

## THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE FOR ALLAH

All praise is due to Allah ﷻ,<sup>2</sup> who deemed man worthy to be the foremost of His creation. Allah ﷻ states:

لقد خلقنا الإنسان في أحسن تقويم

*We indeed created humanity in the best of forms. (95:4)*

Allah ﷻ, the Lord of the universe, plants the seed of His love in the heart of every human at the time of their birth. This is why every person is born in the original state [*fitrah*] of Islam. A hadith states:

كل مولود يولد على فطرة الإسلام

*Every baby is born on the fitrah of Islam.*

It is this *fitrah*, rather than rational arguments, that compels every person to believe in the existence of Allah ﷻ and to worship Him alone.

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<sup>2</sup> ﷻ literally means, “Glorious and Exalted is He” and is mentioned after the name of Allah ﷻ.

*Life is given in order to worship,  
Life without worship is shameful.*

If the inherent love for Allah ﷻ was removed from humanity, nothing but bestiality would remain. Truly, nothing of worth exists in the temporary life of this world [*dunya*] other than love for Allah ﷻ.

Only when love for Allah ﷻ flourishes in the heart and captivates the eyes does life itself become wondrous.

*The way of love is unlike all other ways,  
The creed of lovers is distinct from all other creeds.*

Honor and disgrace in life are dependent upon love for Allah ﷻ. Allah ﷻ honors His servants with the verse:

و لقد كرّمنا بني آدم

*We have indeed honored mankind (17:70)*

and Allah ﷻ adorns man with the verse:

و فضلناهم على كثير

*And We have preferred them over many others. (17:70)*

Allah ﷻ bestows honor and respect upon humanity due to its love for Him.

*He who is the lover of the beauty of Allah  
Is the leader of all of creation.*

The crux of the beginning and end of life, its origin and destination, is love for Allah ﷻ.

*Love is the beginning; love is the end; love is everything,  
Love is the branch; love is the tree; love is the flower.*

Instead of sustaining and nourishing, infertile land causes a seed to erode and wither away. Similarly, rather than fostering love for Allah ﷻ, an environment saturated in sin engulfs and stifles the heart in heedlessness and neglect. In a nurturing environment, the seed of Allah's ﷻ love flourishes and blooms giving off a beautiful fragrance. In every virtuous environment, you will find that the awareness of Allah ﷻ is the focus of people's lives.

*One knows not the color and scent of this pleasant flower,  
That attracts every bird in the garden toward it.*



*So what if the enamored one is insane in the love of Allah?  
Look and you shall find the whole world His admirer.*

Truly, the degree to which Allah ﷻ has been sought; the zeal with which He has been loved; the extent to which He has been remembered; the yearning with which He has been invoked; the amount that He has been worshipped; and the fervor with which He has been admired and adored stands far above all else. No other entity in the universe bears comparison. All of creation loves Allah ﷻ.

#### PRINCIPLES PERTAINING TO LOVE FOR ALLAH

##### *The First Principle*

The human body is composed of limbs and organs, each with a unique trait: seeing is the trait of the eye; listening is the trait of the ear; and smelling is the trait of the nose. Similarly, loving is the trait of the heart; the heart is always in love with someone.

*Be it with a stone, God, or anyone else,  
There comes not tranquility without loving.*



*The heart is the ocean of love; love is its act,  
Guard it a thousand ways; it will still fall in love.*

*The Second Principle*

A person usually falls in love for two reasons. The first is when the beloved's essential being [*dhāt*] and attributes [*ṣifāt*] are distinct and superior to all others. Such is Allah ﷻ, who is perfect in every way and beyond any comparison. How beautiful and magnificent must the Creator of all the world's beauty be! It is only natural that a person is attracted to his Lord.

The second reason is when the beloved has authority and is involved in every aspect of one's life. Such is Allah ﷻ, who at any moment can relieve one's grief or sorrow. This is the reason why everyone instinctively turns to Allah ﷻ in times of distress.

*At every instance of grief, comfort was found in Thee,  
At every turn, bewildered, I took Thy name.*

*The Third Principle*

There is such sweetness and pleasure in the name of Allah ﷻ that by repeatedly invoking His name every sorrow is turned into joy.

*He who is distressed turns his attention in that direction,  
Certainly there must be something in the name of Allah.*

*The Fourth Principle*

A person should remain unaffected by the ever-changing conditions of life and remember Allah ﷻ at every moment.

