

E-Book

Restraint...

How to adjust yourself ?



Sheikh

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Introduction

All praises are due to Allaah and peace and blessings be upon His prophet Muhammad and his family and companions.

To proceed:

Allaah has created the human Nafs (self/soul) and what it conceals. Allaah Says (what means): *{And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it. And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness.}* [QUR'AAN 91: 7-8].

He created the Nafs with such precision and secrecy in a way that proves His unity. It includes love and hatred, anger and contentment, advancement and restraint, and all the various feelings and emotions of the human Nafs.

The Muslim must advance in good and refrain from evil, especially in this day and age where trials and desires are in abundance.

So the Muslim must have restraint that curbs him from these evils and helps him to stand in opposition against them.

So, what is restraint and what are its various forms? What are the reasons of weakness in restraint? How can a Muslim strengthen his restraint? All these questions will be answered in this booklet.

We ask Allaah to inspire us in guidance and protect us from the evil of ourselves.

What is restraint?

Allaah, the Almighty created the human Nafs (self or soul) with two main strengths, which are: the strength of advancement and the strength of restraint. The strength of advancement must be directed to the things that are of benefit to the person in this life and the Hereafter. As for the strength of restraint, this must be used to abstain from what harms the person. The Muslim should naturally be disposed to advance in good and restrain from evil. This restraint is like a rein that holds the Muslim back from all evil.

Therefore, restraint is the Muslim's curb which prevents him from committing or indulging in evil, sins and non-beneficial matters. The stronger the restraint is, the better the Muslim can oppose his forbidden desires, temptations and trials. Some people have patience with the discomfort of worship but have no patience when it comes to avoiding sins, and vice versa.

For example, many people have the patience to stand in night prayers in the cold and heat, and have patience with the discomfort of fasting, but do not have the patience to restrain themselves from gazing at what is forbidden. Many other people have the patience to restrain from indulging in the forbidden gaze, but do not have the patience to enjoin good and forbid evil or to combat the disbelievers and hypocrites.¹ However, the best people are the ones who have patience with both categories.

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

"The discomfort, or extent of patience, depends on how strong the impulse to perform a particular action is, and

¹ Reported by Ibn Al-Qayyim in his book 'Iddat As-Saabireen (10-11).

how easy it is for the person to perform. When both these elements are combined in a deed, the effort of patience is heavy upon the person. If they are non-existent, then it is easy to be patient.

If only one of these elements is missing, then it is somewhat easy to have patience and somewhat difficult at the same time.

For example, if there is no impulse to commit murder, theft, drinking alcohol or any other types of obscenities, and it is not easy for a person to act on it, then it is very easy for a person to have the patience to restrain from it.

As for someone who has the impulse to perform an obscenity, and for whom it is easy to carry out, it is very difficult for them to have the patience to practice restraint.

Therefore, the sultan's patience in restraining himself from committing oppression, the young person's patience in restraining themselves from indulging in obscenity, and the wealthy person's patience in not giving in to desires and pleasures, all have a higher rank with Allaah the Almighty.

It is because of this that the seven people who will be shaded by Allaah on the Day of Judgment will truly deserve the distinction because of all the patience and trouble they endured.

The patience of the governing leader in being just and fair in distributing riches, in his rulings, and in his pleasure and anger; and the young man's patience in worshipping Allaah and opposing his own desires;

and the patience of the man who is attached to the mosque; and the patience of the person who gives in charity hiding it from even his other hand; and the patience of the one who is invited to obscenity, with [the further temptation of] the caller's beauty and rank; and the patience of the ones who love each another for the sake of Allaah whether they are together or separated; and the patience of the one who weeps out of fear of Allaah in private without showing it to people: all these examples are of the most severe patience.

Thus, having patience in restraining oneself from the sins of the tongue and private parts is the most difficult type of patience, due to the strong need and ease of committing them.

The sins of the tongue, such as slandering, backbiting, lying, quarrelling, complimenting oneself explicitly or implicitly, slandering those one hates and praising those one loves etc. constitute a kind of enjoyment to people.

In all these cases, there is a strong urge and also ease for the tongue to utter sinful words, which is why patience weakens. Therefore, one may find someone who performs prayers in the night, fasts during the day, and does not use silk upholstery because of his asceticism; yet he freely backbites and slanders people.

There are also people who abstain from every minute prohibition, such as a drop of alcohol or impurity as diminutive as a needle's tip, but they openly commit what is clearly forbidden; their example is like that of a man, alone with a non-Mahram woman whom he wants to have

intercourse with, and to whom he says: 'Cover your face, as it is forbidden to look at a non-Mahram woman's face.'

A man once asked 'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, about killing a fly. He said: 'Look at these people, asking me about a fly's blood when they have killed the son of the daughter of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam!'''

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy on him, continued:

"Something similar to this happened to me when I was in the state of Ihraam and a group of A'raab (Bedouins) approached me, who were infamous for killing people and seizing property. They asked if a person in the state of Ihraam could kill lice. I replied: 'How strange are the ones who do not abstain from killing souls that Allaah has forbidden to kill, but ask me if they can kill lice when in the state of Ihraam.'"¹

¹ Reported by Ibn Al-Qayyim in his book 'Iddat As-Saabireen (55-57).

The Difficulty of Restraint

Restraining oneself from committing obscenity is difficult and being patient when abstaining from forbidden acts is a hardship. Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, said: "*Paradise is surrounded by hardships and Hellfire is surrounded by lusts and desires.*"¹

Al-Haafith ibn Hajar, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

"The meaning of hardships here is: what the Mukallaf (religiously responsible or accountable person) has been commanded to fight himself against committing and avoiding, such as performing worship as it should be done, continuing with it, and avoiding what Allaah has forbidden in speech and action. They have been called hardships due to the trouble and difficulty they cause for the person. The meaning of lusts and desires is: all the enjoyment of this life that Islam has forbidden either due to the act itself or because committing the act shall lead to abandoning a commandment. It is like saying, you cannot reach Paradise without performing the hard and troublesome acts called hardships and you cannot reach Hellfire without giving into desires, and they are both concealed so whoever violates the cover enters or breaks through."²

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam, said: "*When Allaah created Paradise and Hellfire, He sent Jibreel [Archangel*

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (6487) and Muslim (2822).

²Fat-h Al-Baari (11/320).

Gabriel], may Allaah exalt his mention, to Paradise, saying: 'Look at it and at what I have prepared therein for its inhabitants.' So he came to it and looked at it and at what Allaah had prepared therein for its inhabitants. So he returned to Allaah and said: 'By Your Glory! No one hears of it but would strive to enter it.' So He ordered that it be encompassed by forms of hardship, and He said: 'Return to it and look at what I have prepared therein for its inhabitants.'

So he returned to it and found that it was encompassed by forms of hardship. Then he returned to Him and said: 'By Your Glory! I fear that no one will enter it.' He said: 'Go to Hell-fire and look at it and what I have prepared therein for its inhabitants.' He found that it was in layers, one above the other. Then he returned to Him and said: 'By Your Glory! No one who hears of it and [does what makes him deserving to] enter it.' So He ordered that it be encompassed by lusts [or desires]. Then He said: 'Return to it.' And he returned to it and said: 'By Your Glory! I fear that no one will escape from entering it."¹ This is due to the hardships of troublesome obligations, fighting oneself and desires.²

So, restraining yourself with the curb of fearing Allaah comes with struggle and patience. Abu Dardaa', may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "Knowledge comes only through learning; insight comes only through persistent study. Only those who search for the

¹ Reported by Abu Daawood (4744) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

² Reported by Al-Mubaarakpoori in his book Tuhfat Al-Ahwathi (7/237).

good will be given it. Only those who want to protect themselves will be protected.¹ Abu Sa'eed Al-Khudri, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*Whoever tries to be patient. Allaah will give him patience, and no one is given a better or vaster gift than patience.*"² His saying: "*Whoever tries to be patient. Allaah will give him patience*" means that Allaah shall strengthen the person and enable him to fight himself until it surrenders to enduring hardship and trouble. When this is achieved Allaah is with that person and he shall reach his purpose.

Ibn Al-Jawzi, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

"Patience is the best gift, as it means to restrain oneself from doing what one would like to do, and obliging oneself to do what one dislikes at the present moment; because the performing or abandoning of an action would harm one in the future."³

You should be aware that being patient in restraining oneself from what is forbidden, even if it is difficult to do, is succeeded by pleasure and comfort on the Day of Judgment. Allaah Says (what means): {*And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allaah is with the doers of good.*} [QUR'AAN 29: 69]

So being patient when it comes to forbidden things is challenging in the beginning, but it is better than consuming Ghisleen (the filth

¹ Reported by At-Tabaraani in his book Al-Awsat (2663) and Al-Albaani ruled it as sound (Hasan).

² Reported by Al-Bukhaari (1469) and Muslim (1053).

³Fat-h Al-Baari (11/304).

that comes from washing wounds) and Dharee' (a poisonous thorny plant) on the Day of Judgment. Some people who are offered a small sum as a bribe will refuse it, but when offered a large sum, are unable to resist the temptation.

