

The Basic Level

TAZKIYAH

CURRICULUM

The second semester

TAZ 172

Written by

Heba Amr

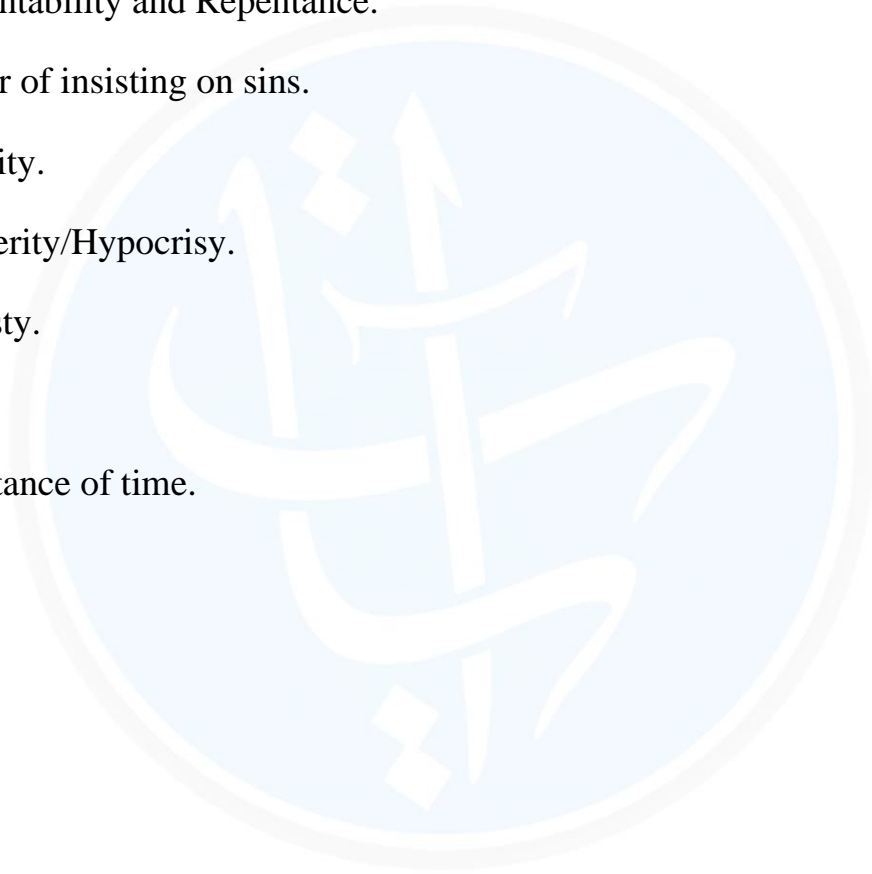
Islamic Studies Diploma,
Higher Institute of Islamic Studies, Egypt

First Edition

2021 C.E. – 1442 A.H.

**Topics covered this term:**

1. Watchfulness & Excellence.
2. Accountability and Repentance.
3. Danger of insisting on sins.
4. Sincerity.
5. Insincerity/Hypocrisy.
6. Modesty.
7. Piety.
8. Importance of time.



أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



TAZKIYAH

CURRICULUM

First

Lecture

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





First lecture

Watchfulness (Morakaba) and Excellence (Ihsan)

Those who are endowed with spiritual insight from among the servants of God, know that God is ever watching what they do, and that they will be held accountable for what they do, even if their deeds were as tiny as an atom. Their **only salvation** is in being continuously watchful over their own deeds, and holding themselves accountable for what they do.

Guilt vs awakening

Being watchful over our own deeds doesn't mean being judgmental or hard-hearted. But rather, being awake and alert, with compassion towards self and others.

Healthy guilt: is when we look at our own mistakes and feel sorry but learn the lesson, reform and move on.

Unhealthy guilt: is the continuous blaming without moving on.

Also remember we said: being watchful over “oneself” deeds, not on “other people” deeds.

"يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ"

O believers! You are accountable only for yourselves. It will not harm you if someone chooses to deviate—as long as you are ‘rightly’ guided. To Allah you will all return, and He will inform you of what you used to do. (5:105)





He who holds himself accountable, will have an easy reckoning on the Day of Judgment. He will be able to answer for what he did and will end in a good abode. He who does not hold himself accountable in this life, will be regretful on the Day of Judgment. He will have a severe reckoning and will end up in an evil abode. When the fact became clear to them, they realized that their only salvation is in being obedient to God.

The First station: Setting the Conditions (Al-Musharata)

You should know that the objective of business people is to gain profit. A business person may employ a partner to conduct certain transactions. When the transaction is completed, the partners settle the account. The mind is the business person on the road to the Hereafter. Its profit is to purify the self because that is where the self's success lies, *"He is indeed successful who purifies it, and he is indeed a failure who corrupts it."* (91: 9-10) The success of the self is attained by performing righteous deeds. The mind employs the self in conducting these business transactions; the mind employs the self as a business person employs an assistant. Business partners divide the profit among themselves. Thus, a business person needs to set conditions for the distribution of the profit, keep watching over the assistant as he performs the transactions, hold him accountable, and punish or rebuke him when necessary. Similarly, the mind needs to force the self to fulfill the conditions. This starts by outlining the duties for the self, setting the conditions which the self has to fulfill, guide it to the road of success, force the self to follow the road which has been charted for it, and continue keeping watch over it. If the mind becomes heedless of the actions of the self, even for a moment, it will go astray and will fall prey to treachery. Thus, losing the capital. Exactly, as would be





expected to happen when the business person employs an assistant who is a traitor neglects to keep a close eye on him.

It is thus, obligatory for any person with resolve and who believes in God and the Day of Judgment to keep a watchful eye on his self. The self should be held accountable for its deeds. He should maintain tight control over each and every movement, thought, and desire which his self has. Each breath one breathes is a valuable jewel that cannot be replaced. This jewel can be used to buy a treasure whose bliss lasts forever. Spending the breath on things that will bring nothing but ruin is a great loss; a feat that is unacceptable to any sane human being.

Each morning, after the person has completed his morning prayer, he should devote one hour for the task of setting conditions for his self. He should say to the self, *“My life is my trade. If I lose it, then I lose my capital and I have no hope in conducting any business. Today is a new day that God blessed me with, had God put me to death, I would have wished to come back for a single day to do good deeds.”*

The Second station: Watchfulness (Al-Moraqaba)

Having set the conditions for the self, it remains to keep a watchful eye during the performance of the deeds. The self will become tyrant when left without being watched.

