

KHUTBA
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English

Weakness of faith

Dear Muslims

One of the main factors, probably the major one, which has affected Muslims and made them lagging behind the other nations, is the weakness of faith, the phenomenon that has become so widespread among Muslims today. So often we feel this hardness in our heart, in that we do not find any joy in worship, reading Qur'an does not move us and we fall into sin so easily. It is unfortunate that this entity of weakness often goes by our entire existence without us being consciously aware of its destructive nature – and how it is detrimental to the spiritual and the moral aspects of our lives. As Muslims this is not acceptable. We need to recognize and acknowledge this weakness and make a sincere effort to channel this weakness to become our strength to serve Allah and His cause.

The issue of people's hearts is an important and sensitive issue. The heart is called *qalbin* Arabic because it changes so quickly and frequently (*taqallub* – alteration, variation, ups and downs). **The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: (The heart (qalb) takes its name from its constant changes (taqallub). The likeness of the heart is that of a feather at the root of a tree, being turned over and over by the wind.) Narrated by Ahmad**

He also said, as reported by 'Abd-Allah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas : (The hearts of the children of Adam are as one between the fingers of the Most Merciful, and He turns them in whatever way He wills) Narrated by Muslim

Man's heart changes constantly, as the Prophet (PBUH) described: *(The heart of the son of Adam changes more quickly than a pan of rapidly boiling water.)* or, According to another report: *"It changes more than a pot of rapidly boiling water.)* Narrated by Ahmad.

Allah tells us that:

"... Allah comes in between a person and his heart (i.e., He prevents an evil person from deciding anything) ..." *Al-Anfaal 24.*

No one will be saved on the Day of Resurrection *"except him who brings to Allah a clean heart [free from shirk and hypocrisy]."* *A-Shu'ara' 89.*

And, *"those whose hearts are hardened"* *Al-Zumar 22*, are doomed and the promise of Paradise is for those *"who feared the Most Beneficent (Allah) in the Unseen, (i.e., in the worldly life, before seeing and meeting Him), and brought a heart turned in repentance (to Him)."* *Qaaf 33.*

So the believer must check his heart, find out the nature and cause of the problem, and start treating it straight away, before it overwhelms and destroys him. The matter is of the utmost seriousness, for Allah has warned us against the heart that is hardened, closed, sick, blind and sealed. However, before treating it, the person must be able to realize that he has problem with his faith. This can be achieved by understanding the nature and the sign of the problem. Here are some of the main signs:

Falling into sin and committing haraam deeds: There are some sinners who commit a sin and persist in it, and some who commit many kinds of sin. When a person commits many sins, sin becomes a habit which he gets used to, and then he no longer feels that it is abhorrent. He gradually reaches a stage where he commits the sin openly, and thus becomes one of those referred to in the hadeeth: **(All of my ummah will be fine except for those who commit sin openly, an example of which is a man who does something at night, and when morning comes and Allah has concealed his sin, he says, 'O So-and-so, I did such and such yesterday.' His Lord had covered his sin all night, but he has uncovered what Allah had concealed.)** Narrated by Al-Bukhari.

Feeling that one's heart is hard and rough: A man may feel that his heart has turned to stone which nothing can penetrate or reach. Allah says *"Then, after that, your hearts were hardened and became as stones or even worse in hardness..."* *Al-Baqarah 74.*

The person whose heart is hard will not be moved by reminders of death or by seeing deceased persons or funerals. He may even carry a dead person to his grave and throw earth into the grave, but when he walks between the graves it is as if he is merely walking between rocks.

Not doing acts of worship properly: His mind wanders and he fails to concentrate properly when praying, reading Qur'aan, making du'aa', etc. He does not think about what he is saying, and he recites the words as the matter of boring habit, if he does these regularly at all. If he has the habit of praying a certain du'aa' at certain times, according to the sunnah, he does not think about the meaning of what he is saying, and Allah **(does not accept the du'aa' of one whose heart is heedless of Him)** Narrated by Al-Termithy.

Laziness and carelessness in performing acts of worship: If he does them at all, they are just empty movements, devoid of any real feeling.

Tightness in the chest, mood swings and depression, which weigh a man down and make him quick to complain about the slightest thing: He easily gets upset with the people around him, and no longer has any tolerance. **The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) described faith when he said, (Iman is patience and tolerance) Narrated by Ahmad; and he described the believer as being (one who makes friends and with whom others feel comfortable. There is a goodness in one who does not make friends and with whom others do not feel comfortable.)** Narrated by Al-Tabarani.