How beautiful was the reaction of Ka'b ibn Maalik, May Allaah be pleased with him, when he refused the temptation that was offered to him. This happened when he stayed behind while the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and the Muslims fought in the battle of Tabook. Upon their return, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and his Companions kept away from him, and of this period

Ka'b ibn Maalik, may Allaah be pleased with him, said:

"The people began to avoid us and their attitude towards us changed and it seemed as if the whole atmosphere had turned against us, and it was in fact the same atmosphere of which I was fully aware and in which I had lived (for a fairly long time). We spent fifty nights in this very state... As I was walking in the bazaars of Madeenah, a man from the Syrian peasants, who had come to sell food grains in Madeenah, asked people to direct him to Ka'b ibn Maalik. People pointed towards me. He came to me and delivered a letter from the King of Ghassaan, and as I was a scribe, I read that letter whose purport was: 'It has been conveyed to us that your friend (the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) was treating you harshly. Allaah has not created you for a place where you are to be degraded and where you cannot find your right place; so come to us and we shall receive you graciously.' As I read that letter I said: 'This, too, is a trial,' so I put it to fire in an oven..."

Afterwards, Allaah, the Almighty, revealed the verses of forgiveness thereby accepting his repentance.¹ Thus, remaining steadfast in the face of temptations was what led to his success and gain. The believer possesses the faith he needs to restrain himself from neglecting Allaah's commands. Al-Hasan Al-Basri, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "The believer encounters things that he admires and he says, 'By Allaah, I yearn for this thing and I need it. However, by Allaah there is no way for me to reach it, as there are barriers between us.' Sometimes, the believer neglects a command of Allaah's and then reprimands himself and determines to never return to it again, by the Will of Allaah."²

The causes of weak restraint

Restraint varies from person to person. Some people have a strong restraint from evil and others have a weak restraint. There are some reasons that lead to weak restraint:

1. **Weak Faith:** Faith is the believer's weapon and it protects the person from committing vice. When a person turns his back on worship and obedience, his faith weakens and therefore he will boldly commit sins. This is why it has been said: "There are three signs of piety: avoiding the discommended desire when one has the ability to fall for desire, devotion to good deeds when one is disinclined to do so, and returning deposits/trusts to their owners when in need of them."³ These three signs indicate that the person's

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (4418) and Muslim (2769).

² Reported by Abu Nu'aym in his book Hilyat Al-Awliyaa' (2/157).

³ Reported by Abu Nu'aym in his book Hilyat Al-Awliyaa' (9/393).

heart is filled with faith and great piety, as he encounters the forbidden but leaves it for the sake of Allaah, and then forces oneself to worship and be obedient when he is disinclined to do so and he returns trusts to their owners when he is in need of them.

2. **Ignorance regarding the Qur'aan and Sunnah:** Being aware of Allaah The Almighty is based on fearing Him, the Almighty and the one who fears Him is careful by accounting for his actions before being accounted for his actions by his Lord. The person is alert, cautious and aware, knowing of himself what others do not. He is always aware and attentive of Allaah and prevents himself from many desires and curbs them with the curb of Sharee'ah so as not to err and go astray. Because of his knowledge of the consequences of anger he controls himself and accustoms himself to patience and enduring harm (from others). This is his way with everything; cautious of the consequences of haste, and instead is calm and deliberate dealing with matters wisely. Allaah Says(what means): *{And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colors similarly. Only those fear Allaah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allaah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving.}* [QUR'AAN 35: 28]. Ibn Jareer, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "He fears Allaah and His punishment by obeying the scholars. Allaah, the Almighty has the ability to do what He wishes and He does what He wishes, and the one who realizes this,

is certain of Allaah's punishment for disobedience. Thus, the person fears Allaah and His punishment.¹

3. **Weakness regarding protecting yourself and fighting against oneself:** The succession of evil thoughts in the heart is what makes them control the person leaving the heart ill. So the Muslim should beware of indulging in these thoughts and not try to fight them or push them away. These thoughts are a difficult matter, as the beginning of good or evil come from a single thought. If you eliminate the thought from the beginning you shall be in control of yourself and overcome your desire, but if the forbidden thoughts overcome, you shall perish. The Nafs contains good thoughts from the Merciful Allaah, satanic thoughts from Satan, and thoughts of the Nafs itself. Whenever reform is carried out in the early stages the matter is easier and simpler, and the quicker someone takes the initiative, reform happens quicker.
4. **A weak fear of Allaah:** Fearing Allaah, the Almighty is the core of faith and it protects the slave from committing the forbidden, and from the pursuit of desires and lusts. "Allaah forbid" is what Yusuf (Joseph), may Allaah exalt his mention, said and Allaah forbade and turned away the plot of the women from him. It is also said by some of the people whom Allaah will shade with His throne on the day when there is no shade but His shade. Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*There are seven*

¹ Reported by At-Tabari in his book Tafseer At-Tabari (20/462).

whom Allaah will shade in His Shade on the Day when there is no shade except His Shade....a man who is called by a woman of beauty and position [for illegal intercourse], but he says: 'I fear Allaah'"¹ It is the true, honest faith in Allaah, the Almighty that yields to its owner the fear of Allaah and being aware of His presence in private and public. These are the main reasons that lead to weak restraint.

The restraint of the believers

There are various types of restraint and forbearance in the believers, according to different situations. Some curb their anger and some restrain from committing sins, whereas others restrain from divorce etc. The following are some of the different forms:

Repressing anger and curbing yourself from taking revenge:

Allaah, the Almighty has praised the believers with many qualities. One of those is repressing anger. Allaah Says (what means): {Who spend [in the cause of Allaah] during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people- and Allaah loves the doers of good} [QUR'AAN 3: 134].

These three great qualities are: restraining and repressing anger, forgiving and pardoning when able to and the third and highest in status is being good to people who treat you badly. Sahl ibn Mu'aath ibn Anas Al-Juhani, may Allaah be pleased with him

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (660) and Muslim (1031).

narrated that his father heard the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, say: "*Whoever suppresses his anger when he is able to vent it, Allaah will call him before all the people on the Day of Resurrection and let him choose whoever of the Hoor Al-'Ayn he wishes.*"¹

'Ali ibn Al-Husayn Zayn Al-'Abideen, may Allaah have mercy on him, had a slave girl who poured water for him to perform ablution. Once, she dropped the jug on his face, thereby injuring him. He raised his head to her so she recited: "Allaah Says (what means): {and who restrain anger}." He said: "I have restrained my anger." She then recited: "Allaah Says (what means): {and who pardon the people}." He said: "I have pardoned you." She then recited: "Allaah Says (what means): {and Allaah loves the doers of good}." [QUR'AAN 3: 134].

He said: "Go, you are free."²

Allaah, the Almighty has commanded His Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, to forgive and pardon. Allaah Says (what means):

- {Take what is given freely, enjoin what is good and turn away from the ignorant} [QUR'AAN 7: 199]
- {And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and there upon, the one whom between you and him is enmity [will

¹ Reported by Abu Daawood (4777) and At-Tirmithi (2021) and Al-Albaani ruled it as sound (Hasan).

² Reported by Al-Bayhaqi in his book As-Shu'ab (10/545) and Ibn 'Asaakir in his book Taareekh Dimashq (41/386).

*become] as though he was a devoted friend.] [QUR'AAN
41: 34]*

Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "This means, repel with your patience the ignorance of those who behave ignorantly with you." He, may Allaah be pleased with him, also said: "He is the man who curses another man and the man who was cursed says: 'If you are truthful, then may Allaah forgive me; and if you are lying, then may Allaah forgive you.'"¹

Allaah's prophets and messengers, may Allaah exalt their mention, were a good example of forgiving and pardoning others. Ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "It is as if I am looking at the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, telling us about a prophet who was hit by his people until he bled. He wiped the blood off his face, saying: 'O Lord, forgive my people as they do not know.'"²

'Urwah ibn Az-Zubayr, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the wife of the Prophet, 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, told him that she asked the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam: "Have you encountered a day harder than the day of the (battle) of Uhud?" The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, replied: *"Your tribes have troubled me a lot, and the worst trouble was the trouble on the day of 'Aqaba when I presented myself to Ibn 'Abd Yaaleel bin 'Abd Kulaal and he did not respond to my demand. So I departed, overwhelmed with excessive sorrow, and proceeded on, and could not relax till I found myself at Qarn At-Tha'aalib where I lifted my*

¹ Reported by Al-Qurtubi in his book Tafseer Al-Qurtubi (15/361).

² Reported by Al-Bukhaari (6929) and Muslim (1792).

head towards the sky to see a cloud shading me unexpectedly. I looked up and saw Jibreel [Gabriel] in it. He called me saying, 'Allaah has heard your people's saying to you, and what they have replied back to you. Allaah has sent the Angel of the Mountains to you so that you may order him to do whatever you wish to these people.' The Angel of the Mountains called and greeted me, and then said: 'O Muhammad! Order what you wish. If you like, I will let Al-Akhshabayn [i.e. the two mountains] fall on them.'" The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "No; rather, I hope that Allaah will let them beget children who will worship Allaah Alone, and will worship None besides Him."¹

Al-Haafith ibn Hajar, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "This Hadeeth shows the Prophet's mercy and sympathy, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, for his people and the extent of his patience and endurance. This corresponds with the Aayah (which means):

- {So by mercy from Allaah, [O Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allaah. Indeed, Allaah loves those who rely [upon Him].} [QUR'AAN 3: 159].

