all his Companions.

Now then! I advise you and advise myself to fear Allah. Allah, Exalted be He, says: **"O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam."** [Surah Ale 'Imran: 102]

Ramadan provides us with matchless bliss and unparalleled pleasure, which overwhelm the heart with sweetness and fill it with joy and happiness at having this great opportunity to do acts of obedience to Allah. It combines contemplation of the Qur'an, the spirituality of fasting and performing prayers, and the splendour of solitude and silent supplication to Allah. In Ramadan, the heart becomes soft, the eyes shed tears, and the body becomes calm. Ramadan restores to the heart and the body their health that has been taken away by worldly preoccupations and life distractions. It also purifies the soul from any blemishes and impurities.

When the Prophet ﷺ forbade the practice of continuous fasting (wisal), his Companions said to him: *"But you practise it yourself."* He ﷺ said to them: **"Who amongst you is like me? My Lord gives me food and drink during my sleep."** Ibn Al-Qayyim (Rahimahullah) said: *"Food and drink here mean the knowledge that Allah grants His prophet, the overwhelming pleasure that*

his heart feels when he privately supplicates His Lord, the comfort of being near Him, the bliss of loving and longing for Him, and all the accompanying conditions that feed the heart, delight the soul, and comfort the eyes, which provide the best and the most beneficial type of food. This type of food will strengthen the body to such an extent that it may dispense with material food for a period of time."

O Servants of Allah! Ask Allah to bestow His peace and blessings on the Messenger of Guidance, as Allah has commanded you to do so in His Holy Book. Allah, Exalted be He, says: "**Allah sends His Salat on the Prophet and also His angels (ask Allah to bless him). O you who believe! Send your Salat on him, and greet him with the Islamic way of greeting.**" [Surah al-Ahzab: 56]

O Allah! Send Your peace upon Muhammad, his wives, and his offspring as You have sent Your peace upon the family of Ibrahim, and send Your blessings upon Muhammad, his wives, and his offspring, as You have sent Your blessings upon the family of Ibrahim; You are All-Praiseworthy, All-Glorious. O Allah! Be pleased with the four Rightly-Guided Caliphs, Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and 'Ali, along with their families and the Prophet's honourable Companions, and also be pleased with us together with them, by Your forgiveness, generosity, and benevolence, O Most Merciful of All the Merciful!

O Allah! Grant power and glory to Islam and Muslims. O Allah! Grant power and glory to Islam and Muslims, subdue disbelief and the disbelievers, and destroy Your enemies, the enemies of Your religion. O Allah! Make this country and all other Muslim countries safe and secure.

O Allah! Protect Muslims everywhere. O Allah! Grant victory to whoever supports Your religion, and disgrace whoever forsakes Islam and Muslims. O Allah! Grant victory to Your religion, Your Book, Your Prophet's Sunnah, and Your believing servants. O Allah! Bring Muslims together, gather them around a single word, guide their shots, and gather them around the word of truth, O Lord of the Worlds!

O Allah! We ask you for Paradise and every word or deed that brings us closer to it, and seek refuge in You from Hellfire and every word or deed that brings us closer to it.

O Allah! We ask You for the ways to good, the outcomes of good, the beginnings of good, and the ends of good, and we ask You for all good. We ask You for the highest ranks of Paradise, O Lord of the Worlds!

O Allah! We ask You for all that is good in this world and in the hereafter, both what we know and what we do not know. O Allah! We seek refuge in You from all evil in this world and in the hereafter, both what we know and what we do not know.

O Allah! Make good for us our religion, which safeguards our affairs; make good for us this world in which we live; and make good for us the hereafter which will be our eternal abode. O Allah! Make our life an increase for us in all goodness and our death a respite for us from all evil, O Lord of the Worlds!

O Allah! Be with us and not against us, render us victorious and not defeated, plan for us and not against us, guide us and lead us to guidance, and grant us victory over those who have oppressed us.

O Allah! Make us among those who remember You and praise You, who are humble to You, and who often implore You and return to You in repentance.

O Allah! Accept our repentance, forgive our sins, approve our cause, guide our tongues to say the truth, and purify our hearts from envy.

O Allah! Have mercy on our dead, cure the sick among us, relieve our distress, release our prisoners, ease our affairs, and grant us success, O Lord of the Worlds!

O Allah! Bless our deeds, our lives, our spouses, and our offspring, and make us blessed wherever we are, O Lord of the Worlds!

O Allah! Guide our leader and ruler to what You love and accept. O Allah! Lead him to Your guidance, make his deeds pleasing to You, and guide his two Deputies to what You love and accept, O Lord of the Worlds!

O Allah! Guide all Muslim rulers to act according to Your Book and to rule according to Your Shari'ah, O Lord of the Worlds!

... Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Your Mercy, we shall certainly be of the losers. (Al-A'raf: 23)

... Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of kindness, Most Merciful. (Al-Hashr: 10)

... Our Lord! Give us that which is good in this world and that which is good in the Hereafter, and save us from the torment of the Fire! [Surah al-Baqarah: 201]

"Verily, Allah enjoins justice and ihsan, and giving to kith and kin, and forbids evil, and Al-Munkar, and Al-Baghy (i.e. all kinds of oppression), He admonishes you, that you may take heed." [Surah an-Nahl: 90]

Remember Allah and He will remember you. Thank Him for His favours and He will give you more. Verily, remembrance of Allah is greater than all, and Allah knows what you do.