

Maximizing the Intention

First Khutbah

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ , نَحْمَدُهُ , وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ , وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا , مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ , وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ , وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

Verily, all praise is for Allah. We praise Him, we seek His assistance and we ask for His forgiveness. And we seek refuge in Him from the evils of our selves. Whoever Allah guides, none can misguide. Whoever He misguides, none can guide. And I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah and I bear witness that Mohammad is His servant and messenger.

(يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ) [آل

عمران:102]

Al Imran(3) 102 : O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam.

Oh Believers:

The intention is a great matter. For it is the head of virtue, and the basis for deeds, and the resolve of the doer of good and the aim for reaching a goal. And our pious predecessors used to magnify the matter of the intention. Sufyan Athawri said, "they used to learn about the intention for a deed like you learn about the deed". For if the intention is pure, then the deed is pure. And if the intention is good, then the deed is accepted. And with the sincere intention, a person will enter Paradise while not yet doing the deeds of its occupants. For as narrated in Saḥīḥ Bukharī and Muslim, a man from Bani Israel killed 100 people, then he went searching for

repentance. So he left his village to a village having righteous people. Then when he was on his way, death overtook him. Then Allāh accepted his repentance and rewarded him for his good intention. And Amr bin Thabet, may Allāh be pleased with him, was one of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who had previously refused Islam. Then on the Day of Uhud, Islam became clear to him, so he accepted Islam. Then he eagerly participated in the campaign and was mortally wounded and passed away. Then when he was mentioned to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, he said:

إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ - رواه الإمام أحمد

He is from the people of paradise. [Ahmed 23634, Grade: Hasan]

So by testifying to the oneness of Allāh and having certain resolve upon īmān (faith) and righteous deeds, he became from the people of paradise. And death overtook him before he could perform a single prostration to Allāh.

If Allāh knows a person's sound intention, good purpose and inner purity, Allāh rectifies their speech and blesses their deeds and appreciates their efforts. Allāh Almighty said:

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا - الإسراء: 19

Al Isra (17) 19: **But whoever desires the Hereafter and exerts the effort due to it while he is a believer - it is those whose effort is ever appreciated [by Allāh].**

So the will to do good takes one beyond where their deeds fall short.

Then Allāh records their reward. The Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ أَتَى فِرَاشَهُ وَهُوَ يَنْوِي أَنْ يَقُومَ يُصَلِّيَ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَغَلَبَتْهُ عَيْنَاهُ حَتَّى أَصْبَحَ كُتِبَ لَهُ مَا نَوَى وَكَانَ نَوْمُهُ صَدَقَةً عَلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

Whoever goes to his bed intending to get up and pray at night, then sleep overwhelms him until morning, will have recorded that which he intended and his sleep is a charity given to him by his Lord, the Mighty and Sublime. [Sunan an-Nasa'i 1787, Grade: Sahīḥ]

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And when Imam al-Bukharī compiled his authentic book, the first hadith that he narrated from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was the hadith of Umar ibn al-Khattab:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى، فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَهَجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ امْرَأَةٍ يَتَزَوَّجُهَا، فَهَجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ

Indeed, deeds are only by way of intentions. And indeed, every person shall have what they intended. Whoever emigrated for the sake of Allāh and His Messenger, then his emigration is for Allāh and His Messenger. And whoever emigrated seeking a worldly gain or to marry a woman, then his emigration is for his aim of emigrating. [Bukharī 6689, Muslim 1907a]

And this hadith is from his concise and comprehensive noble words, and one of the great fundamentals of Islam and one of the foundations of the Sharī‘a. To the point it was said that this hadith is one-third of knowledge. And a group of scholars, did the same thing as Imam al-Bukharī, and began their books with this great hadith, as an alert that the believer is in desperate need of the intention. For the intention enters into all the worships, habits, transactions, exchanges and charities. For no one’s prayer, zakat, fasting or hajj is valid except with the intention. Many scholars have spoken about this hadith to honor it and clarify its high position. Imam Shafi said that this hadith is included in seventy chapters of fiqh (jurisprudence).