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (3231) and Muslim (1795).

- {And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.} [QUR'AAN 21: 107].¹

Yusuf (Joseph), may Allaah exalt his mention, said to his brothers, after suffering because of them; Allaah Said (what means): {He said, "No blame will there be upon you today. Allaah will forgive you; and lie is the most merciful of the merciful."} [QUR'AAN 12: 92]

Pardoning others leads to a high rank, and brings peace, tranquility and self-respect to the person. It elevates the person's rank to a degree reached only by the most generous people.

The cure of anger:

Anger is one of the weaknesses of humans and leads to Satan controlling the person. So, discovering the ways to curing it is essential, to prevent it and avoid its evils. These are some of the cures:

1. Knowing the virtue of suppressing anger: Knowing the virtue of something should lead to achieving it. Sahl ibn Mu'aath ibn Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him narrated that his father heard the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, say: "Whoever suppresses his anger when he is able to vent it. Allaah will call him before all the people on the Day of Resurrection and let him choose

¹Fat-h Al-Baari (6/316).

whoever of the Hoor Al-'Ayn he wishes.¹ Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *"There is no dose that is more rewarded by Allaah the Almighty than a dose of anger that a slave restrains for His sake."²*

2. **Avoiding the things that cause anger and fighting oneself to drive it away:** Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that a man said to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam: "Advise me". He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *"Do not get angry."* He repeated it a number of times saying: *"Do not get angry."*³ Ibn Rajab, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

¹ Reported by Abu Daawood (4777) and At-Tirmithi (2021) and Al-Albaani ruled it as sound (Hasan).

² Reported by Ibn Maajah (4189) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

³ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (6116).

"The Prophet's saying to the one who asked for advice 'Do not get angry' holds two possible meanings. The first is that: it may be a command to comply with the causes that entail good manners such as; generosity, patience, modesty, humbleness, endurance, the avoidance of harming others, pardoning, forgiving, suppressing anger, smiling at others etc. This includes all beautiful manners, which if people were to acquire and get accustomed to them, would entail the restriction of anger when it results in. The second is that: it could mean, do not act upon your anger when it occurs; instead, fight yourself to avoid implementing and doing what your anger makes you do."

3. **Seeking refuge with Allaah from Satan:** Satan is the source of all trials and evils. Allaah Says (what means): *{And if an evil suggestion comes to you from Satan, then seek refuge in Allaah. Indeed He is Hearing and Knowing.}* [QUR'AAN 7: 200] Sulaymaan ibn Surad, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that two men abused each other in front of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and the face of one of them became red with anger, and his jugular veins swelled (i.e. he became furious). On that, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *"I know a word, which will cause him to relax and all his anger will go away, if he does say it.* If he says: 'I seek

¹ Reported by Ibn Hajar in his book Jaami' Al-'Uloom wa Al-Hikam (145).

refuge with Allaah from Satan.” The angry man said: “Am I mad?”¹

4. **Keeping silent when angry and holding the tongue:** Ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: “*Teach others, make things easy, not difficult. When any of you is in a state of anger let him keep silent, when any of you is in a state of anger, let him keep silent, when any of you is in a state of anger, let him keep silent.*”²
5. **Changing positions:** Abu Tharr, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated: “The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said to us: ‘*When one of you is angry while standing, let him sit down and if his anger goes away that is good; otherwise let him lie down.*’”³
6. **Being aware of the outcome and consequences of anger:** Someone could lose the most precious thing to him in a moment of anger. How many times has anger been the cause of separation or divorce, being deprived of one's children, infringing upon the rights of others and physically assaulting weaker people and brothers in Islaam? Therefore, when a sane person realizes the consequences of

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (6048) and Muslim (2610).

² Reported by Ahmad (2556) and Al-Bukhaari in his book Al-Adab Al-Mufrad (1320) and Al-Albaani ruled it as sound (Hasan).

³ Reported by Abu Daawood (4782) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

anger and what it can result in, they will avoid it. Mu'aawiyah ibn Abu Sufyaan, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that he had delivered a sermon to the people, after cutting off their payment for two or three months. Abu Muslim said to him: "O Mu'aawiyah, this money is not yours, nor your father's, nor your mother's." At that, Mu'aawiyah indicated to the people to stay. He left to wash and then returned. He said: "O people, Abu Muslim mentioned that this money is not mine, nor my father's, nor my mother's. Abu Muslim is right, as I heard the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, say: *'Verily, anger comes from Satan and Satan was created from fire, and fire is extinguished with water, so if you become angry then perform Ghusl [bathe].'*

Take your payment with the blessing of Allaah, the Almighty."¹

Mubaarak ibn Fadhaalah, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated that Suwaar ibn 'Abdullaah came with a delegation from Basrah to Abu Ja'far, may Allaah have mercy on him. Suwaar said:

¹ Reported by Abu Nu'aym in his book *Hilyat Al-Awliyaa'* (2/130) and Al-Albaani ruled it as inauthentic.

"I was with Abu Ja'far, may Allaah have mercy on him, when a man came and he sentenced him to death. I said to myself, how can he kill a Muslim man when I am present?! So I said: 'O Ameer Al-Mu'mineen (Leader of the Believers), shall I tell you a Hadeeth that I heard from Al-Hasan? He said: 'What is it?' I said: 'I heard him say: "On the Day of Judgment, Allaah the Almighty shall assemble people on one plain where they shall all hear the caller and see him. A caller shall then call: 'Whoever has a good deed with Allaah should stand. The only ones who are to stand are the ones who pardoned (in this life).' Abu Ja'far, may Allaah have mercy on him said: 'Swear to me that you heard this from Al-Hasan.' I said: 'By Allaah, I heard this from him.' He said: 'I have pardoned him' [the man whom he had sentenced to death]."

A man was reminded with a verse from the Qur'aan that led him to give up his oppression: It has been narrated that Ziyaad arrested a man from the Khawaarij but he escaped from him. So he arrested the brother of that man and said to him: "Bring me your brother or I shall cut your neck." He said: "If I bring you a letter from Ameer Al-Mu'mineen will you let me go?" He said: "Yes." The man said: "Then I will bring you a letter from The Most Wise Allaah, and I will bring two witnesses called Ibraaheem (Abraham) and Musa (Moses), may Allaah exalt their mention." He then recited (what means): *{Or has he not been informed of what was in the scriptures of Moses. And [of] Abraham, who fulfilled [his obligations]. That no bearer of burdens will bear the burden}*

¹ Reported by Al-Ghazaali in his book Ihya' 'Uloom Ad-Deen (3/183).

of another} [QUR'AAN 53: 36-38]. Ziyaad said: "Leave him be; this man has strong evidence."¹

One restraint is the fear of being attributed to cowardice:

When the people of Makkah expelled Khubayb to kill him outside of the Haram, he said to the people: "Let me pray two Rak'aat (units of prayer)." So they let him pray two Rak'aat. He then said: "Were it not that you would think I am frightened, I would have lengthened my prayer."² This is a commendable act because he was honorable and glorious through following Allaah's commands. When Al-Mutanabbi returned from Persia on his way to Baghdad and then Kufah, Faatik Al-Asadi and his comrades attacked him, as Al-Mutanabbi had written defamatory poetry about the mother of Faatik. Al-Mutanabbi was with a group of friends, and so they fought them and Al-Mutanabbi was killed along with his son Muhammadi, and his slave Muflah. Narrators mentioned that Al-Mutanabbi fought severely and then tried to flee when he saw that they were defeated. His slave said to him: "Do not let people talk about your fleeing, when you have praised yourself with bravery in your poetry." He said to the boy: "You have killed me (with this speech)," and so he returned and was stabbed by the chief of the people with a spear in his neck. They then surrounded him and stabbed him with spears until he died, taking all his belongings. His poetry was the cause of his death³. This kind of act is disreputable and is part of the Jaahiliyyah (Pre-Islamic era of ignorance).

One of the restraints is good manners:

¹ Reported by Al-Jawzi in his book Al-Athkiyaa' (66).

² Reported by Al-Bukhaari (3045).

³ Reported by Ibn Katheer in his book Al-Bidaayah Wa An-Nihaayah (11/257).

'Abdullaah bin Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him narrated: "I prayed with the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, one night. He stood (in prayer) for so long that I nearly did something bad." He was asked: "What did you nearly do?" He said: "I nearly sat down and left the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam."¹ As-Sindi, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "His saying 'something' means something unbecoming, like 'sitting' in prayer or leaving the prayer, due to the long duration of standing. This was during an optional night prayer. As for the obligatory prayer, one must follow the Imaam in all aspects."²

An-Nawawi, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "From this we understand that one should have manners with the Imaam and people of high status. They should not oppose their action or speech as long as it is not forbidden. The scholars agree that if the person praying behind the Imaam finds it difficult to stand in obligatory or optional prayer then it is permissible to sit. However, Ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, did not sit due to his manners with the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam."³

Another type of restraint is to be considerate of your status (among people) and the fear of people following in your example what is unsuitable:

Musa ibn A'yun, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "Al-Awza'i, may Allaah have mercy on him said to me: 'O Abu Sa'eed, we used to joke and laugh, but when we became an example that people follow, we could only smile.'"⁴

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (1135) and Muslim (773).

