

SUMMER IMMERSION

PREPARATION FOR PROPHETHOOD



Mufti Abdul Wahab Waheed

SESSION 2

Ayah 4

- Allah commands the believers to stand at night and keep reciting the Qur'an.
- Scholars emphasize that extensive recitation is superior to simply maximizing the number of prayer units (rak'ahs). Ideally, a balance of both quality recitation and prayer is best.
- Tilawah (recitation of the Qur'an) is necessary in Salah. It denotes a direct conversation with Allah, and the true sweetness of Salah comes from this intimate connection.
- Reciting the Qur'an offers spiritual benefits and deep impact, even for those with little to no understanding of Arabic.
- Keep reading the Qur'an even if you struggle with Tajweed or know limited Surahs. Focus on repetition, not perfection.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) comforted those who find Qur'an recitation difficult.

◦ Narrated Aisha: The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"مَثَلُ الَّذِي يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ وَهُوَ حَافِظٌ لَهُ مَعَ السَّفَرَةِ الْكِرَامِ الْبَرَّةِ، وَمَثَلُ الَّذِي يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ وَهُوَ يَتَعَاهَدُهُ وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ شَدِيدٌ، فَلَهُ أَجْرَانِ."

"Such a person as recites the Qur'an and masters it by heart, will be with the noble righteous scribes (in Heaven). And such a person exerts himself to learn the Qur'an by heart, and recites it with great difficulty, will have a double reward." (Sahih al-Bukhari)

- Different opinions on the definition of Tartil:
 - Organizing in a specific order:
 - Ibn Ashur explains that Rattil means to put something in a specific order, to ensure clarity.
 - Articulating distinctly and beautifully:
 - In Arabic, it carries the physical meaning of arranging, stringing, or spacing objects out evenly and precisely — much like perfectly aligned and evenly spaced bricks in a well-built wall.
 - Just as bricks must be perfectly spaced and aligned to ensure a wall is solid and beautiful, scholars note that in application, this encompasses two main principles:
 - 1. Distinct and clear pronunciation:
 - Every letter must be articulated clearly and without rushing so that the listener can understand each word.
 - The command here is to recite the Qur'an slowly and deliberately, instead of reciting the Qur'an to ponder. Thus, we should recite as much as we can during the night prayer as well as in the day.
 - Reflecting on its meaning is a separate and equally important concept. We should balance frequent recitation with deep contemplation.
 - 2. Beautification of recitation:
 - It involves a measured, melodious tone that elevates and beautifies the text rather than reading it plainly.
 - Fadalah ibn 'Ubayd reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said,

لِلَّهِ أَشَدُّ أَدْنًا إِلَى الرَّجُلِ الْحَسَنِ الصَّوْتِ بِالْقُرْآنِ يَجْهَرُ بِهِ مِنْ صَاحِبِ الْقَيْنَةِ إِلَى قَيْنَتِهِ
"Allah listens more intently to a man reciting the Quran aloud in a beautiful voice than an employer of singers listens to his singers. (Sunan Ibn Majah)

- Allah pairs "Rattil" with "Tartil" in the same verse. This specific structure serves as an absolute grammatical emphasis. By combining both words in the same verse, Allah signifies that the reader must recite the Qur'an with the utmost possible care, absolute clarity, and perfect deliberation.

Ayah 5

- قَوْل (Qawl) — Refers to a saying, speech, word, or statement.
- ثَقِيل (Thaqīl) — Means heavy, weighty or burdensome.
- ثَقْل (Thiqal) — Refers to heaviness, but it is not a burden of distress. It is a weight of substance, purpose, and truth.
- The revelation of the Qur'an is weighty, but it is not meant to overwhelm us.
 - Allah tells the Prophet (ﷺ):

مَا أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لِتَشْقَىٰ

We have not sent down to you the Qur'an that you be distressed (20:2)

- While believers embraced Quranic verses with excitement, the polytheists and hypocrites viewed them as a heavy burden.
- The Qur'an describes the manipulative tactics of Fir'awn using the word استخف (istakhaffa). It means to belittle or to make something light. Khafif (خفيف) literally means light or frivolous. Meaning, he devalued them and made them feel weak, worthless or insignificant.

فَاسْتَخَفَّ قَوْمَهُ فَاطَاعُوهُ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ

So he fooled (or belittled) his people, and they obeyed him. Indeed, they were a defiantly disobedient people." (43:54)

- In our tradition, validation is in the eyes of Allah. A believer rests in the absolute certainty that Allah supports them through all of life's trials. Allah alone holds all power, and He provided us with thiqal through the Qur'an.

