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حتى لا نخسر رمضان

**RAMADAN:
LET'S AVOID THE LOSS!
Majidi Al-Hilaaly.**

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Publisher's Note

All praise is due to Allah as appropriate to His majesty and Countenance and greatness of His authority. May his peace and blessings be upon the best of humankind, Muhammad, his family and his companions and those who follow his sunnah till the day wealth and children and of course all worldly pursuits shall be of no avail, except he who meets his Lord with a sound and submissive soul.

Man's sojourn in this life, whether short or long, is a trade or business transaction after which every normal person would want it profitable. A loss after any business transaction is not desirable, but detested like a plague. Hence, we should be so much concerned about the result of our activities in this life and what will be our portion in the end.

“O you who believe! Be conscious of Allah and be concerned about what you put forward to tomorrow...”

Qur'an 59:

Our Creator, Allah, informed us that our major concern in this life should be to worship Him and render absolute servitude to Him. He made everything possible for us to achieve success in this service to Him. Therefore the decision to succeed is basically ours, and we may not succeed unless we have our mind on the goal of existence and live to discharge the great responsibility of being Allah's Vicegerents on earth.

Knowing what will make us succeed in rendering true servitude to Allah should be a priority in our pursuit of happiness in this world. If we are negligent to search for and understand how we can avoid loss in our sojourn on earth, then we expose ourselves to being a failure in this life and hereafter. For that is a great loss!

May Allah forbid that!

That we may avoid loss in our worship and eventually in our entire life is the discourse of this book. Though of few pages, but dear reader, it explains in concise manner the formula that guarantees success in our acts of worship, and especially the fast in Ramadan.

This book in your hand is a translation of:” hata la nakhasaru Ramadan” by our Shaykh Majidi Al-Hilaaly (hafidhahullah).

We use this opportunity to thank the translators. May Allah reward you all well and increase your knowledge of the deen and grant you living Imaan.

We hope we shall all benefit greatly from this noble and humble work.

Assalam alaykum.
The Publisher

AVOID LOSING THE BLESSINGS OF RAMADAN!

*P*raise be to Allah, the Lord of the Universe. May the peace and blessing of almighty Allah descend upon the one sent as a mercy unto the universe, Muhammad, his family and his companions.

When a person approaches the doctor for an illness, normally the doctor would listen to his complaints, diagnose him and then prescribe the suitable medication for his case.

Never will the doctor forget to explain the dosage and the manner in which the medicine should be taken...take this before food, this after, and that before going to bed. After all that, he counsels him on nutritional balance and gives him the next appointment for check-ups.

Presumably, the first question to be posed by the doctor in the following appointment will be to know the state

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of his health now. If he sees a significant improvement, he will advise he keeps taking the medicine -either some or all- for another specified periods of time as he deems fit until the patient is healed finally by Allah's will. If there is no noticeable improvement in the state of his health, then he confronts his patient with questions to ascertain his adherence and seriousness in taking the drugs as prescribed in the right manner. If he sees that he keeps strictly to the instruction, he may then think changing the dosages of the drugs or changing it completely. Why not, when he knows that the main objective of the visit of the patient is to know his well being and that the medicines are just a means to achieve this end.

The relationship between medications and wellness represents the relationship between means to achieving an end and the goals. The means are not required for themselves but rather for goals to be achieved.

Surprisingly, this perception of such relationship is upheld, automatically, by us, in many of our mundane affairs. But as for the matters of our religion, the reverse is the case: the goals are often forgotten, when means are being transformed into goals and objectives.

Keeping Imaan Alive in the Heart is the GOAL

Allah, the almighty, has created us to live on earth for a great responsibility, which is to uphold servitude to him, may He be exalted.

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

“And I have not created the jinn and men except that they may worship me” (Al-Dhariyaat:56).

The reality of this servitude suggests that man should live in its purview while its effects should obviously be shown in his behaviours and social interactions.

Servitude to Allah(*azza wajalla*) means complete submission and obeisance to Him, may He be exalted. Obedience to His commands, constants fear of Him, feeling of absolute need of Him, the perpetuation of seeking from Him, show of indigence before Him, trust in Him, and sincerity with love in approaching Him, preferring His love and pleasure to all things...and that all these reflect on the behaviour so that a person's concern becomes to do everything that pleases his Master, and with this comes His mercy, favour, and reward that He promised His pious servants. So his pursuit of everything that brings him closer to paradise and takes him away from hell will increase.