Virtues of Watchfulness

Gabriel (PBUH) asked the Prophet (PBUH) about Excellence (Ihsan). The Prophet (PBUH) said¹, “To worship God as if you see Him because if you do not see Him, He, definitely, sees you.” God said, “Is He who is a sustainer of every soul,

¹ Narrated by Umar and reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.



(knowing) what it has earned?” (13: 33) “Does not he know that God sees?” (96: 14) “God is ever watching over you;” (4: 1) “And those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants.” (23: 8) Ibn Al-Mubarak said, “Be observant of God all the time.” When he was asked how can this be done, he said, “Live as if you see God.”

The Essence of Watchfulness

You should know that *watchfulness is in essence observing The Watchful without being concerned about anyone else*. Watchfulness is a state of the heart which is the fruit of a certain type of knowledge.

The state produces actions to be carried out by the senses and the heart. The state consists of devoting the heart to the observance of The Watchful. The specific knowledge which produces this state is knowing that God is privy to the consciences, He knows the inner most secrets of the human being, and He is always watching His servants. The secrets of the hearts are disclosed to God. When the person becomes certain of the truth of this knowledge, and ascertains its truth without a shred of a doubt, then the knowledge will overwhelm the heart and will force it to be completely absorbed in observing The Watchful.

He who is in this state should keep watch over each and every action, lack of action, and thought. Generally, he has to watch all his choices. He has to consider each act, before and during the act.

1. Before Embarking on the Act. One should consider the motives behind the act. Is he motivated to do this act by his desire to please God? Or is he motivated by his whims and the temptation of Satan? If he finds that he is doing this for the sake of God, he should do it. If the not, then he should feel shy in front of God and he should refrain from doing the act. He should, also



rebuke his self for attempting to do such act. It is God's rule, that every servant should keep a watchful eye on his self whenever he intends to perform an act. He should wait until the true motivation behind the act has been exposed by the light of knowledge. Indeed, unless the first step on the path of falsehood (the passing thought) is driven away, it will produce desire, desire produces interest, interest produces decisive intention, intention produces action, and action leads to aversion and destruction. Thus, evil should be eliminated at the source, which is the passing thought.

2. During the Act. One should inspect the way the act is being performed, to make sure that all God's injunctions are being followed. One should have the intention to do the work as best as he can. One should follow this rule in all his actions or non-actions. If he does this, he will be able to conduct his rituals using the proper intention, the best performance, and the best etiquette.

The actions of a person are divided into three categories: acts of obedience, acts of disobedience, permissible acts. Performing watchfulness in these three deeds is as follow:

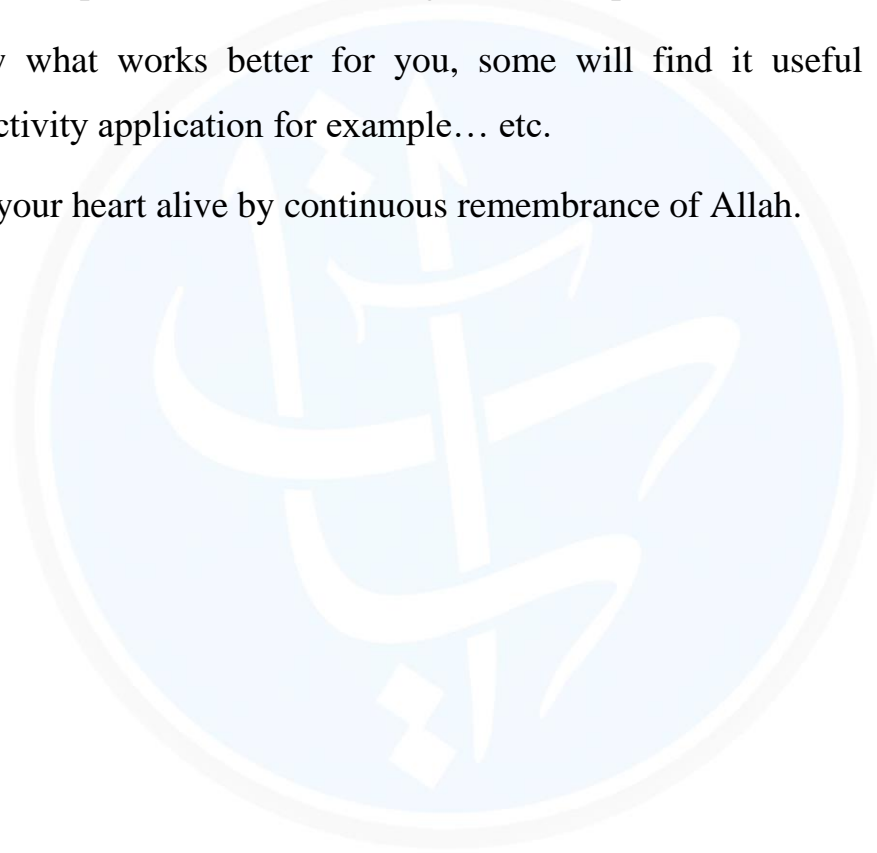
- a. He should make sure that his acts of obedience are performed with sincerity, perfection, and observing the proper etiquette.
- b. If he commits and act of disobedience, then he should repent, cease committing sins, and engage in reflection.

He should make sure that he is following the proper etiquette in performing the permissible acts, he should recognize the blessing, and he should show his gratitude.



**Tools to activate Watchfulness & Excellence:**

1. Take a pause before every action to revise your motive & intention.
2. Choose to spend more time with righteous companions.
3. Know what works better for you, some will find it useful to install a productivity application for example... etc.
4. Keep your heart alive by continuous remembrance of Allah.



أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





Analyze your daily activities. Beware how many hours are spent on each. Remember that a good intention can change the equation!

Days	Acts of Obedience	Permissible Acts	Acts of Dis-Obedience
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

Questions on Lecture (1):

1. What is meant by Watchfulness?
2. What is the difference between healthy guilt and unhealthy guilt?
3. Mention 3 ways to activate Watchfulness.