*Although trapped daily to earn a livelihood,  
Never did I neglect thinking of You.*

*The Fifth Principle*

The heart that is not imprinted with love for Allah ﷻ finds no pleasure in living. Whatever one's state, never should the court of the True Beloved ﷻ be abandoned.

*The Sixth Principle*

The person whose heart experiences the sweetness of love for Allah ﷻ attains focus and tranquility in life.

*Seeking neither means nor objects, my needs I myself fulfill,  
By thanking You, thinking of You, and taking Your name.*

*The Seventh Principle*

No veils remain on the perception of what exists between the Throne [*'Arsh*] of Allah ﷻ and the ground for he whose eyes are adorned with the antimony [*kuhl*] of the love of Allah ﷻ. When the one who loves Allah ﷻ [*'ashiq*] gazes introspectively, he perceives himself full of sin and defects. And when he directs his gaze upon the Beloved ﷻ, he finds Him to be the endower and bestower of all things. Consequently, he places all hope in Him and waits expectantly at His door.

إلهي كيف أدعوك و أنا عاص  
و كيف لا أدعوك و أنت كريم

*O Allah, how may I call unto You, when I am but a sinner,  
Yet how may I not call unto You, when You are the Most Gracious?*

*The Eighth Principle*

The 'āshiq is never heedless of the True Beloved ﷺ; not even for a moment. He remains waiting in vigil, knowing not when the doors of his Beloved ﷺ might open.

*Be not heedless of the Lord for even the blink of an eye,  
Lest He direct His attention toward you, and find you unaware.*

It is for this reason that the scholars of *tasannuf*<sup>3</sup> have said:

من غمض عينه عن الله تعالى طرفة عين لم يصل إلى مقصوده

*The person who diverts his attention from Allah for even  
the blink of an eye will not attain his goal.*

*The Ninth Principle*

There is no place in the heart of an 'āshiq for anyone other than his Beloved ﷺ. Although he is unable to see the True Beloved ﷺ with his physical eyes, he is able to perceive Him with the eyes of his heart.

حبيب ليس بعد له حبيب  
و ما لسواه نصيب  
حبيب غائب عن بصري و شخصي  
و لكن عن فؤادي لا يغيب

*My Beloved is such that there is no beloved besides Him,  
Nor is there place in my heart for any other.  
My Beloved may be hidden from my sight,  
But He is not absent from my heart.*

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<sup>3</sup> *Tasannuf* is the science of the purification of the heart and soul.

*The Tenth Principle*

The sole objective of a sincere 'āshiq is to meet his Beloved ﷺ. He passes his entire life in anticipation of this meeting. His heart refuses to be attracted toward anything else.

أنت أنسي و همتي و سروري  
قد أبقى القلب أن يحب سواكا  
يا عزيزي و همتي و مرادي  
طال شوقي متى يكون لقاكا  
ليس سؤالي من الجنان نعيم  
غير أني أريد لقاكا

*You are my dear, my motivation, my happiness,  
My heart refuses to love any other besides You.  
Oh my dear, my motivation, my desire,  
Long have I been yearning, when will I finally meet You?  
I seek not the comforts of Heaven, my desire is only to meet You.*

*The Eleventh Principle*

An 'āshiq always yearns to join his Beloved ﷺ. This is the sole thought occupying his mind.

*You are the true innermost desire of my heart,  
Love of You is the deepest thought in my mind.  
Whenever I glance at the world around me,  
I find that today there was naught but You,  
And that tomorrow holds naught but You.*

*The Twelfth Principle*

When an 'āshiq looks around, he finds the heedless people of the world [ghāfil al-dunyā] trapped in their desires. To him the world seems like a cage.

*The Thirteenth Principle*

Love for Allah ﷻ removes everything except Allah ﷻ from the heart of the sincere ‘*ashiq*. Indeed, his heart has no place for anything other than Allah ﷻ.

*The Fourteenth Principle*

The heart of the ‘*ashiq* desires to sacrifice everything for the sake of his Beloved ﷻ.

*May I forget everything in Your remembrance,  
And may I remember not anyone else.  
May I forsake unto Thee all dear to my heart,  
And may my heart be filled by You.  
May I set fire to my joys and happiness,  
And may my heart ache for Thee alone.  
May I be blinded to all I know,  
And may I turn only to Thee and none other.*

*The Fifteenth Principle*

In the material world [*dunya*], a person receives many things, while many other things remain out of reach. Whatever a person lacks, its substitute exists somewhere in the world. However, if someone is distant from Allah ﷻ, no substitute exists anywhere.