- When a person anchors themselves in the Qur'an, it provides an existential weight that stabilizes them against modern anxieties, and feelings of insignificance.
- The Qur'an gives a solid foundation so that our values and principles do not shake when faced with life's trials and it is required for us to stand firm amidst the frivolous distractions of the world.
- Different opinions on the definition of Thaql:
 - 1. Commandments
 - It refers to the commandments of the Qur'an being heavy.
 - Allah informs the Prophet (ﷺ) that the commandments in the Qur'an carry a profound weight, and people will find them challenging to fulfill.
 - 2. Revelation
 - It refers to revelation that is heavy upon the Prophet (ﷺ). This is the majority opinion.
 - Allah tells us:

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَاهُ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ

If We had sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allah. (59:21)

- The sincerity of a believer is the greatest force, even stronger than the mighty forces of nature — the mountains, iron, fire, water and wind.
- Anas bin Malik narrated that: The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"لَمَّا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْأَرْضَ جَعَلَتْ تَمِيدُ فَخَلَقَ الْجِبَالَ فَعَادَ بِهَا عَلَيْهَا فَاسْتَقَرَّتْ فَعَجِبَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ شِدَّةِ الْجِبَالِ قَالُوا يَا رَبِّ هَلْ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ شَيْءٌ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ قَالَ نَعَمْ الْحَدِيدُ . قَالُوا يَا رَبِّ فَهَلْ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ شَيْءٌ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْحَدِيدِ قَالَ نَعَمْ النَّارُ . فَقَالُوا يَا رَبِّ فَهَلْ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ شَيْءٌ أَشَدُّ مِنَ النَّارِ قَالَ نَعَمْ الْمَاءُ . قَالُوا يَا رَبِّ فَهَلْ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ شَيْءٌ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْمَاءِ قَالَ نَعَمْ الرِّيحُ قَالُوا يَا رَبِّ فَهَلْ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ شَيْءٌ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الرِّيحِ قَالَ نَعَمْ ابْنُ آدَمَ تَصَدَّقْ بِصَدَقَةٍ يَمِينِهِ يُخَفِّيَهَا مِنْ شِمَالِهِ "

"When Allah created the earth, it started shaking. So He created the mountains, and said to them: 'Upon it' so it began to settle. The angels were amazed at the strength of the mountains, so they said: 'O Lord! Is there among your creatures one who is more severe than the mountains?' He said: 'Yes. Iron.' They said: 'O Lord! Then is there anything among your creatures that is more severe than that iron?' He said: 'Yes. Fire.' So they said: 'O Lord! Is there anything among your creatures that is more severe than fire?' He said: 'Yes. Water.' They said: 'O Lord! Is there anything among your creatures that is more severe than water?' He said: 'Yes. Wind.' They said: 'O Lord! Is there anything among your creatures more severe than wind?' He said: 'Yes. The son of Adam. He gives charity with his right hands, while hiding it from his left.'"
(Jami` at-Tirmidhi)

- This is exactly why humans are uniquely equipped to carry and uphold the weight of revelation. Thus, the duty of da'wah rests entirely upon our shoulders, as does the preservation of Islam and iman in this world.
- Accepting the responsibility of the Qur'an is a unique honor granted only to humanity. Declining this duty makes a person an oppressor, as human beings are the sole creation chosen by Allah for this privilege.
- The physical weight of revelation was so intense that it visibly affected both the Prophet (ﷺ) and his surroundings.
 - Zayd ibn Thabit recounted: "...Allah revealed to His Apostle while his thigh was on my thigh, and his thigh became so heavy that I was afraid it might fracture my thigh." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)
 - Even the animals felt its weightiness. Camels or horses carrying the Prophet (ﷺ) would often buckle, sweat profusely, or kneel completely unable to bear the weight.
 - The Prophet (ﷺ) would sweat heavily, even on freezing winter days, due to the intensity of the experience.

- Aisha narrated:

وَلَقَدْ رَأَيْتُهُ يَنْزِلُ عَلَيْهِ الْوَحْيُ فِي الْيَوْمِ الشَّدِيدِ الْبَرْدِ، فَيَفْصِمُ عَنْهُ وَإِنَّ جَبِينَهُ لَيَتَفَصَّدُ عَرَقًا.
"Verily I saw the Prophet (ﷺ) being inspired divinely on a very cold day and noticed the sweat dropping from his forehead (as the Inspiration was over)."(Sahih Al-Bukhari)

- 3. Daw'ah
 - Every believer bears the responsibility of sharing the Qur'an's message. Fulfilling this obligation of da'wah is a weighty undertaking.
 - Believers earnestly care for the ultimate well-being of all people, including non-believers.
 - We should dedicate our lives to protecting others from harm and encouraging what is good to our best ability.
- قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا (Qawlan Thaqila) — Refers to the Qur'an as a whole. It signifies that every single word holds immense weight, and this profound weight is what provides believers with inner strength.