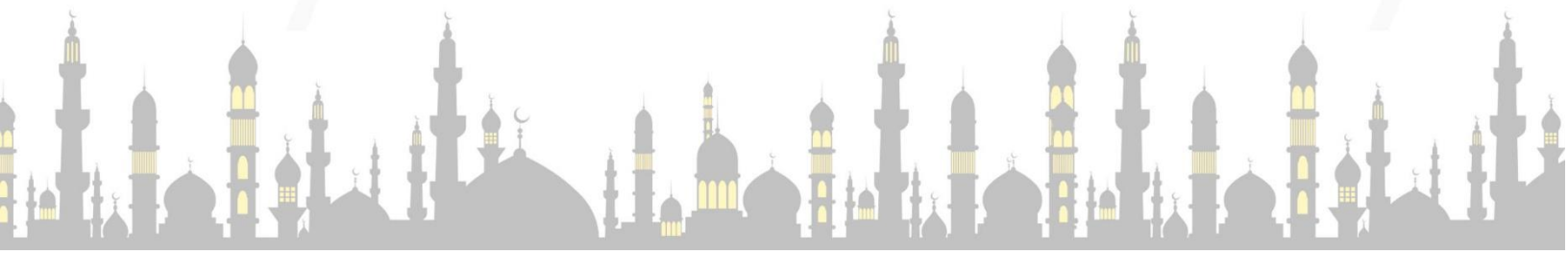
TAZKIYAH

CURRICULUM

Second

Lecture

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



Second lecture

Accountability (Mohasaba) and Repentance (Tawba)

After setting the conditions I want to commit to, and then being watchful of my own actions. It's time to move on to the third station and evaluate my actions as follows.

The Third Station: Holding the Self Accountable After Actions

Virtue of Accountability

God said, *“Believers, be conscious of God and let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow.”* (59: 18) This is a reference to holding the self accountable for what it has done. That is why Umar (RA) said, *“Hold yourselves accountable before you are held accountable on the Day of Judgment.”* God said, *“And turn to God together, believers, in order that you may succeed,”* (24: 31) turning to God is a result of regretting the act after has been committed. The Prophet (PBUH) said², *“I pray God for forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times, every day.”* God said, *“Those who are conscious of God, when a thought of evil from Satan assails them, remember God and they suddenly see.”* (7: 201) Umar ibn Al-Khattab (RA) used to strike his feet every day, saying, *“What have you done today?”* Aishah (RA) said, *“When Abu Bakr (RA) was on the death bed, he said to her, “I love no one more than Umar.” He then asked her, “What did I just say?” She told him, he then said, “There is no one dearer to me than Umar.”* Consider how he reflected on his first statement then changed it to be more accurate. Remember Talha's (RA) story when he was distracted by a bird while he was praying. He reflected upon what happened, regretted the fact that he was

² Narrated by Abu Hurairah and reported by Al-Bukhari



distracted while praying, and decided to give away his garden in charity as a penance. Al-Hassan commented on the verse, *“I swear by the self-reproaching soul.”* (75: 2) He said that the reference is made to the believer who is always blaming himself saying, *“What did I mean with my word? What did I intend with my food? What did I intend with my drink? The transgressor never blames himself for anything.”*

Holding the Self Accountable After the Deed

You should know that just as you dedicate a time for setting the conditions at the beginning of the day, you should dedicate a time at the end of the day for holding the self accountable; the same way a merchant settles his account with his partners at the end of the year, month, or day. The merchant does this for fear of missing a material benefit in this life. It is more appropriate for a wise person to settle the account with his self, knowing that this account deals with his eternal happiness or sadness. Laziness in doing so is a result of heedlessness and lack of success, we seek refuge with God for being one of those.

The way to settle the account with the partner is to review the account to determine the capital, the profits, and the losses; and to determine the increase or decrease in the capital. If he finds that the business made a profit, he will receive it and will thank his partner for it; but if he finds that the business lost, he will request a surety from the partner and request him to make it up in the future. Similarly, the obligatory duties represent the religious capital of a person, supererogatory and extra duties represent the profit, and sins represent the loss. The hours of the day represent the trading season and his partner is the self that commands evil. One should hold his self accountable at the end of the season. He should start with the obligatory duties first. If they have been fulfilled satisfactorily, he then should express his gratitude to God, and exhort his self to do more. If the some of the





duties were not fulfilled, then he should command his self to make up for the missed duties. If they were not performed satisfactorily, then he should command the self to do supererogatory duties to make up for the imperfect performance. If he finds that he committed a sin, then he should punish his self, torment it, and rebuked it for the purpose of assuring that it will make up for the sin in the future.

One should consider his self a debtor who should repay back his debt. Some debts should be paid back with penalty and surety. Some debts should be paid in full. Some debts are repaid by punishment. This cannot happen unless the account has been settled and the debt has been determined. Once the account has been settled, one can start asking for repayment of the debt. One should hold his self-accountable his whole life, day after day and hour after.

Importance of Accountability (Mohasaba):

1. It is a way of one's self-control and a sign of wisdom:

Shaddad bin Aus (May Allah be pleased with him) reported:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "A wise man is the one who calls himself to account (and refrains from doing evil deeds) and does noble deeds to benefit him after death; and the foolish person is the one who subdues himself to his temptations and desires and seeks from Allah the fulfillment of his vain desires".

[At-Tirmidhi, who categorized it as Hadith Hasan].

2. Whoever condemns himself says he will judge himself in this world before he will be judged on the Day of Resurrection.





What's next?

Repentance

Repentance, which involves returning back to the Concealer of defects, the Knower of the hidden secrets, is the starting point of the seekers of the spiritual path, the capital of the successful, the first step of the learners, and the key for the straight path.

It is incumbent on the children to follow in the footsteps of their father. Adam (PBUH) sinned, regretted his sin and then repented. It is essential that we emulate him not only in sinning but also in repenting. Angels were created to be exclusively devoted to doing good; while the devils are exclusively devoted to doing evil without a chance to repent. It is necessary for human beings to repent when they sin.

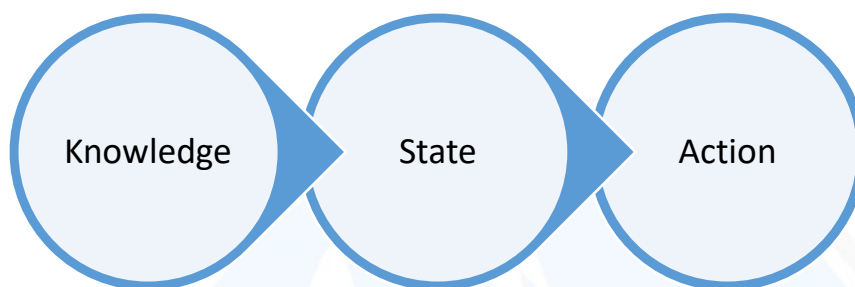
The discussion of repentance involves three components. These are

1. The nature of repentance.
2. The sins that require repentance.
3. The conditions for the true repentance.

The First Component: The Nature of Repentance

You should know that repentance is a concept that involves three consecutive things, one follows the other and each one of them is required for the concept to assume its full meaning. These are knowledge, state, and action.





