

# RAMADAN

## IMMERSION



Imam Ali Hofioni

### 1. The Eyes (Cont.)

- We must turn our gaze into an act of worship, prioritizing our servitude to Allah above all else.
- Our eyes should be protected from four major things:
  - 1. Looking at things that are haram (forbidden):
    - This refers to looking at the opposite gender that are not from our immediate family or close relatives.
    - The first gaze is forgiven; meaning it is an accidental, unintentional glance, but a deliberate second look is prohibited.
      - Ali reported: The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

لَا تُتَّبِعِ النَّظْرَةَ النَّظْرَةَ الْأُولَى لَكَ وَالْآخِرَةُ عَلَيْكَ

*“Do not follow one glance at a woman with another. You are excused for the first but the second will be counted against you.” (Sharh Mushkil al-Athar)*

- Our limbs are streams into the heart's reservoir. Allowing the eyes to gaze upon anything haram corrupts the heart, just as a small amount of filth pollutes a whole river.
- 2. Looking at things with desire:
  - This goes beyond just looking at the opposite gender. It means looking at things like wealth, someone's house, or a person) with intense, lingering desire, longing, or lustful intent.

- 3. Looking at other Muslims with disdain:
  - This pertains to looking at another person with hatred, contempt, pride, or feeling superior to them.
  - Because Allah is the Creator of all things, we should not hold hate for His creation.
  - Scholars emphasize distinguishing between actions and individuals: we despise the evil action, not the person.
- 4. Looking at other Muslims to find fault:
  - This refers to intentionally searching for, focusing on, scrutinizing or highlighting the shortcomings, flaws, and sins of other Muslims.
    - Khalid bin Ma'dan narrated from Mu'adh bin Jabal that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

**" مَنْ عَيَّرَ أَخَاهُ بِذَنْبٍ لَمْ يَمُتْ حَتَّى يَعْمَلَهُ "**

*"Whoever shames his brother for a sin, he shall not die until he (himself) commits it."  
 (Jami` at-Tirmidhi)*

- Hasan al-Basri remarked: "If you taunt him for his sin, then verily Allah will punish you such that you will not die until you have committed that sin."
- We should not take pleasure in discussing other people's lives — talking just for chatter, for the sake of entertainment or vanity should be avoided.
- In some cases, if we have something to say, ensure it is true and necessary — it is fine to discuss facts.
- A Muslim should invest their time in beneficial actions rather than wasting time on matters that do not concern them.
- According to Hasan al-Basri, one of the signs that Allah has turned away from a person is that He makes them occupied with that which does not concern them.
- This is a reminder that being obsessed with other people's affairs is a sign of Allah's abandonment.

## 2. The Ears

- Our ears should be protected from hearing innovations (bid'ah) — staying away from backbiting, obscene speech, falsehoods, speaking ill of people or from any person of innovation and their type of words.
- Definition of bid'ah:
  - Refers to a newly invented matter. It means someone adding something new to Islam as a means of worship.
  - A majority of scholars classify bid'ah into multiple categories — there are various types.
    - For example, during his Caliphate, Umar ibn al-Khattab used the term bid'ah for taraweeh prayer to denote something newly arranged rather than a religious innovation that contradicts the Sunnah.
      - 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Abdul Qari said,

لَيْلَةً فِي رَمَضَانَ، إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ، فَإِذَا النَّاسُ أَوْزَاعٌ مُتَفَرِّقُونَ يُصَلِّي الرَّجُلُ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَيُصَلِّي الرَّجُلُ فَيُصَلِّي بِصَلَاتِهِ الرَّهْطُ فَقَالَ عُمَرُ إِنِّي أَرَى لَوْ جَمَعْتُ هَؤُلَاءِ عَلَى قَارِيٍّ وَاحِدٍ لَكَانَ أَمْثَلًا. ثُمَّ عَزَمَ فَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى أَبِي بِنِ كَعْبٍ، ثُمَّ خَرَجْتُ مَعَهُ لَيْلَةً أُخْرَى، وَالنَّاسُ يُصَلُّونَ بِصَلَاةِ قَارِيهِمْ، قَالَ عُمَرُ نِعَمَ الْبِدْعَةِ هَذِهِ، وَالَّتِي يَنَامُونَ عَنْهَا أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الَّتِي يَقُومُونَ. يُرِيدُ أَخِرَ اللَّيْلِ، وَكَانَ النَّاسُ يَقُومُونَ أَوَّلَهُ.

