

Sincerity of deeds to Allah

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In the name of Allah most Gracious most Merciful.

Dear brothers & sisters,

Allah says: {They were commanded only to worship Allah, sincere in their religion to Him, Do their prayers and give charity. That is the religion of value and goodness}.

Allah also says: {Say that my prayers, my worship, my living and my death are for Allah; the Lord of the worlds, no associates with Him. That is with what I was commanded and I am the first to submit}.

Allah also says: {We have brought down the book to you with the truth. So worship Allah, and be sincere with the religion to Him. Is it not to Allah that the pure religion is?}

Today's talk (khutbah) is about sincerity. It is the most critical subject ever. The day of resurrection will approach one of us only to find that even half a piece of fruit of dates given in charity is just as big as the mountain of Auhum; blocking and shielding him from the fire. Or one of us would come up with deeds as big as the mountains made up of prayers, fasting, charity, Hajj and Amrah (pilgrimage and visits to the holy mosque), and deeds of kindness and giving to the poor; but one would find non of it in the scale.

Brothers & sisters, sincerity is to have the intentions of the individual in every move he makes; or every time he remains still; acts of worship done in public or in privacy seclusion, is to have the intentions purely for Allah, with nothing expected to be gained from this worldly life or not to be commended by people.

The messenger (PPBU) has put a great foundation for this critical subject. The messenger (PPBU) said: {All acts or deeds are based on the intentions. Every individual will gain (or will be rewarded) based on their intentions. This whoever, migrates for Allah and His Messenger then; then his migration is to Allah and His messenger. And this whoever migrates for something to gain in this worldly life or for a woman to marry then that's what his migration counts for.}

Imam Shafiee said that this hadeeth by the messenger (PPBU) has one third of the science (knowledge) and it has some input into seventy topics of the science of Islamic faith (Fiqh).

"Acts are based on intentions". Intentions are the specific spoken words and the points separating between truth and falsehood. Which side of the scale (Faith or Satan) would win; not through physical looks like height and broadness, or not through riches or the family line once descends from but through intentions.

Along the same lines, the messenger (PPBU) was reported saying: {I know of some people who would come on the day

of resurrection with good deeds as big as the high mountains that have white tops; which Allah makes it like scattered dust. They are brothers of yours, descendants of yours; who stay up parts of the night just as you do, except for they break Allah's prohibitions when they are not seen by others.} Yes, they have so many good deeds but it counts to nothing, and they are led to hellfire. That's because they made Allah the least to worry about amongst those seeing them.

The real scale then is: the hearts and intentions. One scholar said: "Analysis was made to explain the word: [Sincerity], and the only explanation found is that all the individual's moves and stills, in private or in public; are to be for the sake of Allah alone, not to be for something or someone else in this life".

With sincerity; Allah rewards a plenty for so little deed. And for seeking fame and for lack of sincerity Allah gives nothing for much done work.

The scholar Ebn-Taymiyah says: "One small deed may be done by a human in with a complete sincerity to Allah, because of which Allah forgives great sins". The messenger (PPBU) said: {A man from my followers is brought in the presence of All creations on the day of resurrection; and 99 logs or records are laid open for all to see. Each log is as long as the eye can see. He is then asked: Can you deny doing any of this? Did my writers do you any wrong? The man says: "No my Lord". Then he is asked: "Do you have any excuse, or do you have any one good deed in all this?" the man says: "No

my Lord". It is said: "O' yes, you have one good deed with us. For today you shall not be wronged." And one single card is brought out and there on it is the statement: "لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله" or No God but Allah, and Muhammad is His slave and messenger. The man says: "What good can this single card do against all those lines and lines of records". Well, all the logs of records of bad deeds of this man are placed on one side of the scale; and this single card is placed on the other side of the scale. And this card comes out on the scale heavier.}

Ebn Tay-meiah said: "Deeds are not compared and evaluated by what they look or how much they count, but by what is in the hearts. Two deeds may look the same and yet the difference between them is as big as the distance between heavens and earth". Remember that the messenger (PPBU) told us about that single card tipping the scale against the long records; and consequently saving the man from Hellfire. And remember that each and every one of us has that record. And yet many of us will still receive some punishment because of all the sins.