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True servitude to Allah means the predominance of belief in Allah in a man's heart and feelings, so that His love, may He be exalted, becomes his most beloved thing, and His anger is most dreaded and scary thing to him.

He reposes his confidence in Him, trust in Him and in His infinite ability, closeness, knowledge and His encompassing all things. He relies on Him, respects Him, loves Him and longs for Him.

Reliance and trust in Allah(*azza wajalla*), love and fear of Him are evidence of the strength of Imaan in Him and servitude to Him.

Allah says:

﴿وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

***“And upon Allah, then trust in if you are believers”
(Al Maidah :23)***

﴿فَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَوْهُ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

***“Allah is more entitled to fear Him if you are believers”
(At-Tawbah:13)***

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﴿وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

***“And fear Allah if you are believers”
(Al Maidah:57)***

The more Imaan is well entrenched in the heart, the better the behaviour accordingly, as the noble Messenger, Muhammad, said,

“...there is in the body a lump of flesh that if it is sound, the whole of the body will be sound and when it is sick the whole of the body will be sick; listen, it is the heart”

(Reported by Al Bukhari and Muslim).

Imaan is the motivation for righteousness and good behaviour:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ﴾

***“And it does not behove the believers when Allah and His messenger decreed and order for them that they seek for alternative”
(Al-Ahzaab:36).***

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﴿وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“And obey Allah and His messenger if you are believers”

(Al-Anfaal:1)

﴿وَمَنْ يُعِظْمُ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ﴾

“And whoever honours the rituals of Allah, that is one of the piety of the heart”

(Al-Hajj:32)

Worships are Means

If the life of the heart with imaan is the goal by which the servitude to Allah is achieved, then how does a Muslim achieve this goal?

Allah has guided us to the means which naturally will make us achieve this goal. These means are the various forms of acts of worship carried out by both the heart and the body,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾

“O people worship your Lord who created you and those before you that you may fear Him”

(Al-Baqorah:21)

Indeed, worship is the potent medicine that assists the heart in achieving its complete servitude to Allah, the Exalted, the Majestic.

For Salah, in its nature, makes a Muslim feel submissive and humble to his Lord. And it is a great way to reach Him, consult Him and to feel His closeness, to be kind to Him, and to long for Him. The ultimate result of this will be increase in feelings of submissiveness to Allah.



“...then prostrate and draw close”
(Al-Alaqah:19)

“They fall upon their faces weeping and the Quran increases them in humble submission”
(Al-Israah:109)

Thus, the Imaan increases through Salah and its effects manifest in a person's motives and behaviours. Hence, his promptness to do good increases. His inner stamina and resistance to committing sins or approaching them becomes stronger. By so doing the following golden words of Allah come to reality;

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﴿وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ﴾

“And establish the Solaat, indeed, the Solaat forbids immorality and evil”

(Al-Ankabuut:45)

Charity (As-Sodaqah), is a great act of worship that cures the heart from the illness of excessive love and attachment to this ephemera world... That is, it purifies the heart and increases its strength.

﴿خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا﴾

“Take from their wealth a charity that cleanses them and purifies them with it”

(At-Tawbah:103)

Fasting (As-Siyaam) helps a person to control himself and compel him to fear Allah.

﴿كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾

“Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was written for those before you, so that you may have piety.”

(Al-Baqorah:183)

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Remembrance of Allah (dhikr) aims at keeping the remembrance of Allah burning in the heart...to remember His greatness, majesty, glamour and honour so that with it a person increases in Him reassurance, confidence and Imaan

﴿أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ﴾

“Indeed, by the remembrance of Allah the heart find solace”

(Al-Ra'ad:28).

Thus, do we have in the other acts of worship that are carried out by the heart and the body which constitute an integrated system. Through the correct implementation of all these, the lofty goal of our existence on earth is achieved. There is no any act of worship Allah has guided us to except that it stands as a means and a “vehicle” that moves us forward in the direction of being close to Him until we reach the great goal in this world (to worship Allah as if you're seeing Him), glory be to Him. And ultimately, in the hereafter

﴿وَيُنَجِّي اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا بِمَفَازَتِهِمْ﴾

“and Allah will deliver those who feared by their reward”

(Az-Zummar:61)

Preparing the Environment for Achieving the GOAL

Anyone that considers the directions given by the sharia, he will find out that it enjoins and assists us on making the environment conducive for the compatibility of the soul with the worship and consequently through it, Imaan increases. For instance, salah; we see that the sharia enjoins us to free our minds from all preoccupations and detach our souls from all that can affect our concentration in it. When the food is ready at the time for salah, it is preferred that the food is taken so that man will go to salah without his mind being on the food.