Knowledge is the realization of the grave consequences of sinning, and how sinning creates a barrier between the human being and everyone he loves. Losing the beloved one will cause the heart great pain. When the heart realizes that it lost its beloved as a result for something it did, the heart will feel sorry for doing that deed that alienated his beloved. This sorrow constitutes remorse. When the heart becomes overwhelmed with remorse, it will move into a new state which is called volition. Volition produces an aspiration to perform a deed that has past, present, and future components. The component related to the past involves redressing the harm that he had caused when he sinned. The component that is related to the present involves abandoning the sin that he committed. The component related to the future involves the intention to abandon the sin, which alienated his beloved, to the end of life.

Thus, knowledge is the first component and it is the source of all good things. Knowledge is faith and certitude. Faith is to believe that sins are deadly poison. Certitude is to be absolutely certain that sins are deadly poison.

Thus, repentance consists of having the three components: the knowledge, the feeling of remorse, and the firm intention to abandon sinning with its past, present and future components.

The Second Component: The Sins that Require Repentance

Repentance involves abandoning the sin. One cannot abandon that which he does not know. Since repentance is an obligatory duty, then its prerequisites are also considered obligatory duties. Thus, knowing what constitutes a sin is an obligatory duty. Anything that contravenes the commands of God is a sin.

Abu Taleb Al-Makki said, *“The capital sins are seventeen, I assembled them from various traditions due to Ibn Abbas (RA), Ibn Umar (RA), Ibn Massoud (RA), and others.”* These are

1. Four of the Heart

These include associating partners with God, persisting in committing acts of disobedience, despairing of the mercy of God, false feeling of being safe of the plot of God.

2. Four of the Tongue

These include perjury, slandering chaste women, making false oath, magic.

3. Three of the Stomach

These include drinking alcohol, usurping orphan’s money, dealing in usury.

4. Two of the Sexual Nature

These include committing adultery and homosexuality.

5. Two of the Hand

These include committing murder and theft.

6. One of the Legs

This includes fleeing a battle.

7. One of the Whole body

This includes being undutiful to one’s parents.

This list is not exhaustive. The topic is very long and we will not be able to cover all the details. However, what is mentioned above is a good summary.



The Third Component: Conditions of Repentance

First: The most important condition for the acceptance of one's repentance is that the act of repentance must be sincerely for Allah The Almighty alone.

Second: The person must feel remorse and guilt over his actions so much so that he wishes he had never done it in the first place.

Third: The person must immediately cease committing the wrong and sinful act.

Fourth: The repentant person must have a firm intention to never commit the sin again.

Fifth: The person must repent before it is too late, meaning before death approaches.

Questions on Lecture (2):

1. What is the importance of accountability?
2. Mention the major sins which require repentance.
3. What are the conditions for repentance?

Ayaat Academy



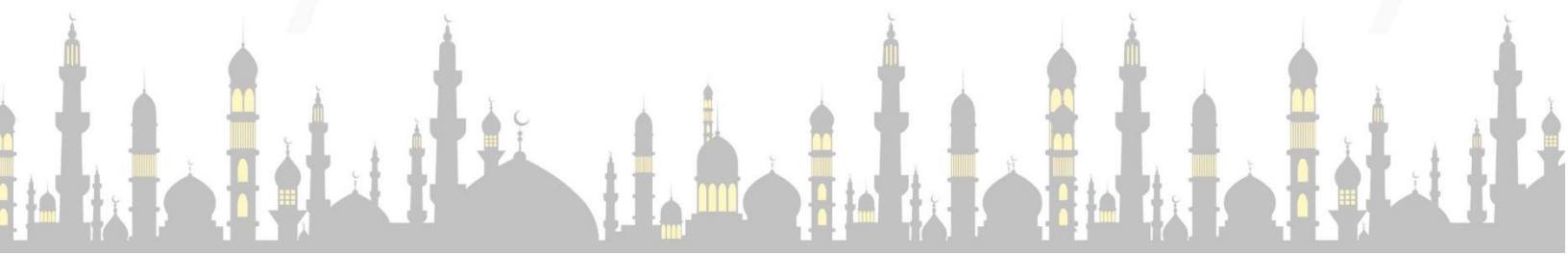
TAZKIYAH

CURRICULUM

Third

Lecture

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





Third lecture

Danger of insistence on sins

We are all humans and we all do mistakes. Even when we try to avoid major sins, we stumble upon minor sins all the time. This is inevitable. While accepting our human side is something favorable, insisting on a sin (even minor) without repentance or trying to change/develop ourselves is not favorable at all and can even evolve to be a major sin.

Explaining how a Minor Sin becomes a Capital Sin

You should know that there are several reasons for a minor sin to evolve into a major sin.

1) Among these are persistence and insistence. It has been said that, *“No sin remains minor with persistence, and no sin remains major while seeking forgiveness.”* Pardon is more likely to be granted for a single capital sin which is not followed by another, while it is difficult to expect the same pardon for a person who is persistent in committing the same minor sin over and over again. However, it is difficult to imagine a situation where a person would jump suddenly into committing a major. A capital sin is usually preceded by a number of minor sins. Temptation and seduction usually precede adultery, animosity and angry fighting usually precede murder.

2) Another reason for a minor sin to evolve into a major one is belittling the sin. God minimizes the sins that His servant considers significant. A heart that resents sin will consider every sin significant. This resentment will prevent the person to become familiar with sinning. While a heart that belittles sinning will become used to it. It has been narrated that a believer considers his sins as a mountain hanging over him and fears that the mountain may fall on the top of his head, while a





hypocrite considers his sins as insignificant as a fly that stood on his nose and then flew away.

3) A third reason for making a minor sin a major one is to feel happy, show pride, and brag about doing a minor sin. He considers his ability to commit such sins a blessing and is heedless of the fact that sins are the cause of misery. A minor sin will grow into a major one as the sweetness that the person feels for committing the sin increases.