If sincerity of intention is placed in any action, even if it is a permissible matter or habit, it transforms it into an act of worship and obedience. So if a person performs any permissible matter such as sleeping, eating, drinking, or walking or other than that, aiming to get closer to Allāh then all of that is considered an act of worship. For example, strengthening his body to be able to serve his family and brothers. Or sleeping at night for the sake of striving during the day to earn one’s sustenance. Or by eating with the intention of gaining strength for acts of obedience. The Prophet

ﷺ said:

إِنَّكَ لَنْ تُنْفِقَ نَفَقَةً تَبْتَغِي بِهَا وَجَهَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا أُجِرْتَ عَلَيْهَا حَتَّىٰ مَا تَجْعَلُ فِي فَمِّ امْرَأَتِكَ

Indeed, you will not spend anything, seeking thereby Allāh's pleasure, except that you will be rewarded for it, even what you place in your wife's mouth. [Bukharī 56, Muslim 1628a]

Imam An Nawawi, may Allāh have mercy on him, said that when one places a morsel of food in his wife's mouth it is usually done out of play, romance and enjoying the permissible. And this is the furthest from acts of obedience and matters of the Hereafter. And in spite of this, the Prophet ﷺ informed that if a person seeks, through this morsel, the pleasure of Allāh Almighty, he is rewarded.

And the companions, may Allāh be pleased with them, understood that. For Muath, may Allāh be pleased with him said, "Indeed I account for my sleep as I account for my being awake". That is, he accounts for the reward in his sleep, in spite of what sleep contains of rest, just as he accounts the reward for his being awake and praying, equally.

And this is how the predecessors, may Allāh have mercy on them, were. As Zubayd al-Yami - may Allāh have mercy on him – said, "I like to have an intention in everything, even in food and drink." And Ibn Al Mubarak said, "perhaps a small deed is magnified by the intention and perhaps a big deed is diminished by the intention".

أَقُولُ مَا تَسْمَعُونَ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

I say what you have heard and I seek forgiveness from Allah for me and you from every sin. So seek forgives from Him, Verily He is Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful.

Second Khutbah

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ، وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

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All praise is to Allah, and peace and blessings upon the Messenger of Allah, and I bear witness that there is no deity other than Allah and I bear witness that Mohammad is His slave and messenger.

Oh people:

Just as it is necessary for one to examine their intention when they want to perform a deed striving to seek the pleasure of Allah alone in their acts of worship and habits, one should also examine their intention and intend multiple acts of worship through one single deed. That is, one should strive to have multiple intentions for performing a single deed. Then they will be rewarded for each of those intentions even though they only performed one single deed. Many people are not aware that it is possible to get multiple rewards for a single act of worship. They are not aware of combining multiple intentions for a single deed and miss out on this great opportunity.

The scholars call having multiple intentions for one single deed combining acts of worship. Ibn Qayim said that combining acts of worship through a single act of worship is a great noble door that is not entered except by the sincere, clever in pursuit, versed in knowledge and highly motivated, through which by a single act of worship one gains many acts of worship. And that is the favor of Allāh, He bestows it upon whom He wills.

So let us strive to be among this group who combines multiple intentions for one single deed and earn multiple rewards. And the discussion about intending multiple acts of worship through a single deed is detailed, but to clarify the point, we will mention some simple examples, but this does not eliminate the need to learn more and ask knowledgeable people.

For example, consider the one who performs ablution (wudu) and then goes to the Masjed. If one prays a single prayer consisting of two raka (units) intending the sunnah prayer after wudu, then they will only be

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rewarded for the sunnah prayer after wudu. One can earn two rewards for that same single prayer by combining the intention of greeting the masjid with the intention of the sunnah after wudu. Then they will be rewarded for both the sunnah after wudu plus greeting the masjid while only performing a single prayer. Even more one can have three rewards for that same single prayer. That is by combining the intention to perform a regular sunnah prayer, such as the sunnah prayer before Fajr or Dhuhr prayer, with the intention of the sunnah prayer after wudu, plus the intention of greeting the masjid. Then through a single sunnah prayer, they will be rewarded for all three, for the hadith states "and indeed, every person shall have what they intended". Although the act of worship, a single prayer, appears to be the same in all three cases, the rewards are different in each case according to the number of intentions that one combines.

And consider an example from fasting. Suppose that one intends to fast six days in the month of shawwal, which is virtuous as the Prophet ﷺ indicated that the one who follows the fasting of Ramadan with fasting six days of shawwal is like fasting the whole year. So if one fasts a day intending only a day from the six days of shawwal, then they are only rewarded for that. If the six days that one chooses to fast fall on either a Monday or Thursday and also fall on the white days (13th, 14th and 15th of every month), then one can earn more reward by including them in their intention as they are also virtuous days to fast. For example, if one makes the intention of fasting one of the six days of shawwal plus intends through that single day of fasting a Monday or Thursday as well, then for that single day of fasting they are rewarded for two acts of worship. Even more, one can gain three rewards for fasting a single day if the white days fall on a Monday or Thursday by combining the intention of fasting one of the six days of shawwal with the intention of fasting one of the white days with

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the intention of fasting on Monday or Thursday. Then for that single day of fasting they are rewarded for three acts of worship.