In the same vein, when the need to answer the call of nature is pressing, the messenger of Allah(SAW) said: *“There is no salah when the food is ready and when one needs to answer the call of nature.”*

It is not proper that a person hastens his steps while going to the mosque to join the salah, instead he should go with calmness and ease. Rushing will naturally make him join the salah when he is already disturbed and will be difficult for him to bring his mind together.

Urging to go to the mosque early before iqamah for salah is said has its role of getting the mind settled and away from the worldly preoccupations.

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Also urging people to remember death before salah is naturally to excite the feeling towards hoping and longing for the pardon of Allah and fear and scary of his punishment.

He(SAW) says: *“Remember death in your salah, because if a man remembers death in his salah, he will be willing to perform it excellently and perfectly; and observe the salah of a man who does not think he will perform another salah.”*

All this prepares the Muslim to have benefits from his salah and the recitation of the Qur'an, dhikr and supplication therein, in achieving its goal of increase in Imaan and perfection of moral disposition.

Absence of Vision:

In the absence of this kind of vision and the goal does not become the essence of performance of worship in any form at all, consequently the fruit of worship will hardly be seen in reality. Therefore, the worshiper will neither progress in the company of those racing to Allah nor experience the sweetness of Imaan or notices any remarkable improvement in his conduct, rather he will remain stagnant.

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The outcome will be that he will be a man of double personality or someone of two contrasting personalities: he will be seen observing numerous salah, fasting, hajj, umrah but on the contrary, seen not being trustworthy (No amanah), not truthful, and in addition he is malicious in his relationship with others and envious of every good he observes in them. He is distressed and worry when anything happens to his wealth and property or any unwholesome thing occurs to him in his life...

This and many other negative manifestations are a pointer to the fact that the person is not benefiting from his worship and his Imaan does not grow in the course of his worship. Hence, awesome impact, which necessarily reforms character and relationship- is not felt from this worship...

Furthermore on this personality, my dear brother and reader, you need to ponder over this saying (of our Prophet)-may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him:

“How many fasting person that his only gains from his fast is hunger and thirst; and how many a person that wakes up in the mid of the night to pray but has no gain save the vigil he keeps¹”

¹Saheeh at-targheeb wat tarheeb 1070

²As-Silsilah As-Saheehah 594

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He (SAW) also said: “...and know that Allah does not accept supplication from the mind that is heedless and occupied by inattentive.”²

He (SAW) again said: “Some group of people will be brought on the day of judgement and their deeds will be like the mountain of Tuhaamah; then they will be ordered to be taken to the Hell, and the people asked: 'O messenger of Allah, did they not observe salah? He replied: yes, they did observe salah, fast and take portion of the night (in prayer) but when any worldly thing came their way, they jumped at it’”

The main goal of worship is not just observing it mechanically, but the necessary and more important thing is observing it in a way that it will achieve its purpose and goal; for instance, the main purpose of slaughtering of animal during the hajj rites is to increase Imaan and piety and not just the blood that is being shed.

﴿لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ
الْعَقَوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ﴾

(It is neither their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah, but it is piety from you that reaches Him...)

Al- Hajj 37

³Abu Na'eem in Hilyah..

The first thing is making the Deed Excellent:

We can say from the above that it is necessary we make the deed excellent to achieve the purpose of worship through it and increase Imaan in the heart.

Al-Hafiz bn Rajab says on this:

“The early Muslims (Salaf) were known for excellence in their deeds and perfecting and not for engaging in numerous deeds (without excellence). Verily, a few deeds performed with excellence and perfection is better than so many deeds performed heedlessly and lacking in perfection”.

A salaf said: “Verily two people will be in a roll for salah and (the difference in their reward) between their salah is like what is between the heaven and earth”.

This made Ibn Abbas and others say: ”Two rak'ah of salah observed in a sober reflection is better than keeping **vigil** in salah with heedless heart”.

This is because the heart is the area of Allah's surveillance, thence the acts and deeds are valued and rated in the sight of Allah according to the value of what is in the hearts in terms of Imaan, love, sincerity, and His fear, and with the consideration of these deeds being in consonance with the Islamic sharia.