4) A fourth reason is to misunderstand God's protection of his secret discretions. He wrongly assumes that God's respite is bestowed on him as a sign of God's favor. He does not understand that God is giving him respite to give him a chance to indulge more in his sin. The Quran refers to these saying, *"And they say among themselves, 'Why does not God punish us for what we say?' Sufficient for them is Hell, in which they will burn, and wretched is the destination."* (58: 8)

5) A fifth reason is to commit a sin in secret and then talk about it and reveal his own secret. This amounts to committing two sins. First, he transgressed against God who protected his secret. Second, talking about his sins in the open desensitizes people to these sins. His narration will motivate evil desires in the hearts of those who listen to him. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Everyone in my nation will be forgiven except those who declare their sins. God protects the secret of a man who committed a sin in secret, but then the man goes around the next day telling people about what he had done. God protected his secret by night and he divulged his secret during the day."

6) A minor sin committed by a scholar who have followers who emulate him amounts to a capital sin because of its effects on those who emulate him. This scholar will eventually die but he will leave behind a legacy of bad deeds that will be emulated by many people. The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Whoever enacted a good





deed in Islam, will get its reward and the reward of all those who would emulate him – without them missing any of their reward – and whoever enacted a bad deed in Islam, he will be punished for it and for all of those who would emulate him – they will also be punished for their bad deed.” God said, “Indeed, it is We who bring the dead to life and record what they have put forth and what they left behind.” (36: 12) What left behind refers to the actions which ensue after the original act and the actor have expired.

Heedlessness is the cause of all sins. God said, “*Those are the ones over whose hearts and hearing and vision God has sealed, and it is those who are the heedless. Assuredly, it is they, in the Hereafter, who will be the losers.*” (16: 108-109) The remedy leading to repentance is a mixture of the sweetness of knowledge and the bitterness of perseverance.

Knowledge

If you ask, “*Is there a specific kind of knowledge that is required for the remedy of the complex of persistence?*” You should know that knowledge in its totality provide remedy to the ills of the hearts. There is a specific type of knowledge which provides the appropriate remedy for each illness of the heart. Let us draw a parallel between the illnesses of the heart and the illnesses of the body. For the medicine to be effective in healing a patient, the patient should believe in four things. These are:

1. A patient who has a physical complaint should believe that there are causes for illnesses and there are causes for recovery that have been determined by the One who cause the causes. This is the fundamental belief in medicine. The parallel in the ills of the heart is that one should belief in the fundamental divine law.





According to the divine law, obedience is the cause of happiness in the Hereafter and disobedience is the cause of misery.

2. He should believe that a specific doctor has a good grasp of medicine, is skilled in his field, tells the truth, and does not deceive or lie. Similarly, one should recognize the truthfulness of the Messenger (PBUH) and believe that everything he said is correct and true.

3. He should listen to the doctor and follow his instructions to avoid things that may cause him harm. Similarly, one should listen to the verses and the traditions which urge people to remain conscious of God and which warn people against committing sins and following their desires. He should believe in the veracity of these verses and traditions so that they can produce the fear that will enable him to persevere in resisting his carnal desires. This is the second component of the remedy.

4. He should listen to the doctor when he gives him information specific to his own illness so that he would seek the things that protect him against the specific things that may cause him harm. Similarly, in case of the ills of the heart, a person needs to know that his acts are sins; he needs to know the harm that these sins will cause him; he needs to know how he can persevere in warding off these carnal desires; and he needs to know how to atone for his previous acts.

The ills of the heart became more widespread than the ills of the body. There are three reasons for this

1. A patient who is afflicted by an illness in his heart is unaware of his illness.
2. The consequences of the ills of the heart are not seen in this life, contrary to the consequences of a physical illness. A physical illness may lead to death, which is visible and a disliked seen. The consequence of sins is death of the heart, which is





invisible in this life. People do not see what happens after death. You would see people hope for God's mercy regarding the ills of the heart while they seek remedy diligently in case of physical illnesses without relying on God's mercy.

3. The rarity of the doctors who can deal with the ills of the heart. These doctors are the scholars. In these times, they became afflicted themselves with very severe illness which they were unable to cure themselves from. To cover up their shortcomings they deceived people and prescribed for them things that increased their illnesses. This severe affliction is the love of the worldly life. They could not warn people against it, fearing that they would be rebuked for warning people against something that they already do.

Perseverance

This is needed because a sick person remains sick as long as he ingests something harmful to him. A person ingests something that is harmful to his health because he is either heedless of the harm that this matter may cause or because he finds an irresistible pleasure in ingesting it. We mentioned above the remedy for heedlessness. It remains to explain the remedy for the irresistible pleasure. This remedy was discussed in the Book on Discipline. The prescription is summarized as follows:

1. One should remind oneself of the devastating consequences of the such pleasure.
2. One avoids gazing at the source of pleasure.
3. One finds an alternative means for attaining a similar pleasure without incurring the bad consequences associated with prohibited source of pleasure.
4. One should, by virtue of fear, endure the pain that will accrue as a result of abstention.





If you say that it all boils down to faith, because only by perseverance can one abandon sinning, perseverance is instigated by fear, fear is the result of knowledge, and knowledge is obtained only when one appreciates the devastating effect of sins. Appreciating the devastating effect of sins is brought about by the belief in God and His Messenger (PBUH); and this is faith. Does this mean that a person who persists in sinning is a disbeliever? You should know that the answer to this question is no. Persistence in sinning is not caused by the loss of faith, but by it may be caused by a weakness in faith. Every believer believes that committing sins drives him away from God and it is a cause for punishment in the Hereafter.

Ways to get rid of insistence on sins:

1. Pray for stopping doing sin.
2. Disciplining yourself, and making a commitment.
3. Reading Quran: Whoever has an extended and uninterrupted relationship with the Quran, it is a very strong way to stop making sins.
4. Be away from bad friends.
5. Maintaining the time of the prayer, not leave its time and doing it with love.

Questions on lecture (3)

1. What are the reasons for a minor sin to evolve into a major sin?
2. What is the cause of all sins?
3. Mention some ways to stop insistence on sins.



TAZKIYAH

CURRICULUM

Fourth

Lecture

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





Fourth Lecture

Sincerity

The Virtue of Sincerity

God said, *“And they have been commanded only to worship God, devoting their faith to Him alone, to establish regular prayer; and to give alms;”* (98: 5) *“Unquestionably for God is the pure religion;”* (39: 3) *“Except those who repent, amend, hold fast to God, and devote their religion entirely to God, these are with the believers; and God will grant the believers an immense reward;”* (4: 146) and He said, *“And whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do good deeds, and do not associate partners with his Lord.”*(18: 110) This last verse is referring to people who do deeds for the sake of God, but they like to be praised for their deeds.

