

## LOVE FOR ALLAH IN PRESENT TIMES

In the present era, people have become so preoccupied in satisfying the needs of their bodies that they are oblivious of Allah ﷻ. Everyone is prey to the deceits of their base desires [*nafs*] and is absorbed in submitting to whatever these desires dictate.

*I found no one whose heart's condition was sound and true,  
I found worshippers of idols, but found not a worshipper of Allah.*

It seems that those chests that used to glow like burning red coal due to an intense love for Allah ﷻ are today no more than heaps of ash. People have become unfamiliar with the inner reality [*haqiqah*] of worship. They attend the prayer, yet remain absent in spirit. They abstain from food and drink while fasting, yet they do not wholly refrain from sin. Their state of fasting extends to their stomachs, yet fails to encompass their eyes.

*The frenzy of love no longer remains,  
That (passionate) heart, that yearning, are no more,  
Prayer, fasting, qurbānī, and Hajj all remain,  
But love for You is no more.*

There was once a time when young men and women used to awaken in the last portion of the night to prostrate before Allah ﷻ and to warm their hearts with the *dhikr* of “*Lā ilaha illa’Llah.*” Today, the faces of those who restlessly passed the night away, yearning for the Beloved ﷻ, are seen no more.

Those believers whose gaze could pierce the hearts are no longer to be found.

*The hearts trembled in the breast due to your gaze,  
Alas, the devotion of the pious is no longer among us.*

It is for this reason that the Muslims of today are overpowered by cowardice, so much so that they are afraid even of the dark. They fear going to a desolate place. Even the clawing of a cat frightens them. It is amazing that a Muslim who is scared of the mere ruffling of a window curtain, does not fear Allah ﷻ. It is unfathomable why the fear of creation constantly preoccupies man’s heart; fear that one’s employer may become angry, fear that one’s wife may become angry, fear that if one speaks the truth then so-and-so might become angry, or fear that if a marriage is celebrated in a simple manner then relatives may become angry. The reality is that until the heart is purified and one’s gaze becomes pure, a person cannot become courageous.

*The heart is free from passion for Allah, the gaze is not pure,  
What surprise is it then, that you are not courageous?*

Our predecessors [*aslāf*] safeguarded the respect and honor of women at a time when people used to sell their own sisters. They prostrated before Allah ﷻ at a time when people used to bow before others. They opposed tyranny at a time when people proudly committed oppression. The Muslims of today bear only a superficial resemblance to them. In terms of spiritual piety, we

are as far from them as the sky is from the Earth. They were seekers of Allah ﷻ and we are seekers of the material world [*dunyā*]. They annihilated their base desires [*nafs*], while we submit to ours. They were people who strove on the Straight Path, while we passively draw near to our graves. They were kind and welcoming toward one another, whereas we have anger and spite toward one another. They maintained their honor and dignity, whereas we have lost all respect. Their hearts were full of love for Allah ﷻ while our hearts are devoid of such love. Our disgraceful condition has reached such an abyss that even the supplications [*du'ā*] of our pious ones have lost effect, save those that are accepted by the will of Allah ﷻ.

*I spent one night crying profusely before Allah,  
Asking Him why the Muslims have become so disgraced,  
A voice said, 'You know well that while the Muslims have hearts,  
Their hearts are devoid of the Beloved.'*

Those who have purified their hearts are deeply concerned with the fallen state of the Muslims and earnestly supplicate to their Lord to rectify this condition.

Today, there are very few people who remain awake throughout the night in acts of worship [*'ibādāt*], and there are even fewer who use this time to win over the Beloved ﷻ through tears and desire. The first portion of the night is indulged in fun and entertainment and the last portion is spent sleeping and dreaming. To sleep soon after the night prayer [*'isba*] is a *sunnah*. Nowadays, many shops begin to get crowded after the night prayer. In particular, shops where food and drink are sold remain open until two in the morning. When it is two o'clock, and the time of the night vigil [*tahajjud*] begins, these people head for their beds and then miss the morning prayer [*ḥajj*]. Many people have passed years without witnessing dawn or sunrise. The person who claims

to be unable to wake up for the morning prayer at dawn, regularly awakens shortly thereafter eager for breakfast.

If a person is offered a wage of one hundred dollars to remain awake the entire night and stand guard, he will readily sacrifice his night's sleep. Yet on the night he is off-duty, if he is asked to stay awake for half the night and pray the night vigil [*tabajjud*], he will reply that he is unable to wake up. Thus, in his eyes, the value of *tabajjud* is not even fifty dollars, even though in the last portion of the night the angels announce in the sky:

من سائل فأعطى له

*Is there anyone asking for something that it may be granted to him?*

From the Giver there is an offer, but the one who could have accepted it is snoring loudly, deep in sleep.

Once a man was offering his prayer when a woman with her head uncovered passed in front of him, crying and screaming. The man quickly completed his prayer and admonished her, "O servant of Allah ﷻ, are you blind? I was praying and you disrespectfully passed in front of me." The woman replied, "If you permit, I would like to tell you something." The man said, "Fine." She said, "My husband divorced me, and because of the love I had for him, I became deranged and did not notice that I passed in front of you. But, what kind of sincere '*ashiq*' are you that even in your prayer you are aware of who passes in front of you? Do you offer prayer whilst looking at your Master or at women passing in front of you? What of the command:

أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه

*...that you worship Allah as if you are seeing Him.*

In our time, there is an increasing tendency in the Friday prayer [*jumu'ab*] toward journalistic talks on current events. Indeed, while our pious predecessors prepared their Friday sermons from the books of Quranic exegesis [*tafsir*] and hadith, today the Friday lecture is prepared from newspapers.

*Every word of the speaker's lecture is entertaining,  
But alas, there is no love for the Creator in his eyes,  
Nor the radiance of certainty of faith on his face.*

Nowadays, the sanctuaries devoted to spiritual reform [*khānaqahs*] are also becoming empty. Even those persons connected to spiritual guides [*mashā'ikh*] do not have time to perform *dhikr*. It has become increasingly difficult to recite invocations [*tasbeehāt*] or to fill one's heart with spiritual radiance [*nūr*].

We should thank Allah ﷻ that even today some people remain who are grieved by the lack of love for Allah ﷻ. Their existence itself is a blessing.