Ayah 6

- نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ (Nāshi'atu allayl) — Refers to the rising of the night.
 - The nighttime is where one finds solace with Allah. While others sleep, we rise to pray Tahajjud.
 - According to Al-Hasan Al-Basri, this timing refers to praying any time after Isha.
 - The most virtuous time for Tahajjud is in the final third of the night.
 - Scholars define it specifically as prayer performed after waking up from sleep, which aligns with the night prayer described in this verse.
- أَشَدُّ وَظًا (Ashaddu wat'an):
 - أَشَدُّ — Means more impactful or complete.

- وَظَّاءٌ — Depending on the Qira'at (recitation style), it has two primary pronunciations:
 - 1. Waṭ'an (لِ وَظَّاءُ):
 - Means to subdue or control. This is the primary translation for this verse.
 - According to Imam Al-Ghazali, the night prayer is far more effective than the worship of the day in suppressing one's nafs.
 - 2. Wiṭā'an (وِظَاءٌ):
 - Means it is more effective in conforming.
 - According to scholars, the night prayer is more effective in conforming the tongue with the heart.
 - Meaning, the night offers alignment between the tongue and the heart.
 - The inward and outward state is concurrent with the outward as there are no external distractions or noise, allowing for pure focus.
- Different opinions on the definition of أَقْوَمُ قِيلًا (Aqwamu qīlā):
 - أَقْوَمُ (Aqwam) — Means more upright. This denotes that the recitation in the night prayer is more or has more strength than the regular prayer.
 - 1. Effectiveness on the heart
 - Imam Al-Qurtubi explains that reciting the Qur'an in the night prayer is more impactful on the heart.
 - 2. Greatness in reward
 - Another meaning is that it holds more reward. Praying while the world sleeps removes the temptation of showing off. It ensures the worship is purely for Allah.

- 3. Acceptance of du'as
 - According to Ibn Qayyim, it refers to "more upright speech". This means that the du'as made during the night hold profound weight and substance before Allah.
 - Abu Hurairah reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying:

"يَنْزِلُ اللَّهُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ حِينَ يَمْضِي ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ الْأَوَّلِ فَيَقُولُ أَنَا الْمَلِكُ أَنَا الْمَلِكُ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَدْعُونِي فَأَسْتَجِيبَ لَهُ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَسْأَلُنِي فَأُعْطِيَهُ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَسْتَغْفِرُنِي فَأَغْفِرَ لَهُ فَلَا يَزَالُ كَذَلِكَ حَتَّى يُضِيَءَ الْفَجْرُ " .

Allah descends every night to the lowest heaven when one-third of the first part of the night is over and says: I am the Lord; I am the Lord: who is there to supplicate Me so that I answer him? Who is there to beg of Me so that I grant him? Who is there to beg forgiveness from Me so that I forgive him? He continues like this till the day breaks. (Sahih Muslim)

Ayah 7

- Definition of سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا (Sabhan ṭawīlā):
 - It refers to prolonged occupation.
 - سَبَحَ (Sabaha) — Means to move freely or to swim. It signifies movements throughout the day.
 - This denotes that the night is far more spiritually impactful for worship because the daytime involves prolonged worldly obligations that limit focus.
 - Cultivating a strong connection with Allah in the quiet hours of the night transforms our inner state, setting the right tone for the rest of our day.
 - طَوِيلًا (Ṭawīlā) — Means long, extended, or prolonged.
 - This indicates that it is going to be a long battle between truth and falsehood.

- Allah reminds the Prophet (ﷺ) that despite his night worship, his days will be fully consumed by worldly obligations, preaching the message, and facing opposition.
- Similarly, we will face challenges in our own lives, but we must stay steadfast and swim against the tide.
- As Muslims, achieving a balanced way of life is essential. Our duty is to uphold our religious identity and positively influence the broader society without compromising our core principles.

Ayah 8

- The two commandments of the night were Tahajjud and Tilawah. In this verse, Allah mentioned two commandments of the day Dhikr and Tabattul:
 - 1. Dhikr (وَأَذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ) — Remembering the Name of your Lord):
 - This involves the continuous remembrance of Allah through speech (praising and invoking Him) and by heart, anchoring focus on Allah while navigating daily life.
 - This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) taught us specific dhikr for various daily activities, such as entering a marketplace, leaving the house etc.
 - Remembering Allah throughout the day provides comfort, making the challenges we face so much easier to bear.
 - Allah tells us:

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ

So remember Me; I will remember you (2:152)

- Engaging in the remembrance of Allah can be done in any position, state, or circumstance — whether standing, sitting, or resting on your side.