The Prophet (PBUH) said, *“The first person to be called for account a person on whom God bestowed knowledge, a person who owned great wealth, and a person who was killed in the sake of God. God will ask the first one, ‘Did I not bestow My blessings on you?’ The man will reply, ‘Yes.’ God will ask him, ‘What have you done with it?’ The man will say, ‘I used to recite the Quran day and night.’ Go and the angels will say, ‘You lied. You only wanted people to praise your ability to recite the Quran. They did.’ God will ask the second man, ‘Did I not bestow on you great wealth, so that you were in no need?’ The man will say, ‘Yes. I helped my kinfolks financially, and I gave out charity.’ God and the angels will say, ‘You lied. You only wanted people to praise your generosity. They did.’ God will ask the third man, ‘How did you die?’ The man will say, ‘I was commanded to fight in Your sake, I fought and I was killed.’ God and the angels will say, ‘You lied, you only fought so that people would praise your courage. They did.’”* The Prophet (PBUH) said, *“These are three who will enter Hellfire first.”*





Umar ibn Al-Khatab (RA) wrote Abi Musa Al-Ashaarisaying, “*God will suffice the person who sincerely dedicates his efforts to God.*” One of the knowledgeable scholars said, “*It is sufficient to perform very little good deeds, if you have the sincere intention of dedicating them, to God.*” Ayyoub Al-Sikhtiyani said, “*It is more difficult for the workers to have sincere intentions rather than to do the work.*”

The Essence of Sincerity

You should know that everything could be tainted by other things. Something that has not been tainted with other things is called pure (khalisan). The purity of the act is called, “sincerity (Ikhlasan).” “*We give you drink, from what is in their bellies between excretions and blood - pure milk, agreeable to those who drink it.*” (16: 66) The milk has not been tainted by the excretions, the blood, or any other impurity, therefore, it remained pure. Sincerity is the opposite of the association. Whoever is sincere does not associate anything with God. However, associating partners with God has degrees. Associating partners with God as a deity is the opposite to the sincerity in the belief of the Oneness of God. Associating partners with God is two types: conspicuous and hidden. Similarly, sincerity can be conspicuous or hidden. Sincerity and its opposite are traits of the heart, thus, their place is the heart. They are reflected on the objectives and intentions. We have described the essence of the intention and how it is formed as response to motivations. When the intention is produced by a single motivation, then it is a sincere intention for what it was meant for. A person who gives charity for the sole purpose of showing off is sincere in his endeavor. Whoever gives charity seeking solely to become closer to God is sincere in his endeavor. However, sincerity is usually used to describe endeavors which are intended exclusively to bring the servant closer to God. Similarly, the Arabic word for





atheism means swerving away, but it is usually used exclusively to mean swerving away from the truth.

We will now talk about actions which are motivated by the intention to come closer to God; but this motivation may be tainted by showing off or other worldly fortune. An example of this is a person whose objective from fasting is dual: to benefit from the fasting diet and to become closer to God. Another example is a person who performs pilgrimage to enjoy the trip, to avoid harm that might befalls him in his home country, to flee an enemy waiting for him in his home, or to get away from his family or his work for a few days. The deeds of these people can no longer be described as sincere. These actions are not exclusively dedicated to God and they have been tainted. God said, *“I am the most independent of all partners.”*

In summary, if the endeavor which was originally intended for the sake of God is tainted by another objective which seeks a worldly gain or benefit, then it can no longer be considered a sincere endeavor; no matter how large or small this benefit is. The sincere endeavor is the endeavor which is only motivated by the desire to become closer to God.

These impurities which taint the endeavor originally dedicated to God, may be either compatible to, associated with, or supporting the main intention. They can also be equal in strength, stronger or weaker than the religious motive. Each one has its own ruling, as we will mention later. Sincerity is to completely cleanse the deeds from all these impurities; until the intention to draw closer to God becomes the sole motivation for the deed. This can only happen for a person who loves God and is sole concern is the Hereafter. Such a person does not have a place in his heart for the love of this life. He may even lose interest in eating and drinking. He would regard food as a necessity for survival and as a means to obtain the strength





needed for performing the acts of worship. He wishes to be relieved from the feeling of hunger, so that he would not need to eat. This way, his heart would be completely free from the desire to have more food than what is absolutely necessary for survival. Such a person, if he eats, drinks, and relieves himself, has a sound intention in all his movements. If he sleeps having the intention that sleep is necessary to give him the strength to perform the rituals of worship, then, his sleep becomes a ritual of worship and he would gain the rank of the sincere.

Those who do not belong to this rank, have no way to attain sincerity, except in rare circumstances. The deeds of a person, whose most important concern is to enjoy life, gain prominence, and majesty or any other concern other than God, are tainted by this concern. The rituals of worship performed by such a person will not be pure, except rarely. The recipe for attaining sincerity is to completely destroy the interest in the worldly fortunes, relinquish any feeling of desire in the joys of this life, and to dedicate oneself exclusively to the Hereafter. When this recipe prevails over the heart, one attains the rank of sincerity. A person may work hard in performing deeds, thinking that they were sincerely dedicated to God, while they were not. He does not see the evil that tainted his deeds. These evils are obscure and it is rarely that a deed would be free of the, only those who have been guided by God can discover them. The heedless will realize in the Hereafter that all their good deeds were actually sins. These are referred to in the verse, *“And there will appear to them, from God, that which they never reckoned. And the evils that they earned will appear to them, and that whereat they used to scoff will surround them.”* (39: 47- 48) The people most vulnerable to this trial are the scholars. The control of the hearts of people, the joy of having many followers, and the love of being praised are the factors that motivate most scholars to spread knowledge. Satan confuses deceives them by saying, “Your objective is to spread





the religion of God and to defend the religious law which have been delineated by the Messenger of God (PBUH).” Many of the scholars remind people of the favor they bestow upon them by teaching them, they love giving counsel to people in authority, and rejoice in the acceptance of people of their speeches; they claim that they are only happy because they have been able to contribute to the support of the religion of God. However, if his followers left him to another scholar whom they think is better, he becomes angry. If he was really motivated by a religious motive, he would have been grateful to God. He would thank God, that someone else has relieved him of his chores.