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It is a fact that the journey to Allah and closeness to Him is only through the hearts; and the means to achieve that is the worships(Ibadaah) and righteous deeds as contained in the Qur'an and Sunnah. In order to reap total benefit from these means in the actualization of the goal, there must be perfection of the means (Ibadaah) and the participation of the heart in it, must be the utmost concern too.

However, if our concern in relating with these means-worship-is our goal, then the concern of man will just be to observe these acts of worship as many as possible in any form without the presence of the heart and without benefiting from them. Thus, positive impact of the ibadaat and righteous deeds will be missing in the life of individual.

Let the Reality Speak:

Perhaps, the contemporary situation of the Muslims is the best example to show that there is a missing link between worship and its impacts. Regardless of the number of the Muslims that observe salah in the mosques and despite the numerous voluntary fast, sadaqah, voluntary hajj and umrah that are performed, the impacts of all these acts of worship are not felt.

How easy is it to see a Muslim who observes salah telling lies to gain a favour or avoid a danger! How

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often do we see perfect recitals of the Qur'an that err in relating with his family and raining curses upon curses on them!...and how often and how often..?!

The dichotomy between worship and its impact can only be traced back to unpleasant relationship with the worship because it is taken out of context and restricted to mechanical aspect alone. Perhaps the reasons for this relationship may include:

-Emphasis on the hadiths on virtues of deeds without linking the deed to its purpose in achieving servitude to Allah alone and increasing in Imaan.

-Ease in **observing** mechanical acts of worship/obedience. Efforts in achieving the cohesion of the heart and the body together requires struggle that many may not want to make; hence, they easily revert to this erroneous relationship.

-Feeling of happiness and self satisfaction for observing many(in number) acts of worship. It is observed that whenever someone is successful in completing an act of worship, he feels happy within himself and this feeling motivates him to continue in this sense.

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Perhaps the best typical example on this is the recitation of Qur'an in Ramadan; competition to complete as many Quran as possible without understanding and reflection is one of the causes of the feeling of achievement and satisfaction that every time a Muslim finishes a complete Qur'an, it propels him to start and quickly complete another one in haste and so on...

Earning Rewards:

Our reasons for observing Ibadaah without paying attention to its essence are numerous, though the most important of these reasons is the desire to earn reward due from it. For example, recitation of the Qur'an - that is a great worship which naturally revives, lightens and heals the heart from its ailments-has turned to words that are being read without understanding and reflection among many Muslims that read it. The reading of the Qur'an rather becomes the goal which is to cover the whole of the book (Fatihah to Nas) in the most limited time possible in order to acquire reward.

That is to akin to the saying of the Prophet (SAW) that: *"Whoever reads a letter from the Qur'an will have the reward of a righteous deed, the righteous deed will be in ten manifold; I do not say alif lam mim a letter but alif is a letter laam is a letter and mim is a letter"*⁴

⁴ Saheeh Al-Jaami'I as-Sagheer (6469)

It is astonishing that numerous verses of the Qur'an and hadith discuss reflection and pondering the Qur'an to acquire knowledge, guidance and healing; and also rebuke whoever reads it without understanding and reflection. Among these evidences are the following:

﴿كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ
أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

'(This is) a Book (the Qur'an) which We have sent down to you, full of blessings that they may ponder over its verses, that men of understanding may remember
Sod 38:29,

'Do they not then think deeply in the Qur'an, or are their hearts locked up (from understanding it)
Muhammad 47:24,

﴿وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخْرُؤْا عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا﴾

'And those who, when they are reminded of the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of their Lord, fall not deaf and blind there at'.
Al-Furqaan 25: 73,

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Also ponder the saying of the Prophet(saw) to Abdullah bn Amr bn Al-Aas explaining to him the reason for forbidding reciting the Qur'an in less than three days: 'He will not comprehend it, he who reads it in less than three'⁵,

One day, the Prophet(SAW) saw some companions reading the Qur'an and he said to them:: 'Praise be to Allah..Allah's book is one and the notable ones are among you so also the white and the black. Read the Qur'an, read before some groups will come and read it; they will read it perfectly without error and pronounce its letters from its place of articulation(and with its complete characteristics) the way arrow is perfectly placed in bow, but their recitation does not go beyond their throat (in terms of reward) they hasten for its reward and do not long for it (on the day of judgement)''⁶