² Reported by As-Sindi in his book Haashiyat As-Sindi 'ala Ibn Maajah (3/206).

³The explanation of An-Nawawi on the book of Muslim (6/63).

⁴ Reported by Abu Nu'aym in his book Hilyat Al-Awliyaa' (6/143).

Another type of restraint is not overstepping the boundaries of Allaah:

Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "**Do not prevent women from going to the mosque at night.**" A son of 'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him said: "We should not let them go out as it may turn into immorality and deceit." Ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, rebuked him and said: "I said the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said this and you say prevent them."¹ Na'eem ibn Mas'ood Al-Ashja'i, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that he heard the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, say to them (meaning the messengers of Musaylamah) when he read Musaylamah's letter: "**What do you two say?**" They said: "We say what he says." He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "**By Allaah, if it were not for the fact that messengers are not killed I would have cut your necks.**"² Al-Fadhl ibn Musa, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "Al-Fudhayl was a cunning bandit between Abyoord and Sarkhas, and this is the reason of his repentance: he fell in love with a slave-girl, and while he was climbing a wall to her, he heard someone reciting: Allaah Says (what means): **{Has the time not come for those who have believed that their hearts should become humbly submissive at the remembrance of Allaah and what has come down of the truth? And let them not be like those who were given the Scripture before, and a long period passed over them, so their hearts hardened; and many of them are defiantly disobedient.}** [QUR'AAN 57: 16] He said: 'O Lord, the time has come.' So he returned and when night fell he

¹ Reported by Muslim (442).

² Reported by Abu Daawood (2761).

was in an isolated place. There was a group of men there and some of them said: We must leave, while others said: We should wait until the morning, because Fudhayl is on the road and he will attack us. But Fudhayl repented and left them feeling secure. He lived adjacent to the Haram (the Grand Mosque) until he died.”¹

Another type of restraint is devoutness:

Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, passed by a fallen date on the floor and said: “*If I did not fear it was charity I would have eaten it.*”² When the incident of Ifk (slander and falsehood) occurred and the hypocrites slandered 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her and it started to spread among people, Allaah the Almighty protected Zaynab, may Allaah be pleased with her, from committing a sin (of accusing 'Aa'ishah). 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her said: “The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, used to ask Zaynab bint Jahsh about me. He said: ‘*O Zaynab, what do you know? What did you see?*’ She said: ‘O Messenger of Allaah, I protect my hearing and vision, by Allaah, I do not know anything other than good about her.’”³ 'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her said: “She was equal to me in status and Allaah protected her with devoutness.”³ Zaynab was another wife of the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and she was the one who would compete against 'Aa'ishah with the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. She was devout and was able to overcome the desire of victory and revenge that many women carry out when in a polygynous marriage, which is wrong and aggressive. A slave does not reach true piety until he avoids the permissible so as to not fall into committing the forbidden. It has been said: “We would leave

¹ Reported by Ibn 'Asaakir in his book Taarekh Dimashq (48/382).

² Reported by Al-Bukhaari (2055) and Muslim (1071).

³ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (2661) and Muslim (2770).

seventy doors or ways to what is Halaal (permissible) out of the fear of falling into what is Haraam (forbidden)."¹

Another form of restraint is silence:

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*He who believes in Allaah and the Last Day does not harm his neighbor, and he who believes in Allaah and the Last Day shows hospitality to his guest and he who believes in Allaah and the Last Day speaks good or remains silent.*"² Al-Haafith ibn Hajar, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "His saying: '*He who believes in Allaah and the Last Day speaks good or remains silent*' is a comprehensive phrase because all speech is either good or bad or leads to one of those. Good speech also includes required speech, either obligatory or optional. These are all permissible along with the speech that leads to good speech. Anything other than this is evil or leads to evil, and he commanded that one remain silent when there is the will to utter evil."³

'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*Whoever keeps silent is saved.*"⁴

Ar-Raaghib, may Allaah have mercy on him said: "The Arabic word Samt (muteness) is more eloquent than Sukoot (silence), as it can be used for the person who does not have the strength to utter and for the one who has the strength to utter. This is why the

¹ Reported by Abu Al-Qaasim Al-Asbahaani in his book At-Targheeb wa At-Tarheeb (813) and Ibn Al-Qayyim in his book Al-Madaarij (2/25).

² Reported by Al-Bukhaari (6018) and Muslim (47).

³ Fat-h Al-Baari (10/446).

⁴ Reported by At-Tirmithi (2425) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

dumb person is called Saamit or Musmit. As for Sukoot, it is for the one who can utter words but chooses not to. So, Samt (muteness) is essentially safe but it may be obligatory in the Sharee'ah to speak. The meaning of the Hadeeth is to not speak when it does not concern you and to suffice with the important speech as this will save you.”¹

The mistakes of the tongue are deadly and they come through the speaking, so if a person remains silent everyone is safe. But if he utters and speaks he is endangering himself, unless he has a sincere tongue, sufficient knowledge, protective devoutness and constant observation. One should reduce speech to the minimum to be safe; and even in spite of this, the person can still be in danger. So, if you cannot be one of those who speak and gain benefit from speech, then be one of those who remains silent and is safe, as safety is a great gain. 'Abdullaah ibn Al-Mubaarak, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

“I am taken aback by four kings’ agreement on one phrase. Kisra (of Persia) said: ‘When I say something I regret it, but when I do not say anything I do not regret it.’ Qaysar (Caesar) said: ‘I am more able to disprove what I have not said than to disprove what I have said.’ The king of India said: ‘I wonder at the one who utters a word or a phrase, which, if it prevails (among the people) will harm him and if not, it does not benefit him (in any way).’ The king of China said: ‘If I utter a word, it owns me, but if I do not utter it, I own it.’”²

Ameer Al-Mu'mineen, 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: “The one who speaks excessively, makes mistakes incessantly, and the one who makes incessant mistakes, has little shyness (or shame), and the one who has little shyness has weak

¹ Reported by Al-Ahwathi in his book Tuhfat Al-Ahwathi (7/172).

² Reported by Ibn Al-Muflih in his book Al-Aadaab Ash-Shari'iyah (1/63).

devoutness, and the one who has weak devoutness, has a dead heart.”¹

If the Muslim realizes that every word his tongue utters is something he will be held accountable for, he will reduce his speech to what benefits only. This is why the Companions, may Allaah be pleased with them, were very concerned with accounting themselves for their utterances. Abu Bakr, may Allaah be pleased with him, would hold his tongue and say: “This is what has led me to trouble.”²

‘Alqamah, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated that Bilaal ibn Al-Haarith Al-Muzani, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayhi wa sallam, said: *A man speaks a good word without knowing its worth. Allaah records for him His Good Pleasure till the day he will meet Him; and a man utters an evil word without realizing its importance. Allaah records for him His displeasure till the day he will meet Him.*” ‘Alqamah, may Allaah have mercy on him, would say: “The Hadeeth of Bilaal ibn Al-Haarith, may Allaah be pleased with him, prevented me from speaking many times.”³

Another type of restraint is punishing oneself for neglect, as it protects the person from repeating a wrongdoing:

Ibn ‘Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, missed the congregational prayer, so he prayed the whole night⁴. Ibn Abu

¹ Reported by At-Tabaraani in his book Al-Awsat (2259), Al-Qudhaa’i in his book Musnad Ash-Shihaab (374), Al-Bayhaqi in his book Ash-Shu’ab (4640) and Ibn Hibbaan in his book Ar-Rawdha (44).

² Reported by Maalik in his book Al-Muwata’ (1855), Al-Mubaarak in his book Az-Zuhd (369), An-Nasaa’i in his book As-Sunan Al-Kubra (11841) and Al-Bazaar in his book Al-Musnad (84) and it is an authentic narration.

³ Reported by Ahmad (15852) and At-Tirmithi (2319) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

⁴ Reported by Abu Nu’aym in his book Hilyat Al-Awliyaa’ (1/303).

Rabee'ah, may Allaah have mercy on him, missed the two optional Rak'aat of Fajr and so he set a slave free.¹ The human Nafs is not steadfast without fighting it, holding it accountable and punishing it. Pondering on the history of the pious people helps us to punish ourselves and force ourselves to recompense our deficiencies.

Another type of restraint is fear of the Hereafter:

'Ali ibn Zayd, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "A man from the Quraysh spoke coarsely to 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez may Allaah have mercy on him. He lowered his head for a long time. Then he said: 'You wanted Satan to provoke me because I am the sultan, which would have led me to punishing you. Then you would hold me accountable tomorrow (in the Hereafter).' He then pardoned him."²

Another type of restraint is the fear of seeking to avenge oneself:

'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Azeez, may Allaah have mercy on him, said to a man who had angered him: "If it was not me that you had angered, I would have punished you."³

Another type of restraint is the fear of being associated with something that is inappropriate:

As with the story of Abu Sufyaan, may Allaah be pleased with him:

"Hercules sent for Abu Sufyaan and his companions, who happened to be trading in As-Shaam. They came to him when they were in a place called Eeliyaa'. He invited them

¹ Reported by Ibn Al-Mubaarak in his book Az-Zuhd (528).