Satan will continue to work on him. Satan will say, *“You are not sad because people left you and followed the other scholar, you are only sad because you did not want to miss the reward that you would have gained if these people benefited from your instructions. This is a praiseworthy feeling.”* The poor man does not realize that submitting to the truth is better for him and more rewarding with God.

The scholars' opinion in Ekhlas:

- El-Fodial said: Leaving Working for People: Hypocrisy. Working for the sake of people: Shirk.

Effect of Ekhlas ON YOURSELF:

1. Self-strength and clarity of character arise from devotion to work for God
2. Al-Junaid: God has rational servants, so when they reasoned, they acted, and when they acted they were SINCERITY, so sincerity called them to the gates of righteousness all together
3. IT IS AN IMPORTANT WAY TO DO A LOT OF GOOD THINGS



**How to be sincere:**

1. Take care to observe supererogatory fasting
2. Praying at night
3. Pray to Allah to give you a right heart
4. Make something small but continuous

Our prophet Muhammad said:

The best work is what continuous even if it's little.

Questions on Lecture (4):

1. Mention one Verse from Quran on the importance of Sincerity.
2. Mention one Hadith on the importance of Sincerity.
3. Mention some ways to stay sincere.

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



TAZKIYAH

CURRICULUM

Fifth

Lecture

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





Fifth Lecture

Caution against Insincerity (AL-REYAA)

Insincerity is a disease of the soul that may spoil our work.

It means the consideration of any other thing/one than Allah in our actions.

Danger of AL-REYAA:

Sharia came to warn against AL-REYAA

*"I am but a man like yourselves, (but) the inspiration has come to me, that your Allah is one Allah. Whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner ' **AL-KAHF 110***

*"ye who believe! cancel not your charity by reminders of your generosity or by injury,- like those who spend their substance to be seen of men, but believe neither in Allah nor in the Last Day. They are in parable like a hard, barren rock, on which is a little soil: on it falls heavy rain, which leaves it (Just) a bare stone. They will be able to do nothing with aught they have earned. And Allah guideth not those who reject faith. **AL-Baqra 264***

Our Prophet said:

1: Abu Musa al-Ashari, may God rest his soul, said: O Messenger of God, the man fights for the spoils, the man fights to remember, and the man fights to see his place, who is for the sake of Allah? The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Whoever fights for the word of Allah to be higher is for Allah's sake."





• *Is Reporting others by your work goes under AL-REYAA?*

Ibn Hajar al-Haytami said: (In concealment is the benefit of AL-EKHLAS and salvation from AL-REYAA, and in showing it the benefit of following the example and encouraging people to do good

Joying by obedience, does it goes under Insincerity?

We must differentiate between:

- The joy of working as a matter of vanity and pride in it.
- The joy of working out of gratitude.

*Say, "In the bounty of Allah and in His mercy - in that let them rejoice; it is better than what they accumulate." **Yunus 57***

How to get rid of AL-REYAA?

1. The persistence of self-accountability.
2. Do more secret worship.
3. Return to Allah every time and ask him for his permanent help.
4. Take care of your Companionship.

Questions on Lecture (5):

1. What is meant by Insincerity "Al-Reyaa"?
2. Differentiate between joy of obedience & Reyaa.
3. How to get rid of Al-Reyaa?



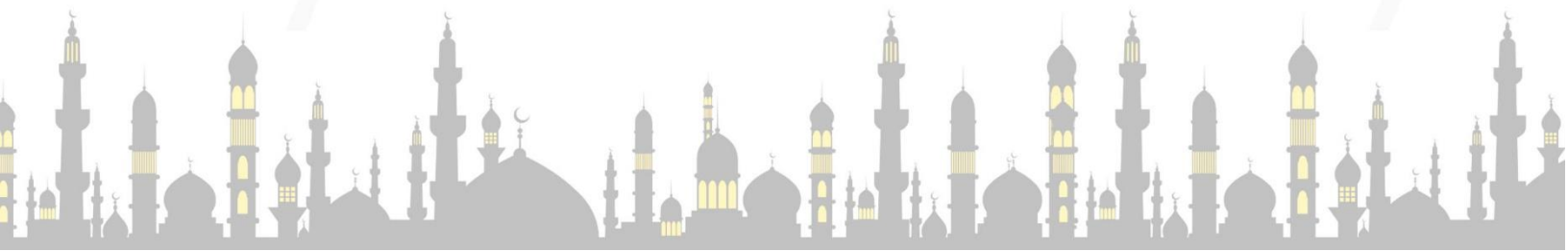
TAZKIYAH

CURRICULUM

Sixth

Lecture

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





Sixth Lecture

Modesty (AL-Hayaa)

It is an important psychological quality that helps to keep one's caprices under control and to avoid what is improper in the eye of Shari'ah.

AL-Hayaa in sunnah

1: About Said bin Zaid al-Ansari, may God rest his soul, he said: A man said to the Prophet (peace be upon him): Omani, he said: "I recommend you to be the piety of God, and to be ashamed of God as you are ashamed of a good man of your people."

2: About Abu Ayoub, he said: The Prophet said: "Four of the morals of the missionaries are: modesty, perfume, scent, and marriage."

3: About Ibn Abbas, the Prophet (PBUH) said to AL-ashag: "You have two qualities that God loves: AL-Hilm, and AL-HAYAA."

Al-Hayaa is of two forms (Good and Bad):

The Good Hayaa:

is to be shy to commit a crime or a thing which Allah (the Great Almighty) and His Messenger (Blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) have forbidden.

The Bad Hayaa:

(which is, in fact, timidity, khajal in Arabic) is to be ashamed to say, do or ask for what is right. The latter is a sign of weak character.





Why did the Prophet (pbuh) choose AL-Hayaa in the people of faith to mention?

I answer that it may be an instinct and it may be an A virtue, but using it according to Islam requires acquisition, knowledge and intent

How to acquire AL-Hayaa?

- Monitoring oneself, to see what one is doing and to hold oneself accountable for what you do.
- Non-complacency in the legal boundaries such as mixing between the sexes, and the permanence of talking between them.
- One should remember to say: "AL-Hayaa only brings the good".

Questions on Lecture (6)

1. Differentiate between good and bad modesty.
2. Why did the Prophet (pbuh) choose AL-Hayaa in the people of faith to mention?