Shaikh Abdulrahman Al Saadi, may Allah have mercy on him, said that a single deed takes the place of many deeds. So whoever enters the masjid at the time of the established sunnah prayer and prays two raka' (units) of prayer intending the established sunnah and greeting of the masjid will attain both virtues. And likewise is the case if one combines with them or either one of them the sunnah prayer after wudu or the prayer of seeking guidance or any other specific prayers.

The sound intention is the best thing by which one starts and concludes their day. And it is the best thing that one deposits with their Lord. So it is befitting for the believer to intend good in their words and deeds, even if the term comes and there is a barrier between them and the deed, Allāh will write for them the reward for the deed. AbdAllāh, the son of the Imam Ahmad, said to his father one day, "advise me my father", he replied, "intend good my son, for you are in good as long as you intend good."

We ask Allāh Almighty to help us make our intentions only for seeking His pleasure. And make us among those who through combined intentions gain multiple rewards by performing a single deed. Indeed Allāh is All Hearing, Answering.

هَذَا وَصَلُّوا وَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى نَبِيِّكُمْ كَمَا أَمَرَكُمْ بِذَلِكَ رَبُّكُمْ , فَقَالَ

I conclude with this and send prayers of blessings and peace upon your Prophet as your Lord commanded:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

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Al Ahzaab (33) 56: Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.

اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِنَا فِيْمَنْ هَدَيْتَ وَعَافِنَا فِيْمَنْ عَافَيْتَ وَتَوَلَّنَا فِيْمَنْ تَوَلَّيْتَ وَبَارِكْ لَنَا فِيْمَا
أَعْطَيْتَ وَقِنَا شَرَّ مَا قَضَيْتَ إِنَّكَ تَقْضِي وَلَا يُقْضَى عَلَيْكَ وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَذِلُّ مَنْ وَالَيْتَ
تَبَارَكْتَ رَبَّنَا وَتَعَالَيْتَ

O Allah, guide us with those whom You have guided, grant us well-being among those You have granted well-being, be an ally to us along with those whom You are an ally to, and bless what You have bestowed upon us, and save us from the evil of what You have decreed. For verily You decree and none can decree over You. He whom You support can never be humiliated. Glory is to You, our Lord, You are Blessed and Exalted.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ كُلِّهِ عَاجِلِهِ وَآجِلِهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ نَعْلَمْ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ
مِنَ الشَّرِّ كُلِّهِ عَاجِلِهِ وَآجِلِهِ مَا عَلِمْنَا مِنْهُ وَمَا لَمْ نَعْلَمْ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ مَا
سَأَلَكَ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا عَاذَ بِهِ عَبْدُكَ وَنَبِيُّكَ اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ
الْجَنَّةَ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِنْ قَوْلٍ أَوْ عَمَلٍ وَنَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا قَرَّبَ إِلَيْهَا مِنْ قَوْلٍ أَوْ
عَمَلٍ وَنَسْأَلُكَ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ كُلَّ قَضَاءٍ قَضَيْتَهُ لَنَا خَيْرًا

O Allah, We ask You for all that is good, in this world and in the Hereafter, what we know and what we do not know. O Allah, we seek refuge with You from all evil, in this world and in the Hereafter, what we know and what we do not know. O Allah, we ask You for the good that Your servant

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and Prophet has asked You for, and we seek refuge with You from the evil from which Your servant and Prophet sought refuge. O Allah, we ask You for Paradise and for that which brings one closer to it, in word and deed, and we seek refuge in You from Hell and from that which brings one closer to it, in word and deed. And we ask You to make every decree that You decree concerning us good.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

Servants of Allah. Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.

أذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ يَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لَهُ يَزِدْكُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا لَهُ يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاتَّقُواهُ يَجْعَلْ
لَكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِكُمْ مَخْرَجًا ، وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

Remember Allah, the Great - He will remember you. Thank Him for His favors - He will increase you therein. And seek forgiveness from Him - He will forgive you. And be conscious of Him - He will provide you a way out of difficult matters. And, establish the prayer.