

KHUTBA

Friday 25.03.11

English

Steadfastness until death

Summary:

- 1) Steadfastness upon the straight path is a sign of one's wisdom.
- 2) The Prophet's supplication to his Lord for steadfastness.
- 3) The need to supplicate for steadfastness in our time.
- 4) Ways which help one achieve steadfastness and protect from diversion.

O Muslims! Steadfastness upon the right way, maintaining oneself upon the straight path and avoiding other paths which lead one astray, are indications of wisdom and good sense in a person. The highest rank of steadfastness is upholding oneself upon Islam and protecting the heart from fluctuating.

For this reason, the fear of straying away from the right path was the main concern of the people of proper understanding and the way of those with sound minds and those firmly grounded in knowledge, those who desire for themselves means of access to their Lord, fear His punishment and hope for His mercy. Allah mentioned in the Qur'an how they supplicate and ask His help to remain steadfast and keep away from deviation as in the verse, which means: ***"It is He, Who has sent down to you the Book. In it are Verses that are entirely clear, they are the foundations of the Book (verses including commandments and penal laws); and others not entirely clear. So as for those on whose hearts there is a deviation they follow that which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking trials and seeking its hidden meanings, but none knows its hidden meanings except Allaah. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say, 'We believe in it, the whole of it is from our Lord'. And none receive admonition except men of understanding. (They say) Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us, and grant us from Your Mercy. Truly, You are the Bestower"*** (3: 7-8).

Slaves of Allah! This supplication which reflects humility and humbleness to Allah was the supplication of the best of creation, our Prophet (saws). Uttering this supplication is an indication of perfect imitation of the Prophet (saws), as 'Um Salamah, may Allah be pleased with her, said, **'The Prophet (saws) used to repeatedly say this supplication, "O Controller of the hearts! Make my heart steadfast upon Your religion" so I asked him, "O Prophet of Allah! Do hearts fluctuate?" He said, "Yes, all mankind's hearts are between two of the fingers of Allah. If Allaah wills He maintains a man's steadfastness, and if He wills He deviates him"** (Ahmad & Tirmithi)

Likewise, in the narration of Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, he said, **'The Prophet (saws) used to repeatedly say, "O Controller of the hearts! Make my heart steadfast upon Your religion" so I said to him, "O Prophet of Allah! We believed in you and in what you came with; do you fear that we may deviate?" He said, "Yes, all mankind's hearts are between two of the fingers of Allah. He changes them as He pleases."** (Tirmithi & Ibn Maajah)

If the Prophet (saws) feared a change of heart of those who were the cream of Muslims, the pioneers of Islam, the ones firmly grounded in faith, with strong certainty in Allah and sincere servitude to Him and are the best of all generations, as the Prophet informed us; if this fear was

regarding those people, then how would the case be concerning those who came after them, especially people in our era? This era during which trials are plentiful and successive; falsehood has spread everywhere under decorated banners; doubts and desires attacked people's hearts; misguiding temptations have attacked people through what they see, read and hear; and deviant ways have become strong and taken control over people's minds and hearts, such as the common sight of ladies who come out of their homes dressed but look as though they are naked.

In addition, a group of people have started slighting some of the commandments and tenets of Islam. The worst of this deviated trend is their doubting the Qur'an and its perfection or some of its rulings, casting doubts regarding the message of the Prophet (saws) and that it is not the final message or that it is not sufficient and useful for all times. They have even come to the point of doubting the Prophet (saws) himself, and how successful he was in his mission, his Sunnah and his conduct. These are a few examples of what some of the people of falsehood say or do, and there are many more.

Further, innovations have spread among other Muslims, and new practices, which are not a part of Islam, have been added to it. In some cases, their traditions and customs have been made a part of Islam, as well as acts of worship, which have no basis in our religion, have been invented, through which they hope to come closer to Allah and gain His reward.

Consequently, differences and disputes have increased between Muslims until brotherhood in faith has become jeopardized, and in some cases blood has been unlawfully shed between Muslims based on doubts. By doing so, people abandon the commandment of the Prophet (saws) when he said, **"Verily, your blood, your properties, and your honor are sacred for each other, just as sacred for you as this day in this month and in this city until you meet your Lord. Have I conveyed the message?"** the companions, may Allah be pleased with them, replied, **'Indeed' He (saws) said, "O Allah! Testify. Let those who are present inform those who are absent, because the person receiving the message might understand it better than the one who originally heard it. Do not become disbelievers after my death, and start killing each other"** Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, said, **'I swear by The One In Whose hands my soul is! His advice to his entire nation was, "do not become disbelievers after my death, and start killing each other"** (Bukhari).

The miserable situation of the Muslims of dispute and differences is pleasing to the enemies of Islam, who enjoy criticizing Islam. Through such situations, a Muslim fears the deviation of his heart, and his need for the help of Allah to make him steadfast increases, and the greatness of the afore mentioned supplication of the Prophet (saws) and the need for uttering it at all times, become evident.

There are ways by which a Muslim can be protected from deviation.

- Truthfulness in faith, strong certainty in Allah and sincerity in the belief in the Oneness of Allaah is one way. There can be no prosperity, salvation nor success except by fulfilling the belief in the oneness of Allah by adhering to the Sunnah and shunning all that opposes it. Shunning what opposes the Sunnah means abandoning innovations, because each innovation is misguidance. **The Prophet (saws) clarified this in the narration of Al-'Irbadh Ibn Sariyah, may Allah be pleased with him, "He amongst you who would live after my death will see many things which he does not recognise, so adhere to my Sunnah and the way of the rightly guided caliphs after me, stick to it and bite on it with your molar teeth; and beware of innovations, because every innovation is misguidance."** (Ahmad, Tirmidhi and others)

- Another means of protection from deviation is to hasten to persistently perform good deeds with sincerity to Allah before trials take place. **The Prophet (saws) said, "Hasten in performing**

good deeds before the time comes when trials would be as dark as nights; a man would wake up a Muslim and go to sleep a disbeliever, and go to sleep as a Muslim and wake up a disbeliever.”(Muslim)

Slaves of Allah! Fear Allah and take provisions from the way of the Prophet, because it is the best source for provisions, and ask Allah to keep your hearts steadfast upon Islam and to help you in staying away from deviation.

Slaves of Allah! Adhering to what pleases Allah is one of the major causes for remaining steadfast and staying away from deviation. **The Prophet (saws) said to his cousin ‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, “O young boy! I wish to instruct you in some matters; be watchful of Allah, (i.e. the commandments of Allah) He will be watchful of you. Safeguard His rights, He will always be with you; if you must beg, beg of Him alone; if you need assistance, supplicate to Allah alone for assistance, and remember that if all the people jointly desire to benefit you with something, they will be unable to benefit you, except with that which Allah has preordained for you. And if all of them intend to do harm to you, they will not be able to afflict you with anything except that which Allah has predestined against you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.” (Ahmad & Tirmidhi)**

Therefore, when a slave is watchful of Allah and safeguards His rights, Allah will be with the slave through his life until he dies upon the state of belief and Allah grants him Paradise. So fear Allah, and maintain all reasons of steadfastness and beware of what might deviate you. It is only when you do so that you will be succeed.