Among his sayings, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him is this: *“When anyone of you wakes up in the night and reads the Qur'an with his tongue and he does not know what he is reading, he should then leave and sleep”*⁷

⁵Saheeh Al-Jaami' As-Sagheer 1157

⁶Ibn Majah related it in hos Saheeh

⁷Saheeh Al-Jaami' As-Sagheer 717

When the verses in surat Al-Imraan: Al-Imraan 90: ***“Verily, in the creation of the heavens and earth and the alternation of the night and day are signs to people of reason.”*** was revealed to the Prophet(SAW) he said: 'woe to whoever reads these verses and does not ponder over it’⁸

Also let's reflect together on his(saw) saying: *“There will be differences and sects in my community, a group of people that makes excellent their saying but engages in evil deeds, they read the Qur'an but it does not go beyond their throat”*⁹

The sayings of the companions on the necessity of reflecting upon the Qur'an are numerous, among which is the saying of Abdullah bn Mas'ud:” Don't rush in the reading of the Qur'an like the rush in the song, and don't hasten in its reading like the scatter of a dry or rotten date fruit, stop at its amazements, let the hearts be impacted by it, and not let your concern in the Surah be getting to its end’¹⁰.

And the saying of Aliy bn Abi Taalib:” There is no good in the recitation of the Qur'an without pondering over it”

⁸Related by Ibn Hibban in his Saheeh

⁹Related by Imam Ahmad in his Musnad

¹⁰Abu Dawud

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Also the saying of Al-Hasan bn Aliy:” Read the Qur'an as much as it forbids you, because if it does not forbid you, you are not reading it”

A man said to ibn Abbas: “I read fast, I read the Qur'an in just three days. He then told him: for me to read Baqarah for a night and I ponder over it and I read it with slow speed is more beloved to me than I should read as you have said.”

This is sayyidah Aishah (RA) listening to a man reciting the Qur'an with speed, and she said: this one did not read anything and he did not keep quiet.”

So, the texts that affirm the necessity of reflecting , understanding and reciting the Qur'an correctly are many. So, why is the focus only on the Hadiths that list the rewards for reading only and not others?!

Undoubtedly, one of the objectives of reciting the Qur'an is to obtain reward, but then through conscious reflective reading that increases Imaan and reminds the reader of what he should do or avoid, then the Qur'an becomes an argument for him not against him.

Ibn al-Qayyim says: “If people knew what is in reading the Qur'an with reflection, they would have worked on it other than anything else. So, reciting a verse with

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reflection is better than a complete Qur'an without pondering and understanding, and it is more beneficial to the heart and it calls for believing it and tasting the sweetness of the Qur'an”.

(Miftahu daari's-Sa'aadah –Ibnu'l-Qayyim)

Where is the Fruit?

We are used to fast reading and the concern of everyone of us to complete reading the Qur'an to the end, and some of us are even competing in the number of times they would complete the Qur'an especially in Ramadan. But what real benefit do we obtain from that?! What did Qur'an change in us?! What improvement occurred in our morals and our interpersonal relationships as a result of the frequent reading with tongue and throats only?

Excellence, then how much

The meaning of this statement is not abstinence in earning reward and merits accruable from worships, rather, the aim is excellence in worship first, with diligent efforts to achieve presence of mind and soul in it. Then we can multiply it as much as we can, therefore we are able to combine the two things and obtain the double good.

- 1) Besides, the reward obtainable from deeds is closely related to the presence of mind while performing them.

Ibn al-Qayyim says: “Every statement that the law Giver(Allah) has prescribed reward for, is nothing but a complete statement, as the saying of the Messenger(SAW) :Whoever says in a day: “Glory and Praise be to Allah a hundred times, his shortcomings are erased, or his sins are forgiven even if they are as much as the Sea Foam ”. This is not due to the statement on the tongue only.

Yes, he who says it with his tongue oblivious of its meaning, reluctant to contemplate it, and his heart does not align with his tongue, and does not know its value and its reality, and with that is still hoping for its reward, his sins shall be erased according to what is in his heart; this is because deeds are not distinct by their forms and number, rather they are distinct by what is in the hearts. So the form of two actions could be the same and there may be distinction between them as between the heaven and earth, and two men could be standing in the same row and the difference between their prayer (Salah) is like the distance between heaven and earth. (Madaariju's-Saaliin-'Ibnu'l-Qayyim)

Correct Understanding First

The correct understanding of the objectives of acts of worship, that they are indispensable means for reviving the heart with Imaan, is the first step on the path to really benefit from those acts of worship, and a result of that understanding-with Allah's permission-will be the search for how to excellently perform the worship.