² Reported by Al-Bayhaqi in his book Shu'ab Al-Eemaan (7971) and Al-'Askari in his book Taareekh Dimashq (45/205).

³ Reported by Ibn Al-Jawzi in his book Tablees Ibalees (133).

to his palace with his chiefs surrounding him, and he called them along with his translator. Hercules asked: 'Who amongst you is the nearest relative to the man who claims to be a prophet?' Abu Sufyaan replied: 'I am the nearest relative to him from amongst the group.' So they made me sit in front of him and made my companions sit behind me. Then he called upon his translator and said to him: 'Tell them (i.e. Abu Sufyaan's companions) that I am going to ask him (i.e. Abu Sufyaan) regarding that man who claims to be a Prophet. So if he tells a lie, they should contradict him (instantly).' Abu Sufyaan, an arch enemy of the prophet commented: 'By Allaah, had I not been afraid that my companions would consider me a liar, I would have told lies.'"¹

Another type of restraint is the fear of committing something that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, forbade:

Qays said that he went to Khabbaab, may Allaah be pleased with him, and found that he had been tortured and scorched seven times on his stomach. He heard him say: "If it were not for the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, forbidding us to invoke Allaah to grant us death, I would have invoked Him for it."²

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (7) and Muslim (1773).

² Reported by Al-Bukhaari (6349) and Muslim (2681).

Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "If it were not for the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, saying: '*Do not wish death upon yourselves*' I would have wished it."¹

Zaynab bint Abu Salamah, may Allaah be pleased with her, said: "When the news of Abu Sufyaan's death came from As-Shaam, Umm Habeebah, may Allaah be pleased with her, used perfume on the third day and said: 'There would be no need for this, were it not that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, had said: '*It is not lawful for a woman who believes in Allaah and the Last Day to mourn for any dead person for more than three days, except for her husband. [for whom she should mourn] for four months and ten days.*'"²

'Aa'ishah, may Allaah be pleased with her, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said during his illness which he never recovered from: "*May Allaah curse the Jews and Christians who took the graves of their prophets as places of worship – do not imitate them.*" She added: "If it had not been for this, his grave might have been raised above the ground, but it was feared that it would be taken as a place of worship."³

Rafaa'ah ibn Shaddaad Al-Qatbaani, may Allaah have mercy on him said: "If it were not for something I heard 'Amr ibn Al-Hamq Al-Khuzaa'i, may Allaah be pleased with him, say, I would have killed Al-Mukhtaar. I heard him say that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: '*Whoever gives a security [protection]*

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (7233) and Muslim (2680).

² Reported by Al-Bukhaari (1280) and Muslim (1486).

³ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (1390) and Muslim (530).

*to a person and then kills them, a flag of treachery will be raised for him on the Day of Judgment.*¹

Another type of restraint is fear of Allaah and sensing that He is watching one in public and private:

'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab, may Allaah be pleased with him, was patrolling Madeenah one night, checking on how the people were. He got tired and leaned against a wall to rest. He then heard a woman say to her daughter: "Dilute the milk with water, so we have more to sell (i.e. more profit)." Her daughter replied: "'Umar ordered his caller to tell us not to dilute milk with water." The mother then said: "O daughter, you are in a place where neither 'Umar nor his caller can see you." The daughter said, sensing that Allaah The Almighty was watching them: "'Umar is not seeing us, but the Lord of 'Umar is seeing us."²

Another type of restraint is being considerate of the interest of Muslims:

'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "If it were not for the coming Muslims, I would not conquer a village without dividing it amongst its people, just like the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, did with Khaybar."³

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy on him, said he heard Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allaah have mercy on him, say: "At the time of the Tatars, some of my friends and I passed by some drinking alcohol. The people I was with rebuked them and so I stopped

¹ Reported by Ibn Maajah (2688) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

² Reported by Al-Aajuri in his book Akhbaar 'Umar ibn 'Abd Al-'Azeez (48) and Ibn 'Asaakir in his book Taareekh Dimashq (70/253).

³ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (2334).

them and said: 'Allaah has forbidden alcohol as it repels the remembrance of Allaah and prayer. As for these people, alcohol repels them from murdering innocent souls, abducting children and seizing property, so leave them be.'"¹

Another type of restraint is the dislike of divorce:

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*A believing man should not hate a believing woman; if he dislikes one of her characteristics, he will be pleased with another.*"²

An-Nawawi, may Allaah have mercy on him said: "He should not hate her, because if he finds a characteristic of hers that he dislikes, he will find another that pleases him. She may be ill-mannered on the one hand, but religious, beautiful, chaste or kind to him, etc. on the other."³

The good characteristics that he finds in her will prevent him from hating her, and he will pardon her for her ill manners, for instance. He will convince himself with the way she holds onto her religion, prayer, fasting, night prayer and the good upbringing of her children etc. Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, divorced Hafsa, may Allaah be pleased with her. So Jibreel (Gabriel) may Allaah be pleased with him, came to him and said: "O Muhammad, you have

¹ Reported by Ibn Al-Qayyim in his book I'l'aam Al-Muwaqqi'een (3/4).

² Reported by Muslim (2672).

³ The explanation of An-Nawawi on the book of Muslim (10/58).

divorced Hafsaah, and she is devout in fasting and night prayer, and she is your wife in Paradise, so take her back." ¹

Another form of restraint is having children:

'Abdullaah ibn 'Abbaas, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that Mugheeth, may Allaah be pleased with him, was a slave and he asked the Prophet to mediate for him with Bareerah, may Allaah be pleased with her, his wife to return to him. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*O Bareerah! Fear Allaah, as he is your husband, the father of your son.*" She said: "O Messenger of Allaah! Do you command me with this?" He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*No, I am only a mediator.*"²

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, wanted to remind her of what holds her to her husband, which might then lead to her returning to him. He reminded her first that he is her husband. Then he reminded her of the son that Allaah The Almighty has blessed her with. So it is better for her to rethink the matter as the original reason of her marriage (her husband) has no effect in her life. Fearing those bad effects (of divorce) makes many reasonable people who have disagreements with their wives avoid making the decision of divorce. It also makes many righteous and sensible wives endure the difficulty and hardships of life with their husbands.

¹ Reported by Al-Haakim (6754) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

² Reported by Al-Bukhaari (5283) and Abu Daawood (2231).

The different sections of restraint

Restraint is divided into two sections, which are: the restraint that prevents one from giving in to desires, and the restraint that prevents one from falling into a position of doubt and suspicion.

The first section: The restraints that prevent from giving in to desire:

Curbing oneself from giving in to desire is an essential requirement of every Muslim who wishes to pursue the straight path with determination and reason. The prevalence of trials and temptations in society proves that the Muslim is in need of restraint that curbs him from yielding to them. The restraints that curb one from giving into desires are many:

Fearing Allaah The Almighty:

Fearing Allaah the Almighty protects the person from committing the forbidden. As is the case of the three people that entered a cave, the opening of which was blocked by a boulder. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, informed us that one of them said: "O Allaah! I had a cousin who was the dearest of all people to me and I wanted to have sexual intercourse with her, but she refused. Later she came across hard times during a year of famine and she came to me, and I gave her one hundred and twenty dinars on the condition that she would not resist my desires, and she agreed. When I was about to fulfill my desires, she said: 'It is illegal for you to violate my chastity except through legitimate marriage.' So, I realized it was a sin to have sexual intercourse with her and left her, though

she was the dearest of all people to me. I also left the gold I had given her. O Allaah! If I did that for Your sake only, please relieve us from the present calamity. So, the rock moved a little.”¹

Al-Hasan Al-Basri, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

“There was a fornicating woman who had exceeded the people of her era in beauty, and would not let any man sleep with her unless he paid her one hundred dinars. One day, a man saw her and was attracted to her, so he went and worked until he had earned the one hundred dinars, then he came to her. She told him: 'Pay it to the man at the door so that he may count it and weigh it.' When he did this, she told him to enter. She had a luxurious dwelling and a bed made of gold. She told him: 'Come to me.' When he was about to have intercourse with her, he suddenly remembered his standing before Allaah on the Day of Resurrection, so it was as if he was struck with lightning and his desire was put out. He said to her: 'Allow me to leave you, and you can keep the money.' She replied: 'How can you do this now, when you saw me and were attracted to me, and went and worked hard to collect the one hundred dinars, and when you are finally with me, you do what you are now doing?' He said: 'By Allaah! I did not do this out of anything except for the fear of Allaah, and the thought of my standing between His Hands.' She said: 'If you are

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (2111) and Muslim (4926).

truthful in what you say, then I want to marry nobody except you!' He told her: 'Let me leave.' She said: 'No, not unless you promise me that you will marry me!' He said: 'I cannot do anything until I leave first.' She then said to him: 'You must promise Allaah that if I come to you where you live, then you will marry me!' He said: 'Perhaps. We shall see.' So, he put on his clothes, left her, and traveled back to his land. She later traveled to his land with all that she owned – regretting the circumstances under which they had met each other – until she arrived and asked about him. When she arrived at his home, it was said to him: 'The queen herself has arrived and asked about you!' When he saw her, he was in such a state of shock that he collapsed and died. His body fell into her arms, whereupon she said: 'As for him, then I have missed out on the chance to be with him. Does he have any close relatives?' It was said to her: 'Yes, his brother, but he is a poor man.' So, she said to him [the brother]: 'I will marry you out of my love for your dead brother.' She married him and bore for him seven sons."¹