What are some ways to acquire modesty?

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



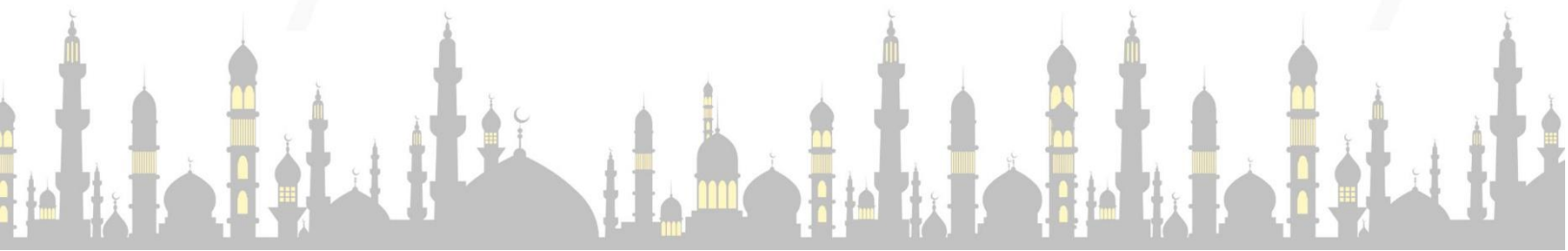
TAZKIYAH

CURRICULUM

Seventh

Lecture

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





Seventh Lecture

Piety (Alwara')

It is getting away from whatever is forbidden.

Evidence of Alwara':

Our prophet Muhammad said:

1. The virtue of knowledge is better than the virtue of worship, and the best of your religion is Alwara'
2. Our prophet said when he asked about righteousness and sin, he said: "Righteousness is in good manners, and iniquity is what weaves in your chest, and you hate people to see it." (Muslim)
3. Leave what makes you confused to that does not confuse you.
4. You will not leave anything to God as if that God will give you what is better for you than it" [Ahmad].

How is Piety (Al-Warea) achieved?

"*Nasr bin Muhammad al-Samarqandi*", may God have mercy on him, said: (The sign of al-wara' is to see ten things that are obligatory on your self).

1. Save your tongue away from backbiting.
2. Avoid mistrust.
3. Stop mocking.
4. Sincerity of the tongue.
5. Prevent looking at what God forbids.



6. Knowing the grace of God upon himself so that he does not admire himself.
7. Spending money in a good way.
8. That he does not ask himself for height and arrogance. For God says: *"That last house we make it to those who do not want higher on earth nor corruption"* **Al-Qasas: 83**
9. Keeping the prayer time and try to do it in a good way. *Observe the 'five obligatory' prayers—especially the middle prayer—and stand in true devotion to Allah".* **Al-Baqara 238**
10. Integrity in the Sunnah.

And: *"This is My path that is straightforward. So, follow it, and do not follow the (other) ways, lest they should make you deviate from His way. This is what He has enjoined upon you, so that you may be God-fearing."* **Al-Anaam 153**

Questions on Lecture (7):

1. What is meant by "Piety"?
2. Mentions some ways to achieve piety.

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



TAZKIYAH

CURRICULUM

Eight

Lecture

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy





Eighth Lecture

Time

Time is life:

- Time is the capital of a Muslim who trades with God

"(I swear) by the Time, man is in a state of loss indeed, except those who believed and did righteous deeds, and exhorted each other to follow truth, and exhorted each other to observe patience" AL-Asr

And the Sunnah came to increase the value of time and was directed to preserve it. In the hadith: "Two blessings in which many people are forgotten: health and emptiness." [Narrated by Al-Bukhari]

- "*Abdullah bin Abbas,*" may God be pleased with him he said: The Messenger of God *may God's prayers and peace be upon him,* said: "Take advantage of five before five: your youth before your aging your health before your illness, your wealth before your poverty, your free-time before your busy-time, and your life before your death."

-The importance of time is also evident in prophet Muhammad saying, *may God's prayers and peace be upon him:* "The son of Adam's feet will not disappear on the Day of Resurrection from his Lord until he asks about five, about his age and what he spent, and about his youth, what he spent, and his money from where he acquired it and on what he spent, and what he did in what he learned." [Narrated by al-Tirmidhi].



- *"Ibn al-Qayyim"*: (wasting time is worse than death because wasting time cuts you off from God and the Hereafter, and death cuts you off from this world)

Ways to save time:

1. Start Everything with “Bismillah”.
2. Paint a Vision and Aim High.
3. Schedule Around Your Prayer.
4. Pray Fajr at the Masjid.
5. Braindump and Get Things of the Mind.
6. Start with the Most Important Tasks First.
7. Avoid Distractions from Your Life.
8. Never Multi-task!
9. Take Breaks.
10. Exercise and Sleep well.

Questions on Lecture (8):

1. Mention one Verse from Quran about the importance of time.
2. Mention one Hadith about the importance of time.
3. Mention ways to save time.

أكاديمية آيات
Ayaat Academy



THIS BOOK

Over centuries, the scholars of behavior and attestation were concerned with strengthening conscience monitoring and improving the efficiency of worship. They noticed that the Islamic Sharia came to reject worship that takes into account only the acts but not the objectives of purifying the hearts. In such cases, the worshiper is interested only in the shape of worship and does not care about its effect on the behavior. Scholars of Islam wrote hundreds of books about heart and its diseases and worships. The early attempts of these books appeared during the beginning of the Islamic civilization, when some Muslims drowned in materialism and imitated other nations in types of luxury.

This book is an attempt to strengthen the control of conscience and the value of faith in the soul of the Muslim according to the teachings of the Islamic Sharia. It shows ways to reach the objectives of worship and morals which are not focused only on acceptance but also on reaching the level of "al-Ihsan الإحسان" which is the highest rank of faith.

It is the Tarbiyah curriculum and value guide that AYAAT ILM Academy provides to its students. The objective is to help them to purify their hearts and work on their morals to reach the level that Islam desires for them.

THE AUTHOR

Islamic Studies Diploma, Higher Institute of Islamic Studies, Egypt
Bachelor Degree of Mass Communication, Cairo University, Egypt
Certified Civic Educator & Holistic Healer

Caulfield Cres., Mississauga, ON L5M 6J7 - Canada 3054
Tel . : +1 (647)633-3491
E-mail : info@ayaatacademy.ca

ميساسجا - أونتاريو - كندا
www.ayaatacademy.ca