لكل شئى إذا فارقته عوض  
و ليس لله إن فارقت من عوض

*For everything that you part from, there is a replacement,  
But if you disassociate from Allah, there is no replacement for Him.*

*Hadrat*<sup>4</sup> Abu Hurairah رضي الله عنه<sup>5</sup> reported that the blessed Prophet ﷺ<sup>6</sup> said that the best saying in the Arabic language is the poem of Labid:

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<sup>4</sup> *Hadrat* literally means, “the venerable” and is used as a title of respect before the name of a religious figure.



ألا كل شئ ما خلا الله باطل  
و كل نعيم لا محالة ذائل

*Verily, everything except Allah is false and spurious  
And every blessing is undeniably fleeting and short-lived.*

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE FOR ALLAH

Allah ﷻ states in the Glorious Quran:

و الذين ءامنوا أشد حبا لله

*And those who believe are intense in their love for Allah. (2:165)*

The sign of complete and perfect faith [*imān*] is deep and intense love for Allah ﷻ. This love remains constant over time, unaffected by the ever-changing conditions of life.

*Love may be called love, but it is not love if it lacks intensity,  
The ways of love are well established; there is no room for  
innovation.*

Love for Allah ﷻ changes the bitterness in a person's life to sweetness. No depression or anxiety afflicts the one who is attached to his Lord.

*Love causes the bitter to become sweet, and silver to turn to gold,  
Love erases all difficulty; love is the cure for all pain.*

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<sup>5</sup> ﷺ literally means, “may Allah be pleased with him” and is mentioned after the name of a Companion of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

<sup>6</sup> ﷺ literally means, “may Allah bless him and grant him peace” and is mentioned after the name of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

## THE DEFINITION OF LOVE

*Hadrat* Shibli (rah)<sup>7</sup> said:

سميت المحبة لأنها تمحو من القلب ما سوى المحبوب

*Muhabbah [love] is called muhabbah because it erases everything from the heart except the Beloved.*

The renowned master [*ustādh*] Abul Qasim Qushayri (rah) said:

المحبة محو المحب لصفاته و إثبات المحبوب بذاته

*Muhabbah is the erasure of the qualities [sifāt] of the lover, affirming the essential being [dhāt] of the Beloved.*

*Hadrat* Samnun Muhibb (rah) used to say:

ذهب المحبون لله بشرف الدنيا و الآخرة لأن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم قال  
المرء مع من أحب

*The lovers of Allah have taken the honor of this world and the honor of the Hereafter because the blessed Prophet ﷺ said: "A man will be with whom he loves."*

*Muhabbah* is the name of a condition of the heart where the lover is restless to meet the Beloved ﷺ. When Allah ﷻ revealed the verse, in which He swears:

لعمرك

*By your age, (15:72)*

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<sup>7</sup> (rah) represents رحمة الله عليه which literally means, "may the mercy of Allah be upon him" and is mentioned after the name of a religious figure.

the blessed Prophet ﷺ stood so long in prayer that his feet became swollen. Allah ﷻ then revealed:

طه ما أنزلنا عليك القرآن لتشقى

*Ta Ha. We did not send unto you [O blessed Prophet] the Quran to cause you difficulty. (20:1-2)*

Imam Ghazali (rah) fell unconscious when he heard someone reciting the following couplet:

لقد لسعت حية الهوى كبدي  
فلا طبيب لها ولا راتي  
إلا الحبيب الذي شغف  
فعنده رقتي و ترياق

*The snake of love has stung my heart,  
There is no doctor or charmer to cure it  
Except the Beloved who fills my heart,  
With Him lies my cure and charm.*

A doctor was then called who, upon checking his pulse and examining his condition, declared that Imam Ghazali (rah) was suffering from the sickness of *muhabbab*.

#### TWO TRUE MAXIMS

In the realm of intense love [*'ishq*] and *muhabbab* two tenets are well established:

##### *The First Maxim*

No matter how much an *'ashiq* may praise the beauty and majesty of the True Beloved ﷻ, it always remains insufficient. Allah ﷻ states:

قل لو كان البحر مدادا لكلمت ربي لنفد البحر قبل أن تنفد كلمت ربي و لو  
جئنا بمثله مدادا

*Say [O blessed Prophet]: Were the sea ink for the words  
of my Lord, verily the sea would be depleted before the  
Words of my Lord were exhausted, even if We brought  
the like thereof [another sea] to help. (18:109)*

*The Second Maxim*

Allah ﷻ announces the name of the person who loves Him throughout the world. A hadith states that when a person draws near to Allah ﷻ through abundant worship [*ibadah*], then Allah ﷻ tells the Angel Jibril ﷺ<sup>8</sup> to take his name and announce it throughout the heavens and the Earth, “O people! Know that Allah loves so-and-so.”