- Encouraged forms of Dhikr:
 - 1. Al-Baqiyat as-Salihah (The Enduring Righteous Deeds):
 - This refers to reciting these phrases: SubhanAllah, Alhamdulillah, La ilaha illallah, and Allahu Akbar.
 - Saying them 100 times each yields tremendous weight on the scale of deeds.
 - Some narrations mentioned the addition of La hawla wala quwwata illa billah, as it is known as a treasure from the treasures of Paradise.
 - `Amr bin Shu`aib narrated from his father, from his grandfather, that: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"مَنْ سَبَّحَ اللَّهَ مِائَةً بِالْغَدَاةِ وَمِائَةً بِالْعِشِيِّ كَانَ كَمَنْ حَجَّ مِائَةَ مَرَّةٍ وَمَنْ حَمِدَ اللَّهَ مِائَةً بِالْغَدَاةِ وَمِائَةً بِالْعِشِيِّ كَانَ كَمَنْ حَمَلَ عَلَى مِائَةِ فَرَسٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ قَالَ غَزَا مِائَةَ غَزْوَةٍ وَمَنْ هَلَّلَ اللَّهَ مِائَةً بِالْغَدَاةِ وَمِائَةً بِالْعِشِيِّ كَانَ كَمَنْ أَعْتَقَ مِائَةَ رَقَبَةٍ مِنْ وَلَدِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَمَنْ كَبَّرَ اللَّهَ مِائَةً بِالْغَدَاةِ وَمِائَةً بِالْعِشِيِّ لَمْ يَأْتِ فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمَ أَحَدٌ بِأَكْثَرَ مِمَّا أَتَى بِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ قَالَ مِثْلَ مَا قَالَ أَوْ زَادَ عَلَى مَا قَالَ ."

"Whoever glorifies Allah a hundred times in the morning and a hundred in the night, he is like one who performs Hajj a hundred times. And whoever praises Allah a hundred times in the morning and a hundred in the night, he is like one who provides a hundred horses in the cause of Allah." – or he said – "went out on a hundred military expeditions. And whoever pronounced At-Tahlil of Allah a hundred times in the night, he is like the one who freed a hundred slaves from the offspring of Isma`il, and whoever extols Allah's greatness a hundred times in the day and a hundred in the night, none shall bring on that day, more than what he brought, except one who said similar to what he said, or increased upon it." (Jami` at-Tirmidhi)

- 2. Salawat upon the Prophet (ﷺ):
 - Sending salawat upon the Prophet (ﷺ) is one of the most spiritually rewarding forms of remembrance, carrying immense blessings and comfort. We should practice this at least 100 times daily.

- Anas bin Malik said: "The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

" مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ صَلَاةً وَاحِدَةً صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَشْرَ صَلَوَاتٍ وَحُطَّتْ عَنْهُ عَشْرُ خَطِيئَاتٍ وَرُفِعَتْ لَهُ عَشْرُ دَرَجَاتٍ " .

"Whoever sends salah upon me once, Allah (SWT) will send salah upon him tenfold, and will erase ten sins from him, and will raise him ten degrees in status." (Sunan an-Nasa'i)

- 3. Istighfar (Seeking forgiveness):
 - Repeat the simple and powerful phrase "Astaghfirullah" (I seek forgiveness from Allah) between 70 to 100 times daily. This is the established Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).
 - Abu Hurairah said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saying,

والله إني لأستغفر الله وأتوب إليه في اليوم أكثر من سبعين مرة

"I swear by Allah that I seek Allah's Pardon and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times a day." (Sahih Al-Bukhari)

- 2. Tabattul (تَبَتُّلٌ إِلَيْهِ تَبَتُّلًا) — Devoting yourself to Him wholeheartedly):
 - تَبَتُّلٌ (Tabattul) — Means to cut off. This means cutting off your heart's ultimate attachment from worldly distractions and dedicating yourself exclusively to Allah for a moment in the day.
 - It is a state of utter devotion to Allah. It emphasizes turning inward, isolating ourselves from everything despite all our daytime affairs.
 - It doesn't necessitate worship, but it calls for an intentional detachment — a state of mind where we direct our focus solely toward Allah.
 - Some scholars define tabattul as taking moments throughout the day to consciously reaffirm our intentions — why you are doing what you are doing.