Remember the story of the man feeling the pain of thirst on his trip. And who found a water well into which he needed to have a long climb down in order to reach the water; and he did. As he climbed up out of the well; he saw a dog that was about to perish because of lack of water. The man climbed down again, filled his boot with water; and held it with his mouth while climbing up. He gave the dog the water to drink. Allah did forgive his sins. The companions asked: "Do we get good deeds and rewards for acts of kindness to animals?" The messenger

(PPBU) replied: "We are rewarded for kindness to every creature (or every creature that has a liver)"

The messenger once said: {a man will enter paradise only for cutting down a tree which used to hurt Muslims in the middle of the road}.

On the other hand, doing an act commanded by God without sincerity and without being truthful to Allah has no value and no reward even if such an act of obedience is a great act of spending generously in good, or in jihad or in acquiring knowledge.

Some scholar said: "All people will loose out except those who know, and all those who know will loose out except those who act. And all those who act will loose out except the sincere ones. And even the sincere ones are not off a great danger."

The messenger (PPBU) said: {At the day of resurrection, a martyr who died fighting in a battle for Allah, says to Allah: "I fought for you until I died as a martyr". He is told: "You have lied, but you fought so it would be said that you were a brave worrier. And it was said". Then the command is given for him to be thrown into Hellfire. Another man learnt and taught; and recited the Koran. On the day of resurrection; he says: "God I have learnt and taught and recited the Koran; all for your sake." He is told: "Liar, you learnt so it would be said: "a scholar" about you. And you recited the Koran so it would be said: "a reciter" about you. And it was so said about you in the

worldly life. And the command is given for him to be dumped into Hellfire. Another man was given riches by Allah. He said: I spent at every avenue your Allah like to be spent at. I left no rout for spending unspent; all for you Allah. He is also called a liar. "You spent so it would be called "a generous man" about you. And so it was said about you" and the command is given for him to be thrown into hellfire.}

The first generation of Muslims used to be so careful in order that their deeds and acts do not get spoilt or mixed with showing off, and association in its dedication. They used to strive (or do jihad) in what they do and what they say. In order for it to be purely and sincerely for Him alone (May He be exulted).

Muad ebn Jabal (معاذ ابن جبل) was crying once at the grave of the messenger (PPBU). Omar asked him why. He said: "I heard the messenger (PPBU) saying {a little show off is associating with Allah (or shirk). Allah loves the pure, sincere and the low profile or the hidden people. The type of men that if they are not there then they are not missed. And if they are present, then no one would recognize them. Their hearts are lights of guidance. They are safe from any dusty and dark.}

Imam Ahmed when heard the hadeeth: "Deeds are by the intentions" he said: "That is the choking or strangling one".

Sofyan Al-Thowry (سفيان الثوري) used to say: "I never dealt with anything that is harder for me than myself or my soul; because it beats me or wins against me."

Yousif Ebn Asbat (يوسف ابن أسباط) said: "Purifying the sincerity of intention from impurities is harder for those doing the deeds than the hard work involved in the deed itself." Someone said: "Whoever wishes to perfect a deed then let them make better their intention. Allah will reward his slave if his intentions are good". Ebn Ainiya (ابن عينية) used to ask Allah: O' Allah, I ask your forgiveness for what I claimed for it to be purely for you; but my heart may have included others which You would know about"

Dawood Ebn Abi Hind (داوود ابن أبي هند) fasted for forty years and no one knew he did, not even his own family knew about it. He used to take his lunch box every morning with him to work. And at lunch time he used to give it away for charity. In the evening at dinner time he used to set with his family at the meal as normal. Some from the early generations of Muslims used to do prayers at night for over twenty years without their wives knowing about them.

They used to hide their good deeds in order to ensure the sincerity to Allah rather than use it as a show off. Some of us today can't wait to let everybody know about a good act they did. If they stay up one night then the entire family, neighborhood, and friends would know about it. Or if they donate money or property for a charity then the entire country gets to know about it. This gives some comparison between

today's Muslims and yesterdays Muslims. Or between hiding the deeds and announcing the deed.

Dear God, grant us the sincerity in what we say and what we do.
And make our deeds be done purely for you.
Make good all our acts and the intentions for our acts.
Allah; grant us the sincerity you like.

Amin.