Not feeling angry when the limits set by Allah are violated, because the flame of zeal has been extinguished in his heart, so he no longer takes action to stop evil, or enjoins evildoers to do good, or denounces wrongdoing. He never gets angry for the sake of Allah.

Stinginess and miserliness: Allah praised the Ansaar in His Book by saying: *"... and [they] gave them [the muhaajiroon] preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that..."* Al-Hashr 9. When it comes to miserliness, the person whose faith is weak can hardly give anything for the sake of Allah, even when there is an honest appeal and it is quite obvious that his brothers in Islam are suffering the impact of poverty and are stricken by disaster.

Not feeling any responsibility to work for Islam and spread this religion, which is unlike the attitude of the Companions of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who as soon as they entered this religion felt this responsibility straight away, for example, al-Tufayl ibn 'Amr (may Allah be pleased with him), who became Muslim and went to call his people to Islam straight away. He was only a new Muslim but he felt that he had to go back and call his people to Islam, and he went and did this, yet nowadays many people wait for a long time after they become committed to Islam before they reach the stage of calling others to Allah, may He be glorified.

Causes of weak faith

There are many causes of weak faith, some of which are the same as the symptoms, such as:

Committing sin or being preoccupied with this world.

Keeping away from a faith-filled environment for too long: This causes weak faith in a person. Allah says: *"Has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe to be affected by Allah's Reminder (this Qur'aan), and that which has been revealed of the truth, lest they become as those who received the Scripture before (i.e., Jews and Christians), and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened? And many of them were faasiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allah)." Al-Hadeed 16.*

This aayah indicates that spending too much time away from a faith-filled environment leads to weakness of faith in the heart.

The believer is weak on his own but strong with his brothers. Al-Hasan al-Basri (may Allah have mercy on him) said: **"Our brothers are dearer to us than our families, for our families remind us of this world, but our brothers remind us of the Hereafter."** If this absence goes on for too long, it creates alienation in the heart, which eventually changes into disdain for that faith-filled atmosphere, which in turn hardens the heart and fills it with darkness, extinguishing the light of faith. This explains the complete change of heart on the part of some who travel to other lands on vacation or who relocate for purposes of work or study.

Living in an environment that is filled with sin, so you see one boasting about his latest misdemeanor, another humming popular song to himself, a third smoking, a fourth reading a pornographic magazine, a fifth cursing and swearing, and so on. As for talk about who said what to whom, gossip, backbiting and discussion about the latest football match, there is no end to it.

As for what goes on in the home – there is a lot we can say about the disasters and evil deeds that cause the

Muslim shame and hurt him deeply. Muslim homes are filled with shameless songs, vile movies, forbidden mixing of the sexes and so on. No doubt in such an environment hearts are stricken with the disease of hardness.

Another cause of weak faith and hard-heartedness is eating too much, sleeping too much, staying up too late, talking too much and mixing with people too much. Eating too much makes the brain slow and the body heavy, this, in turn, prevents a person from worshipping Allah and makes it easy for Shaytaan to tempt him. Talking too much hardens the heart, and mixing too much with people stops a person from having time to be alone and reflect on his own state. Laughing too much drains life from the heart. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said in a saheeh hadeeth: **(Do not laugh too much, for excessive laughter hardens the heart.) Narrated by Ibn-Maajah.** Time that is not filled with worship of Allah also leads to hard-heartedness, as a person pays heed to neither the rebukes of the Qur'aan nor the advice of faith.

Dear Muslims,

It is a great blessing that Allah created cure for every diseases. The cure of the lack of faith can be summarized in these points:

- Knowing and avoiding the reason that leads to this weakness.
- Remembrance of Allah, especially by reciting Quran with tenderness trying to understand the meaning of different verses. *"We sent down in the Quran that which is a cure and mercy for the faithful" Al-Israa 82*
- Persisting in doing good deeds and worships, doing more when possible, hoping for good end and fearing the bad end.
- Pray for Allah to help you strengthen your faith. Prophet Mohamed said: **(Iman (faith) wears out in one's heart, just as the dress wears out (becomes thin). Therefore, ask Allah to renew iman (Faith) in your hearts.) Narrated by Al-Hakim.**

We ask Allah to strengthen our faith and our belief, to help us doing the good and persist in doing it until we meet Him in the Judgment day.

Amen