ثم يوضع له القبول في الأرض

*Then acceptance is decreed for him on Earth.*

ﷺ

*He whose heart is alive with love does not die,  
Rather his imprint lasts forever, recorded in the annals of history.*

PROOFS OF ALLAH’S LOVE FOR HIS CREATION

A *hadith qudsi*<sup>9</sup> relates:

كنت كنزا مخفيا فأحببت أن أعرف فخلقت الخلق

*I (Allah) was a Hidden Treasure, then I wished to be  
known, therefore I created the universe.*

<sup>8</sup> ﷺ literally means, “may peace be upon him” and is mentioned after the names of Angels and Prophets of Allah ﷻ.

<sup>9</sup> A *hadith qudsi* is a narration in which Prophet Muhammad ﷺ relates a statement and attributes it directly to Allah ﷻ.

Thus, *'ishq*, *mubabbah*, and yearning were the motives behind the creation of the universe.

*Love is the reason for the creation of the universe.  
Reflect upon the words of your Lord: 'I wished to be known.'*

*The First Proof of Allah's Love for Creation*

Allah ﷻ loves the believers and therefore states:

الله ولي الذين ءامنوا

*Allah is the Friend of those who believe. (2:257)*

It would have been suitable to say, “*Those who believe* are the friends of Allah,” as it is *man* who befriends Allah ﷻ by professing the testimony of faith [*kalimah*] and becoming Muslim. Yet, Allah ﷻ revealed: “*Allah* is the Friend of those who believe,” befriending the believers Himself. After being bestowed with the honor of Allah’s ﷻ friendship, how can a person help but to sacrifice all for his Lord.

The Quran states that Allah ﷻ will create a nation such that:

يحبهم و يحبونه

*Allah will love them and they will love Him. (5:54)*

In this verse as well, Allah ﷻ first ascribes the attribute of loving to Himself, and then mentions the love of the believers.

*The Second Proof of Allah's Love for Creation*

Allah ﷻ states:

إن الله اشترى من المؤمنين أنفسهم و أموالهم بأن لهم الجنة

*Indeed, Allah has purchased from the believers their souls and wealth in exchange for Heaven. (9:111)*

A buyer's insistence on purchasing an item, despite his awareness of its defects, implies that the item is desirable irrespective of its faults. Allah ﷻ created humanity and is well aware of its faults and defects. He knows that man is weak [*daij*] (4:28), hasty [*ajūlā*] (17:11), impatient [*balū'a*] (70:19), stingy [*manū'a*] (70:21), and irritable [*jazū'a*] (70:20). Yet Allah ﷻ still chose to purchase him in exchange for Heaven. This is an indication that Allah ﷻ loves those who believe.

*The Third Proof of Allah's Love for Creation*

*Hadrat Bayazid Bustami (rah) used to say:*

المحبة استقلال الكثير من نفسك و استكثار القليل من حبيبك

*Muhabbah is to find trifling that which is given from oneself (to the Beloved), even though it is great; and to find great that which is received from one's Beloved, even if it is miniscule.*

Allah ﷻ bestows so many blessings on His servants that it is impossible to count them:

و إن تعدوا نعمت الله لا تحصوها

*If you try to count the blessings of Allah, you will be unable to enumerate them. (14:34)*

Nevertheless, despite these innumerable blessings, Allah ﷻ describes the material world as minimal:

قل متاع الدنيا قليل

*Say [O blessed Prophet], the goods of the material world are but a trifle. (4:77)*

Allah ﷻ devalued His gift of unlimited blessings to a trifle. Yet when His servants remember their Lord, Allah ﷻ described their limited remembrance [*dhikr*] as abundant:

و الذكـرين الله كثيرا

*...and those who remember Allah abundantly. (33:35)*

This also is proof that Allah ﷻ has great love for the believers.

#### CONCLUSION

Allah's ﷻ love for the believers is mirrored in their hearts, causing them to overflow with His love.

و الذين ءامنوا أشد حبا لله

*And those who believe have intense love for Allah. (2:165)*