An A'raabi (Bedouin) narrated: "I went out on a dark night and came across a female slave of exceeding beauty. I wanted to have intercourse with her. She said: 'Woe unto you! Do you have no sense to stop you, since you have no religion [i.e. religious commitment] to forbid you from doing so?' I said: 'By Allaah, we

¹ Reported by Ibn Al-Qayyim in his book Rawdhat Al-Muhibeen (447-448).

are seen only by the planets.' She said: 'And what of the One who created the planets?'"¹

Fasting:

Fasting protects the Muslim from committing fornication, which is why the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, guided the Muslims to this cure. 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "We were with the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and he said: "*Whoever among you able to marry, should marry, because it helps him lower his gaze and guard his modesty [i.e. his private parts from committing illegal sexual intercourse etc.], and whoever is not able to marry, should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power.*"²

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy on him, says: "He guided them to the healing cure that was made for this matter, i.e. marriage. He then went on to give them the alternative when one is unable to marry and this is fasting, as it weakens the desire and diminishes it. This desire is strengthened by excessive eating and different types of food and these are the elements that generate desire. However, fasting diminishes it and inhibits it. The desire of those who fast regularly dies out and weakens."³

¹ Reported by Ibn Al-Jawzi in his book Sifat As-Safwa (4/395).

² Reported by Al-Bukhaari (1905) and Muslim (1400).

³ Reported by Ibn Al-Qayyim in his book Rawdhat Al-Muhibeen (219).

Abu Hurayrah, May Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*Fasting is a shield.*"¹ Which means, it is a protection and a screen. Fasting protects the soul from the emergence and eruption of desire, and from committing forbidden acts, as eating strengthens desire. Al-Qurtubi, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "The less a person eats, the weaker his desire gets. Therefore, as his desire weakens, he commits fewer sins."²

Nobility and Chivalry:

A person may avoid committing a sin out of nobility and that is when he reflects on the lowness and contemptibility of the act. When Umm Salamah, may Allaah be pleased with her, wanted to catch up with her husband Abu Salamah, may Allaah be pleased with him, in Madeenah, she said:

"I went out for my husband alone without anyone until I reached At-Tan'eem and found 'Uthmaan ibn Talhah, may Allaah be pleased with him. He said to me: 'Where are you going daughter of Abu Umayyah?' I replied: 'To my husband in Madeenah.' He asked: 'Do you have any one accompanying you?' I said: 'I have none but Allaah and then my son.' He, therefore, said: 'By Allaah! I would not leave you alone.'

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (1894) and Muslim (1151).

² Reported by Al-Qurtubi in his book Tafseer Al-Qurtubi (2/275).

He held the camel's rein and went forward to Madeenah. By Allaah! I have never seen an Arab nobler or more honorable than him. When we had to rest, he tied my camel and then took himself away and sat down under a tree. When we were about to continue on our way, he prepared my camel and then kept himself away at a distance from me and said: 'Now you mount.'

After I mounted the camel, he then came to lead it. He kept on doing that until we reached Madeenah. Then, he went back to Makkah."¹

Chastity, nobility, and chivalry were the characteristics of 'Uthmaan ibn Talhah, may Allaah be pleased with him. He took care of this woman until she reached her husband. He remained chaste by keeping away from her and not seeking her even though the causes were present, such as the secluded place, the distance, ability, strong desire and urge, so what prevented him? 'Uthmaan and other Arabs of his time were ones that valued women and protected their chastity, out of their nobility and chivalry. They were proud of this, as not harming women was a creditable act among the Arabs.

Abu Umaamah, may Allaah be pleased with him narrated:

"A young man came to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and said: 'O Messenger of Allaah! Permit me to commit Zina.' The Companions turned to him and started

¹ Reported by Ibn Hishaam in his book As-Seerah An-Nabawiyyah (2/316).

rebuking him. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: '*Come closer.*' When the young man drew nearer to the Prophet and sat down, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, asked him: '*Would you like it for your mother?*' The man answered: 'No, by Allaah. May Allah make me a protection for you!' The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, commented: '*People also do not like it for their mothers.*' The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, added: '*Would you like it for your daughter?*' Again, the young man answered negatively.

So, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: '*People too would not love it for their daughters.*' Further, the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, asked: '*Would you like it for your sister?*' The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, received the same answer and made the same comment.

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, went on asking about the man's paternal and maternal aunts. The young man's answer was the same and the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, repeated the same comment: '*People do not like that for their aunts.*'

The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, then placed his hand on the young man and prayed for him: '*O Allaah, forgive his sins, purify his heart, and protect*

his chastity.' The young man did not pay heed to any temptation thereafter."¹

A person may avoid committing a sin and curb his desires due to the fear of shame and bad reputation among people. He might think to himself, if I do this people will speak of me disgracefully and contemptuously, and I will become a bad example among them. This will affect my status with them and my children will be disgraced after me. This will lead to him restraining himself from the act.

People may look at a shameful act and the consequences that result from it in this life. They then fear for themselves and abstain from committing the act. A person might think to himself, retribution comes according to your actions and what you do will be done to you. He may hear people say, fornication leads to poverty, and it takes the Noor (light) away from your face leaving it gloomy. It leads to aversion amongst people and there is no sin greater than it after murder. This is why the punishment for it (adultery) is the death penalty in its most severe forms. When this is heard, the person fears the consequences and it diverts him away from what he intended and it may remind him to fear Allaah the Almighty.

The fear of diseases:

Many people may avoid a sin and committing immoral acts out of the fear of being afflicted with disease. This may be the motive that makes many people in the West abstain from fornication.

¹ Reported by Ahmad (21185) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

There is a story that happened regarding this. A woman found that her housemaid's behavior had changed towards her. She found that the maid was raising her voice above her and refusing to take orders. When she mentioned this to her husband he would hasten to defend her, saying she is a poor woman living in a foreign country. His wife then discovered that her husband had an unlawful relationship with the housemaid, and so she remained patient. After a period of time, her husband left the city on a work trip. In this time the wife took the opportunity to send the housemaid back to her country. When he returned he asked his wife about the housemaid. She told him that she had sent her back to her country when she found out that she was afflicted with AIDS. When the husband heard this news he broke down with grief and extreme stress. He lost twenty kilos and would embrace his children with tears streaming down his face as he thought his death was nearing, and he stayed away from his wife so as not to transmit the disease to her. When the wife felt that she had taken revenge, she told him the whole story and the husband confessed that he was wrong. He asked his wife to forgive him, confirming that he would not repeat what he had done. He was good to her after and he became steadfast.

Fear of scandal:

The believer should essentially stay away from sins, out of the fear of Allaah's punishment, the Almighty. However, he may feel tempted to commit sins and weaken with time. And so the fear of scandal can deter him from committing vices. For instance, a young man would surf the internet to benefit from useful websites and would participate with Da'wah (inviting people to Allaah) on forums, however, sometimes he would be tempted to enter pornographic websites, what did he do? He removed the computer from his room and placed it in the living room where it would be on

show to his parents and siblings. So, when he was tempted to go on those bad websites he would prevent himself out of the fear of disgrace. One of the strongest restraints in this day and age is knowing that whatever is saved on computers and cell phones can be retrieved easily even after it has been deleted, as there are special programs designed to retrieve deleted data. A Western technician once said: "People are unaware of how much they reveal of themselves to others through these phones." Things get more serious when we know that retrieving data from computers and phones is done through the use of special programs which are inexpensive and readily available on the internet. This is why someone said, it is better for me to step on my phone crushing it or to place acid on it destroying it rather than sell it. These aspects may aid the youth to restrain from sending shameful and scandalous photos and videos to each other, due to their fear of scandal and disgrace.

Reflecting on the harmful effects of sins:

Yahya ibn Mu'aath, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "The one who pleases his limbs with enjoyment has planted for himself trees of remorse."¹ 'Abd As-Samad Az-Zaahid, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "The one who doesn't know that desires are traps is foolish."²

So, being aware of the evil and painful effects of forbidden matters, places a strong deterrent between the person and the forbidden. It is enough to just consider the calamities and distress that has occurred to others and the previous nations. What expelled Adam and Eve from paradise to earth? It was a sin. What

¹ Extracted from the online economical newspaper, no. (4881).