In prayer(Salah), the concern will be the presence of the heart in it, and this calls for getting to the mosque early, contemplation of the verses that are recited, calmness in bowing and prostrating, much consultation, supplication, devotion and(so on).

And in the remembrance of Allah , Dhaakir (he who remembers his Lord) associates it (remembrance) with contemplation, and he will seek forgiveness , remembering his sins and shortcomings against Allah, regretting the past misdeeds, appreciating the greatness of whom he has offended (Allah), and acknowledging the glory of Allah , he contemplates the manifestation of the greatness of Allah, His ability and creativeness; as HasanAl-Basri says;

“The people of reasoning go back and forth between Dhikr (remembrance of Allah) and Fikr (contemplation), until they examined the heart and it

(the heart) uttered word of wisdom.”
(Ihyaahu 'uluumi'd-Diin=Al-Ghazaali)

That we avoid the loss of blessings of Ramadan

If we bring this concept to Ramadan, then we shall relate with it differently from before , and we will strive to truly benefit from it.

This month presents the golden opportunity to revive the heart and develop it with Imaan and set it off on the journey to Allah, due to the various acts of worship that gather in it, such as fasting, qiyaam layl, reciting the Qur'an , sadaqah, 'i'tikaaf, dhikr, 'Umrah, and(so on).

These acts of worship, if we renew our relationship with them, will have great impact in reviving the heart, illuminating it and preparing it to embark on the greatest journey..”Journey to Allah”.

But if the way it is done is just by way of formality, then the situation will remain as it is: morality remains morals, souls are souls, concerns are concerns...reality is reality; and the complaint of *futur* (religious apathy), waning of determination and clinging to earthly affairs will be rampant after Ramadan.

Cool Booty

Perhaps, one of the most important things that help a Muslim –with permission of Allah–to benefit from Ramadan is his awareness that this month is like a (cool booty) through which he can awaken Imaan and renew it in his heart and have provision of piety. No doubt this booty cannot be understood by him through mere performing the forms of worship without the heart getting involved in it, and this calls for freeing–to a certain extent –from the concerns that whisper to his mind and distract him from concentration of the mind and response of the soul to the performance of worships.

The matter also requires that the body is not stressed beyond capability, for the more the body is stressed, the more difficult the worship becomes and its positive impact on the soul would be lost.

Unfortunately, some people think that performing the supererogatory acts of worship –such as qiyaam layl– while in a state of physical exhaustion and tiredness is better than not doing it, because if he abandons it temporarily, he will miss that supererogatory act with the congregation. This –undoubtedly–is as a result of lack of understanding of the correct meaning of servitude (to Allah), and his(saw) saying on this: “if one

of you gets up in the night , and pronounces the Qur'an with his tongue, and he does not know what he says , let him go and lie down”. This does not mean to quickly surrender to feeling of tiredness and exhaustion , but it is necessary to give the body its right to rest so that we can- with the help of Allah = perform worship and our minds and hearts are present with it as much as possible.

And you-my dear brother, reader-reflect on the Almighty Allah's saying :

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرُبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ
تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ﴾

***“O you who believe! Approach not As-Salaat (the prayer) while you are in a drunken state until you know (the meaning) of what you utter...”
(An-Nisaa' 43).***

In the gradual process in the prohibition of drinking alcohol, the instruction was not to drink it before the salah so that consciousness would not be lost and that the worshiper would not know what he is saying; this means that focusing on salah and understanding what one says or hears is a matter that is necessary to achieve its intended purpose.

• **Ramadan: *Let's Avoid The Loss!*** •

What do you say about someone who joins the salah while he is absent-minded and is drowsy, then begins the salah behind the Imam by raising his hands with Takbiir, then he is brought back to consciousness suddenly by the salutation (tasliim)? Does this way increase Imaan and taqwa?!

In Ramadan, working with our souls is the most important duty.

If you say: but what would I do? While in Ramadan, there is (my) service to man and the society that will have negative effect on performing my Ibadah in an excellent manner?