*"I went out in the company of 'Umar bin Al-Khattab one night in Ramadan to the mosque and found the people praying in different groups. A man praying alone or a man praying with a little group behind him. So, 'Umar said, 'In my opinion I would better collect these (people) under the leadership of one Qari (Reciter) (i.e. let them pray in congregation!)'. So, he made up his mind to congregate them behind Ubai bin Ka'b. Then on another night I went again in his company and the people were praying behind their reciter. On that, 'Umar remarked, 'What an excellent Bid'a (i.e. innovation in religion) this is; but the prayer which they do not perform, but sleep at its time is better than the one they are offering.' He meant the prayer in the last part of the night. (In those days) people used to pray in the early part of the night." (Sahih al-Bukhari)*

- Another example is following a person (i.e. spiritual leader) who dresses in a specific way or performs specific unprescribed actions that are believed to be a necessary part of piety or a Sunnah, to be seen by people, to gain followers, or to be admired — this is not tazkiyatun nafs (purification of the soul) but a bid'ah.
  - Relying on random social media reels for Islamic knowledge from unknown sources can lead to confusion, misguidance and possibly bid'ah. Hence, we should not depend on them.
  - A key condition for learning is to acquire knowledge from verified, qualified people of knowledge (scholars). Our journey requires a structured approach:
    - 1. Marifa — knowing Allah through sound Aqidah
    - 2. Shariah — practicing Fiqh to distinguish halal and haram
    - 3. Tariqa — purifying the heart and soul through spiritual rectification
- Actively listening to, encouraging, or enjoying backbiting makes a person a partner in that sin. Scholars and hadith emphasize that the listener is considered one of the two backbiters, as silent approval is viewed as a form of participation in the wrongdoing.

### 3. The Tongue

- The tongue's main function is the remembrance of Allah — reciting the Qur'an, reminding ourselves of the deen, and expressing our needs through du'a.
- The name of Allah is free from all defects — it is extremely pure. When we remember Him on our tongues, it is as if we are washing it clean of any impurity.
  - A scholar once said: "Whenever you mention His name on your tongue, do you not think it purifies your tongue from its previous habits?"
- Using our tongues for anything other than the remembrance of Allah is a form of ingratitude for His blessings.

- Our words hold immense power. According to hadith, the misuse of the tongue is the primary reason people are cast into Hellfire.
  - The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "People are thrown onto their faces in Hell for anything other than the harvest of their tongues." (Sunan Ibn Majah)
- We should strive to guard our tongues and think before speaking, as even insignificant words can lead to severe punishment.
  - Abu Hurairah reported: I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying,

إن العبد ليتكلم بالكلمة ما يتبين فيها يزل بها إلى النار أبعد مما بين المشرق والمغرب  
*"A person utters a word thoughtlessly (i.e., without thinking about its being good or not) and, as a result of this, he will fall down into the fire of Hell deeper than the distance between the east and the west." (Al-Bukhari & Muslim)*

- Even with the high reward of martyrdom, the Prophet (ﷺ) warned that misuse of the tongue can wipe out one's good deeds, highlighting the severe consequences of speech.
- We should practice a 'fast of words' by applying the same discipline of abstinence to our speech that we apply to food, ensuring we control our tongues even when not actively fasting.
- A pious scholar of the past used to carry a notebook with him, recording every single word he spoke throughout the day. At night, he would review his notes, questioning each entry: "Is this a word Allah will use against me, or for me on the Day of Judgment?"
- This teaches us to speak sparingly throughout the day and measure our words carefully as we live in a time of loose talk, which is the opposite of wisdom.
- Speak less to people, speak more to Allah. Excessive talking doesn't build respect; it erodes it. When a person speaks too much, their words lose value and their status drops.

- Our tongues should be protected from eight major things:
  - 1. Lying
  - 2. Breaking promises
  - 3. Backbiting
  - 4. Disputation, argumentation and competitive debate
  - 5. Self-glorification
  - 6. Cursing
  - 7. Supplication against creation
  - 8. Ridiculing, mocking, and making fun of people
- 1. Lying
  - Lying is a defining characteristic of the munafiqeen (hypocrites) and a manifestation of hypocrisy.
  - The sin of lying does not just affect the liar; it harms one's own family members. As Sufyan al-Thawri mentioned that the liar will see the repercussions of their lies in their family members in the dunya.
  - Lying is one of the most despised acts in the dunya. However, Prophetic teachings permit it in exceptional circumstances such as to protect lives, prevent severe harm, or reconcile disputes.