² Reported by Ibn Al-Jawzi in his book Tham Al-Hawa (27).

expelled Iblees (Satan) from the heavens and rejected, cursed and disfigured him from the inside and outside turning him into the most repulsive form? What replaced his proximity with distance and mercy with a curse, paradise with hellfire? What degraded him making him an obscene perpetrator leading humanity to obscenity and evil? It was a sin. What drowned all the people on earth until the water had surpassed the mountain tops? What brought the barren winds upon the people of 'Aad casting their dead bodies on the earth? What sent the Sayhah(the awful torment-cry) that cut their hearts open? What led the village of Sadoom of the people of Loot (Lot), may Allaah exalt his mention, to be risen into the sky until the angels could hear the barking of their dogs, to be overthrown from top to bottom, followed by rocks falling upon them, turning it into a lifeless rancid place? What sent the torment of shadow (a gloomy cloud) upon the people of Shu'ayb, may Allaah exalt his mention, so that when it was above their heads it showered them with flames of fire? What drowned Fir'awn (Pharaoh) and his people in the sea, sending their souls to hellfire where they are exposed to the fire morning and evening? Bodies are drowned, and souls burnt but their judgment is on the day of Resurrection.

Pondering on the pains and calamities that are brought on by committing sins leads to piety even if those sins yield a temporary pleasure. A man had unlawful intercourse with a woman, and she got pregnant. The man was in perplexity at what to do, should he marry her and then expose his disgrace to his family? Or should he abort the child in her womb, which is an even greater crime? Or should he abandon her and the child? It caused calamity, pain, sin, and remorse. If the man had pondered on these points beforehand it would have led him, by the Will of Allaah, to abstaining from the forbidden act from the beginning.

We have now completed the first section of restraints and we will move on to the second section.

The second section: The restraints that prevent doubt and suspicion:

There are a group of restraints that prevent one from destructive doubt and suspicions. These are some of the main ones:

Overcoming whim and passion and fighting internal thoughts:

The Muslim should learn how to overcome his whim and passion, starting by dealing with thoughts. So when the thought of committing a sin or evil act comes to mind he dismisses it, as the beginning of any act is actually a thought. Most hearts have been penetrated by the Satan who haunts them with obsessive thoughts leading to forbidden acts.

Jareer ibn 'Ubaydah, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "I told Al-'Alaa' ibn Ziyaad, may Allaah have mercy on him of the Waswaas (insinuating whispers) that I have in my thoughts. He replied: That is of the likes of a house that thieves pass by, if there is anything in the house they try to take it, and if not they move on."¹

The only thing that can erase these whispers is the remembrance of Allaah The Almighty and seeking refuge with Him from these whispers. Allaah Says (what means): *{Indeed, those who fear Allaah, when an impulse touches them from Satan they remember [Him] and at once they have insight.}* [QUR'AAN 7: 201]. Mujaahid, may Allaah have mercy on him, said about this verse (which means): *{From the evil of the retreating*

¹ Reported by Al-Asma'i in his book Al-Muntaqa min Akhbaar Al-Asma'i (66).

whisperer.} [QUR'AAN 114: 4], He surrounds the heart, and when the person remembers Allaah he retreats and spasms and when the person is negligent he surrounds the heart.¹

Not dwelling on thoughts:

Having thoughts is not harmful. However, it becomes harmful when the person recalls them and acts on them. A thought is like a passer-by on a road, if you do not call them they go on, but if you call them they will bewitch you with their speech, deceit and guile. A man came to the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and said: "I find thoughts in my heart that I would rather fall from the sky then utter aloud." He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*That is clear faith.*"² The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "*Satan comes to one of you and says: 'Who created so-and-so? Who created so-and-so? Until he says, 'Who has created your Lord?' So, when he inspires such a question, one should seek refuge with Allaah and give up such thoughts.*"³

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

"Allaah, the Almighty created the human soul so that it is similar to the constantly moving millstone that never stops. If you put grain in it, the grain is grinded; and the same goes for dirt or stones. So the thoughts that wander are like the grain that is placed in the millstone. Some people grind the grain into meal, benefitting themselves along with others. While most people grind sand and stones etc., and when it is time to knead and bake the truth appears."

So, if you drive away your wandering thoughts, you drive away what follows those thoughts. However, if you accept

¹ Reported by At-Tabari in his book Tafseer At-Tabari (24/710) and Ibn Katheer in his book Tafseer Ibn Katheer (8/540).

² Reported by Muslim (132).

³ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (3276) and Muslim (134).

the thought, it becomes a drifting thought. It is clear that rectifying thoughts is easier than rectifying determination, and fixing determination is easier than rectifying immoral acts and rectifying those acts is easier than getting rid of a habit. The one who has thoughts that are mainly low and sordid then that is what all his conditions will be like. Beware of letting Satan take hold of your thoughts as he will corrupt them in a way that is difficult to repair and he will whisper to you harmful things, because of you allowing him to take control of your heart and thoughts. So the parable of you with Satan is the owner of a millstone that grinds good grains. A person comes along with a sack of dirt, and coal to grind in the mill. If the owner drives him away and does not allow him to throw his dirt into the mill, it will continue to grind what is beneficial. If he allows him to throw his dirt into the mill it will corrupt the grains inside and the meal shall be corrupt.¹

Avoiding the company of innovators:

Abu Qulaabah, may Allaah have mercy on him, reported:

"Do not mix with the people of whim and do not debate them, as I can guarantee that they will lead you to misguidance or spark doubts in what you already know."² Al-Hasan Al-Basri, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: 'Do not sit with the people of whim and do not debate with them nor listen to their speech.'³ Muhammad ibn Seereen, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated that two

¹ Reported by Ibn Al-Qayyim in his book Al-Fawaa'id (174-175).

² Reported by Ad-Daarimi in his book As-Sunan (391).

³ Reported by Al-Bayhaqi in his book Shu'ab Al-Eemaan (9467).

men of whom entered upon him and said: 'O Abu Bakr we would like to tell you something.' He replied: 'No.' Then, they said: 'We will recite a verse from the Qur'aan to you.' He said: 'No, leave me or I shall leave.'¹ 'Eesa ibn Yunus, may Allaah have mercy on him, wrote to some of his friends saying: 'Do not sit with the Jahmiyyah (a sect of innovators), and warn people of them so they recognize them and stay away from them.'² Abu Idrees Al-Khawlaani, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated that he heard a man talking about divine decree, so he stood up and stepped on his stomach. Then he said: 'So-and-so does not believe in the divine decree so do not sit with him.'" The man then left Damascus to Homs."³

Not giving Fatwa (a religious verdict) without knowledge:

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "Allaah the Almighty has forbidden talking about Him without knowledge in religious rulings and in judiciary. He has made this one of the greatest of sins, in fact it the greatest of sins. Allaah Says(what means):

{Say, "My Lord has only forbidden immoralities — what is apparent of them and what is concealed — and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with Allaah that for which He has not sent down authority, and that you}

¹ Reported by Ad-Daarimi in his book As-Sunan (397).

² Reported by Ad-Daarimi in his book Naqdh Ad-Daarimi (1/146).

³ Reported by Ibn Battah in his book Al-Ibaanah (2/391).

say about Allaah that which you do not know.} [QUR'AAN 7: 33].¹

Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*Whoever is given a religious verdict [Fatwa]without knowledge, his sin is but upon the person who gave him the opinion.*"² For this reason and other similar ones, the scholars dislike issuing a Fatwa and they prefer to abstain from it. The reason behind this is the fear of attributing something to Allaah, the Almighty that He did not say and giving their opinion in religion without knowledge.

'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that he heard the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, say: "*Verily Allaah does not take away knowledge by snatching it from the people but re-takes away knowledge by taking away the scholars, so that when He leaves no learned person, people turn to the ignorant as their leaders, then they are asked to deliver religious verdicts, and they deliver them without knowledge, they go astray and lead others astray.*"³

'Abd Ar-Rahmaan ibn Abu Layla, may Allaah have mercy on him, said about the Companions: "When they were asked about an issue they would send the asker to another companion and so on, until the person would return to the first one."⁴

¹ I'laam Al-Muwaqqi'een (1/38).

² Reported by Abu Daawood (3657) and Al-Albaani ruled it as sound (Hasan).

³ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (100) and Muslim (4828).

⁴ Reported by Al-Khateeb Al-Baghdaadi in his book Taareekh Baghdaad (13/412).

Abu Husayn 'Uthmaan ibn 'Aasim, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "A man will deliver a religious verdict which concerns an issue, and if that same issue was directed to 'Umar, may Allaah be pleased with him, he would get the opinion of all the people of the battle of Badr."¹

'Abd Ar-Razzaaq, narrated that Mu'ammar said: "A man asked 'Amr ibn Deenar, may Allaah have mercy on him, about an issue but he didn't respond. So the man said: 'I am confused with this issue, so answer me.' He replied; 'If this issue is as heavy as a mountain to you, is better than me answering you with the smallest doubt.'"²

Ibn Mahdi, may Allaah have mercy on him, narrated that a man asked Maalik ibn Anas, may Allaah have mercy on him, about an issue and he insisted on an answer. He said: "I do not utter except what I think is good, and I do not have an answer to your issue."³

Ibn Wahab, may Allaah have mercy on him said: "I heard Maalik, may Allaah have mercy on him say: "Hastening to issue a religious verdict is ignorance and violation and it has been said patient deliberation is from Allaah and haste is from Satan."⁴

¹ Reported by Ibn 'Asaakir in his book Taareekh Dimashq (38/411).

² Reported by Al-Bayhaqi in his book At-Tabaqaat Al-Kubra (5/480).

³ Reported by Abu Nu'aym in his book Hilyat Al-Awliyaa' (6/323).