Indeed, working in the midst of people is needed to direct and call them to Allah, helping them, doing good to them. For a Muslim to benefit from this, he must begin with living imaan and a pure soul; if this does not happen, then, the result is negative just like the prophet said:

The similitude of the one who teaches goodness but forgets himself is like a lamp lightening up for people but burning itself.

Ar Rafi'y said:

“the greatest of mistakes is to organize the lives of the people surrounding you while leaving chaos in your heart.”

• **Ramadan: *Let's Avoid The Loss!*** •

The month of Ramadan is a great opportunity for recharging the heart with belief, training the soul and purifying it. If this opportunity is lost by a Muslim, what will be the state of his heart and Imaan?

Whoever does not revive his heart in Ramadan, when will he revive it?

Whoever does not increase in Imaan in Ramadan, when will he increase?

From here, we will say it is important for us to benefit in Ramadan on a personal level more than a collective one, so that we will be able to perform our societal responsibilities throughout the year.

This does not mean that one should be fully dissociated from people, rather, the intent is to reduce the dosage. This requires us to terminate what can be terminated among our social responsibilities and services before Ramadan or in it, and to –as much as possible– minimize our family visitations and general fast breaking sessions*. Why not so? Ramadan has limited days and quickly they vanish.

*Note: what the author is saying is that we should give priority to personal worship than just attending social functions for the sake of it. When we attend a social function, it has to be for the purpose of increasing good deeds and not just to be there

• **Ramadan: *Let's Avoid The Loss!*** •

Verily, the Prophet used to go for i'tikaaf in the last ten days of Ramadan every year. In the year he died, he spent twenty days alone in I'tikaaf Or two third of a month. What else can you say? What proof do you have to justify your lax in focusing on Ibadah and gaining more reward from your organized Ibaadah in the month of Ramadan ?

A well planned time table for social activities, helping others, time consciousness and management help –bi iznillah- in achieving the interest of the needy, without affecting the real goal to be achieved in Ramadan, and by this, we earn two goodness.

Al Banna emphasizes:

To you I present –my dear reader- a statement of Al Imam Al Mujaddid Hassan Al Banna (rahimahullah). This is part of his well-known weekly lesson (Tuesday's Talk), he said emphatically:

Dear brothers: I salute you with the greeting of Islam, a pure and blessed greeting from Allah; may the peace of Allah, mercy and blessings be upon you:

• **Ramadan: *Let's Avoid The Loss!*** •

This night, in the last part of Sha'ban, we will end this series of talk about reviewing the Quran –the book of Allah the most High-. And if Allah wills, we will return to it in the first ten days of Shawwal. We will use that to begin a new season of our lectures and its topic will be: "Reviewing the prophet's story and the Islamic history."

“Having said this, my dear brothers; Ramadan is a month of emotions, spirituality and turning to Allah.

One of the things I know about the Salaf is that when Ramadan approaches, they would bid themselves farewell until they meet on Eid day at the prayer ground, and their feeling is:

This is a month of ibaadah, month of fast and prayer; we want to free it for our Lord. My dear brothers, the truth is that I tried to create a chance for our Tuesday Talk in Ramadan but I did not see a befitting time. If we indeed spent most of our time this year on reviewing the Quran, I will love that we spend Ramadan in applying what we reviewed.

My dear brothers-

“We have spoken a lot about emotions of love and brotherhood upon which Allah brought us together, which is one of its fruits is these meetings for Allah. Since we will not be allowed this meeting for four weeks or more, it does not mean we should subside the emotions or make it fade away. Neither should we forget what makes our hearts and feelings overflow in these beautiful sittings of the great meaning of affection and brotherhood in Allah.

Rather, I believe it will remain exemplary and radiant in our souls till we have another noble meeting after this holiday Insha'Allah. So, if anyone comes for Ishai next Wednesday, I am hopeful he will supplicate for goodness for his brothers, don't forget this. I will also like you to remember that if our feelings will be thirsty for this meeting again in the coming weeks; I would love to let you know that it will be quenched with a better, perfect and greater fountain. And that is your attachment to Allah the Most High. It is the best a believer should aim for himself in this life and the hereafter.”

In closing, we ask Allah –The Majestically High- to benefit us with this noble month and make us amongst

• **Ramadan:** *Let's Avoid The Loss!* •

those He has forgiven and set free from hell fire.

And all praise is due to Allah, The Lord of the universe.

O Allah! Bless our leader (Muhammad), and his household and all his companions.

