

Nurturing The Heart

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7. Fear of Allah

الخوف من الله Fear of Allah

التقوى - خشية الله

7. Fear of Allah

Fear of Allah, may He be exalted, is obligatory for everyone, and no one can be guaranteed safety from Allah's punishment except by fearing Him. Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُونِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

So fear them not, but fear Me, if you are [indeed] believers.

Qur'an 3:175

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فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَاخْشَوْنِي

So do not fear the people but fear Me

Qur'an 5:44

وَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ

and be afraid of [only] Me.

Qur'an 2:40

7. Fear of Allah

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۚ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ

O mankind, fear your Lord. Indeed, the convulsion of the [final] Hour is a terrible thing.

يَوْمَ تَرَوُنَّهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَارَىٰ وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَارَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ

On the Day you see it every nursing mother will be distracted from that [child] she was nursing, and every pregnant woman will abort her pregnancy, and you will see the people [appearing] intoxicated while they are not intoxicated; but the punishment of Allah is severe.

Qur'an 22:1-2

7. Fear of Allah

قال النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: (يَقُولُ اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: وَعِزَّتِي لَا أَجْمَعُ عَلَى عَبْدِي خَوْفَيْنِ، وَلَا أَجْمَعُ لَهُ أَمْنَيْنِ، إِذَا أَمِنَنِي فِي الدُّنْيَا أَخَفَّتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَإِذَا خَافَنِي فِي الدُّنْيَا أَمَّنَّتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ) رواه ابن المبارك في "الزهد" (157) ، وحسنه الألباني في ("الصحيحة" 742).

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said:
“Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, says: ‘By My might, I will not let My slave suffer from fear in two realms or feel safe in two realms. If he feels safe from Me in this world, I will make him feel fear on the Day of Resurrection, but if he fears Me in this world, I will make him feel safe on the Day of Resurrection.’”

Narrated by Ibn al-Mubaarak ibn az-Zuhd (157); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in as-Saheehah (742).

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"التقوى هي الخوف من الجليل، والعمل بالتنزيل، والقناعة بالقليل، والاستعداد ليوم الرحيل " .

طلق بن حبيب، فإنه قال : " التقوى أن تعمل بطاعة الله، على نور من الله، ترجو ثواب الله، وأن تجتنب معصية الله على نور من الله تخاف عقاب الله " [كتاب الزهد لعبد الله بن المبارك (ص 473)]

Talq ibn Habeeb, one follower of the Companions, said:
"Taqwa is to act in obedience to Allah, upon a light (faith) from Allah, hoping in the Mercy of Allah. And Taqwa is leaving the acts of disobedience of Allah, upon a light from Allah, due to the fear of Allah."

7. Fear of Allah

Fear of other than Allah can be divided into three types.

1. The first type of fear is an inward, spiritual fear. This type is the religious fear one has of other than Allah such as fearing idols and false gods, being afraid that they may afflict him with something he dislikes. An example is the verse in which Allah narrated that the people of Prophet Hūd said to him:

“We only say that some of our gods have possessed you with evil.” He said, “Indeed, I call Allah to witness, and you witness yourselves, that I am free from whatever you associate with Allah.” [7]

Allah also says about this type of fear:

And they threaten you with those (they worship) other than Him. [8]

This is exactly the same type of fear those who worship grave inhabitants have as well as idol worshippers; such people fear these false gods. They threaten the people who believe only in Allah with the punishment of such false deities when the believers criticise their misplaced worship, encouraging them to instead sincerely worship Allah alone. This type of fear completely invalidates tawḥīd – the worship of Allah alone.

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2. The second type of fearing others besides Allah is when one chooses not to do what he is religiously obligated to do out of fear of other people. This type of fear is impermissible and it is a form of associating others with Allah which contradicts complete tawḥīd. And it is this type of fear for which the opening verse was revealed; Allah (تعالى) says:

Those to whom hypocrites said, “The people have certainly gathered against you, so fear them.” But it (only) increased them in faith and they said, “Sufficient for us is Allah and (He is) the best disposer of affairs.” So they returned with favour from Allah and bounty, no harm having touched them. They pursued the pleasure of Allah, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty. That is only Satan who frightens (you) of his supporters. So do not fear them, but fear Me, if you are indeed believers. Qur’an 3:173-175

Similarly, in a ḥadīth

Allah (تعالى) will ask a worshipper on the Day of Resurrection, “What prevented you, when you saw some wrongdoing, from changing it?” The person will answer, “My Lord, the fear of people.” He will say, “I was more deserving that you fear Me.”

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3. The third type of fearing others besides Allah is the natural fear. It is the instinctive fear of an enemy, a wild animal, or similar things. There is nothing wrong with this type of fear as Allah (تعالى) said relaying the story of Prophet Mūsá (عليه السلام) :

فَخَرَجَ مِنْهَا خَائِفًا يَتَرَقَّبُ ۖ قَالَ رَبِّ نَجِّنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

So he escaped it (the city), fearful and anticipating (apprehension). He said, “My Lord, save me from the wrongdoing people.”

Qur'an 28:21

7. Fear of Allah

Ibn al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) says,

“Fear is worship of the heart, and it is not fitting to be given to others besides Allah, similar to repentance, love, reliance, hope, and other aspects of worship of the heart.”

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَاهُ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْنَاهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ
الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

If We had sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allah . And these examples We present to the people that perhaps they will give thought.

Qur'an 59:21

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Matters made easy

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ يُسْرًا

And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him of his matter ease.
Qur'an 65:4

Help from ALLAH during distress and grieves

And whoever fears Allah - He will make for him a way out
And will provide for him from where he does not expect.
Qur'an 65:2-3

Good news in both the worlds

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ
لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ

Those who believed and were fearing Allah For them are
good tidings in the worldly life and in the Hereafter.

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Protection from the enemies

إِنْ تَمَسَسْكُمُ حَسَنَةٌ تَسُوءُهُمْ وَإِنْ تُصِيبْكُمُ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا ^{عَلَيْ} وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا
لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا ^{قَلِيلٌ} إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ

If good touches you, it distresses them; but if harm strikes you, they rejoice at it. And if you are patient and fear Allah , their plot will not harm you at all. Indeed, Allah is encompassing of what they do.

Qur'an 3:120

Obtaining ALLAH's mercy

“My mercy encompasses all things. So I will decree it
(especially) for those who fear ME...”

Qur'an 7:156

Du'a

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ خَشْيَتَكَ فِي الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ

O Allah! I ask You to grant me (the blessing of having) fear of
You in private and public

An-Nasa'i 3/54, 55, Ahmad 4/364, Sahih An-Nasa'i 1/281.