⁴ Reported by Ibn Al-Muflieh in his book Al-Aadaab As-Shar'iyyah (2/65) and the last sentence has been narrated by Anas, may Allaah be pleased with him, that the prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*Patient deliberation is from Allaah and haste is from Satan.*" Reported by Al-Bayhaqi in his book As-Sunan (20767) and Al-Albaani ruled it as sound (Hasan).

Muhammad ibn Al-Mukandar, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "The scholar is the one who shows the creation the way to their Creator, so he must fear Allaah in this status."¹

Yahya ibn Sa'eed, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "Sa'eed ibn Al-Musayyab, may Allaah have mercy on him, would hardly ever issue a religious verdict. And after everything, he would utter: 'O Allaah, keep me safe (from evil) and keep people safe from (my evil).'"²

Especially if the person issuing religious verdicts knows that he is not qualified, due to missing prerequisites, or due to something that prevents him from it, and people do not know this. In this case it is undoubtedly forbidden for him to issue religious verdicts to people. The reasonable person is the one who directs the issue to somebody more knowledgeable and able to deliver the verdict.

Ibn Mu'een, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "The one who talks (gives religious verdicts) in a city where there is someone who is more qualified to do so, is foolish."³

Maalik, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "I did not issue religious verdicts until seventy men witnessed that I was qualified to do so."⁴

Ibn 'Uyaynah and Sahnoon, may Allaah have mercy on them, said: "The boldest people when it comes to issuing a religious verdict, are the ones with little knowledge."⁵

¹ Reported by Ibn Al-Mufligh in his book Al-Aadaab As-Shariyyah (2/66).

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

Sahnoon, may Allaah have mercy on him said: "The most miserable of people is the one who sells his afterlife for the life of someone else. The trial of answering with the correct answer is more severe than the trial of wealth."¹

Sufyaan, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "I realized that scholars dislike to respond to issues with religious verdicts until they have no choice but to answer. The most knowledgeable in issuing religious verdicts are the ones who are more silent on issues and the most ignorant are the ones who answer without hesitation."²

Once, Rabee'ah, may Allaah have mercy on him, wept. People asked him why he wept. He replied: "People are asking for Fatwa from people who have no knowledge, and this is a great matter that has appeared in Islaam. Some people who issue religious verdicts here are more deserving of prison than the thief."³

Abu Moosa, may Allaah have mercy on him, said:

"The one who has been blessed with knowledge by Allaah should teach it to people. Beware of uttering in something you have no knowledge on making you one of the simulated people and leaves the fold of Islaam."⁴

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³ Reported by Ibn Al-Muflih in his book Al-Aadaab As-Shar'iyyah (2/67).

⁴ Reported by Ad-Daarimi in his book Sunan Ad-Daarimi (174).

Ibn Al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "The Salaf (the righteous predecessors) disliked hastening to issue religious verdicts, and each one of them wished that somebody else would take on the task. When one of them realized that they were designated to issue a verdict they would deduct their judgment from the Qur'aan and Sunnah or the sayings of the guided Caliphs, and then they would issue the verdict."¹

The means of founding and strengthening restraint:

Curbing yourself from evil and harmful acts is a great form of worship, and religion is based upon it. Therefore, one should be concerned with establishing restraint and strengthening it, through these points:

1. **Pondering on the Noble Qur'aan:** Allaah Says (what means): *{And We send down of the Qur'aan, that which is healing and mercy for the believers, but it does not increase the wrongdoers except in loss.}* [QUR'AAN 17: 82].
2. **Being aware of the magnificence of Allaah the Almighty:** Knowing His names and attributes and pondering on them, realizing their meanings. This realization should be constant and steady in the heart and should flow to the limbs to be acted upon. So the heart is the chief and the limbs are its soldiers and followers. If the heart is righteous then they

¹ Reported by Ibn Al-Qayyim in his book I'laam Al-Muwaqi'een (1/33).

follow in righteousness and if it is otherwise then so are they.

3. Seeking religious knowledge: Allaah The Almighty Says(what means): *{And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colors similarly. Only those fear Allaah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allaah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving.}* [QUR'AAN 35: 28]
4. Attending religious lessons: This leads to increasing faith. The Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*People will not sit remembering Allaah without the angels surrounding them, mercy covering them, peace descending on them and Allaah mentioning them among those who are with Him.*"¹
5. Frequently performing good deeds and spending time on that: The believer must take these points into consideration when performing good deeds:
 - Hastening to perform good deeds: Allaah The Almighty Says (what means):
 - *{And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden [i.e. Paradise] as wide as the heavens}*

¹ Reported by Muslim (2700).

and earth, prepared for the righteous.} [QUR'AAN 3: 133]

- *{Race [i.e. compete] toward forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden whose width is like the width of the heavens and earth, prepared for those who believed in Allaah and His messengers. That is the bounty of Allaah which He gives to whom He wills, and Allaah is the possessor of great bounty.} [QUR'AAN 57: 21]*
- Continuity in performing good deeds: Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "...and My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it. I do not hesitate about anything as much as I hesitate about [seizing] the soul of My faithful servant: he hates death and I hate hurting him."¹

¹ Reported by Al-Bukhaari (6502).

- Exerting effort in performing good deeds: Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): *{They used to sleep but little of the night. And in the hours before dawn they would ask forgiveness. And from their properties was [given] the right of the [needy] petitioner and the deprived.}* [QUR'AAN 51: 17-19]
6. Performing a diversity of deeds: Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said to his Companions: *"Who among you is fasting today?"* Abu Bakr, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "I am." He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *"Who among you has attended a funeral?"* Abu Bakr, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "I have." He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *"Is there anyone among you who has visited a sick person?"* Abu Bakr, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "I have." He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *"Is there anyone among you who has given charity?"* Abu Bakr, may Allaah be pleased with him, said: "I have." He, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: *"[These qualities] are not combined in a man but he will enter Paradise."*¹
 7. Frequently remembering death: Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu

¹ Reported by Muslim (1028).

'alayhi wa sallam, said: "Frequently remember the destroyer of life's pleasures: death."¹

8. Invoking Allaah the Almighty and humbling oneself before Him: Abu Hurayrah, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "The closest one of you comes to his Lord is while he is prostrating. [therefore] make many supplications therein."²
9. Reducing one's hope that one will live for long, which leads to postponing good deeds and repentance; putting the hereafter before this worldly life: Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): {So be patient. [O Muhammad], as were those of determination - among the messengers and do not be impatient for them. It will be - on the Day they see that which they are promised — as though they had not remained [in the world] except an hour of a day. [This is] notification. And will [any] be destroyed except the defiantly disobedient people?} [QUR'AAN 46: 35]
10. Thinking about the insignificance of this life: Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): {Every soul will taste death. and you will only be given your [full]}

¹ Reported by At-Tirmithi (2460) and Al-Albaani ruled it as sound (Hasan).

² Reported by Muslim (482).

compensation on the Day of Resurrection. So he who is drawn away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise has attained [his desire]. And what is the life of this world except the enjoyment of delusion.} [QUR'AAN 3: 185]

11. Glorifying the commands and prohibitions of Allaah The Almighty: Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): {That [has been commanded], and whoever honors the sacred ordinances of Allaah — it is best for him in the sight of his Lord. And permitted to you are the grazing livestock, except what is recited to you. So avoid the uncleanness of idols and avoid false statement.} [QUR'AAN 22: 30]
12. Holding oneself accountable for one's actions: Allaah The Almighty Says (what means): {O you who have believed, fear Allaah. And let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow — and fear Allaah. Indeed, Allaah is Acquainted with what you do.} [QUR'AAN 59: 18]
13. Supplicating AllaahThe Almighty: This is one of the greatest means available to the slave. Nu'maan ibn Basheer, may Allaah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "*Supplication is worship.*" Then he recited the verse (which means):

{And your Lord says, Call upon Me; I will respond to you. Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible.} [QUR'AAAN 40: 60].¹

These were some of the means that aid in establishing and strengthening restraint. We ask Allaah The Almighty to help us benefit from them.

Conclusion

This was a glimpse at the subject of restraint. We mentioned the meaning, causes, forms, sections and means of establishing and strengthening restraint. It is clear that it is based on fighting yourself, curbing yourself from evil and preventing yourself from anything that angers Allaah the Almighty. If a slave does not fight oneself in the beginning and does not obligate oneself to perform Allaah's commands and avoid what He has forbidden, he will not be able to fight against the outside enemy.

This is why the Prophet, sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam, said: "The Mujaahid [Muslim fighter] is the one who fights himself."² Al-Hasan Al-Basri, may Allaah have mercy on him, said: "The believer is always reprimanding himself. He thinks to himself; what was my intention with that word/phrase, what was my intention of eating that food, what was my intention with my thoughts. He is constantly reproaching himself. As for the obscene person he continues in life without reproaching himself."³

¹ Reported by At-Tirmithi (3247) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

² Reported by At-Tirmithi (1621) and Al-Albaani ruled it as authentic.

³ Reported by Ahmad in his book Az-Zuhd (228).

The Muslim must remember that experiencing transient pain in this life is better than constant pain on meeting Allaah the Almighty. May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon His Prophet, his family and his Companions.

