

FITNAH: COPING WITH THE TRIALS OF OUR TIMES

IN LIGHT OF THE QURĀN AND SUNNAH

BY ABU KHADEEJAH ABDUL-WĀHID

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Fitnah: Coping with the Trials of our Times

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By Abu Khadeejah ‘Abdul-Wāhid.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all creation; may Allah extol the mention of our noble Prophet Muhammad in the highest company of Angels and give him peace and security—and his family, his Companions and all those who follow him correctly until the establishment of the Hour.

My brothers, sisters, sons and daughters, fear Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) and be dutiful to Him—and know that trials, tests and tribulations happen, and they will continually come upon the servants of Allah. Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) has stated:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ

“Every soul will taste death. And We test you with evil and with good as trial—and to Us (Allah) you will be returned.” (Al-Anbiyā’: 35) Allah tests and tries the believers so that the truthful is made manifest from the liar, the believer from the hypocrite, just as Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) stated:

لَتُبْلَوْنَ فِيْ أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ

“You shall certainly be tried and tested in your wealth and properties and within yourselves...” (Aali ‘Imrān: 186) And He (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) stated:

وَلَتُبْلَوْنَ كُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ
وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ۖ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ ۝
أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

“And certainly, We shall test you with something of fear, hunger, loss of wealth, lives and fruits— but give glad tidings to the patient. Those who, when disaster strikes them, say, ‘Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.’ They are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and His Mercy, and it is they who are the rightly guided.” (Al-Baqarah: 155-157)

So, Allah stated: “We shall surely try you with evil” meaning with everything you dislike from hardships and tribulations that are related to yourselves, your feelings, your emotions, your wealth and your families so as to make apparent those who are patient and content with the Decree of Allah—who do not become angry with His Wisdom and Judgement, they are not impatient, impetuous or despairing—they are not from those who fall into harām acts such as screaming, wailing, tearing their clothes or have thoughts and inclinations that lead to destruction such as harming themselves and calling out with the calls of Jāhilyyah.

And there are those who, in times of calamity and hardship, seek out soothsayer, shamans, fortune-tellers and charlatans who offer cures, potions and charms to ease suffering! So, the ignorant and those who despair in the True Lord take that evil path, even if it involves polytheism and paganistic practices (*shirk*) and means that their *īmān* (belief in Allah) is nullified by it. They know that Allah has forbidden these superstitious practices and they know it involves giving obedience and devotion to the devils from among the Jinn and mankind, yet they still engage in them. And this is widespread among ignorant Muslims across the world. Then Allah said:

وَنَبْلُوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْحَيْرِ

“And We test you with evil and with good...” So, Allah will also test with good—and that is everything that a person loves from wealth, possessions, status, family, children, fruit, pleasures and delights. Allah tests them to see who will show gratitude for the favours of Allah and worship Him with more and more acts of piety—who will use these

favours: this wealth, possessions, cattle and crops in obedience to Allah and to earn His Pleasure—and fulfil the rights of Allah that He has commanded such as Praying, giving the Zakāh, fasting in Ramadān, performing Hajj and so on. Or will he deny the favours of Allah, become negligent or arrogant and proud, thinking that it is he himself who earned this wealth, property and status and he himself who is deserving of it.

So, beware of tribulations that steer you away from following the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and take heed of the saying of Allah:

الم ﴿١﴾ أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ
مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَاذِبِينَ ﴿٣﴾

“Alif-Lām-Meem. Do the people think that they will be left to say, ‘We believe’ and they will not be tried? We have certainly tried those who came before them—and Allah will surely make evident those who are truthful, and He will surely make evident the liars.” (Al-‘Ankabūt: 1-3)

Fitan are tribulations, trials and tests that Allah puts His servants through to distinguish the truthful, devoted and steadfast believer from the liar, pretender and deceiver. The *fitan* discern and distinguish those strong in *īmān* from those who are weak in *īmān*, those who truly trust in Allah and believe His promise and those who doubt.

So, when the *fitan* appear, then from the people are those who make apparent their weakness in faith by their lack of adherence to the Book and the Sunnah—so you see their reaction when the calamities strike, and they are tested. Allah stated regarding the hypocrites:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿١﴾ يُجَادِعُونَ
اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يُجَادِعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٢﴾

“And of the people are some who say, ‘We believe in Allah and the Last Day,’ but they are not believers. They think to deceive Allah and those who believe, but they deceive not except themselves, but they perceive it not.” (Al-Baqarah: 8-9) The hypocrites are those who claim that they believe but, in their hearts, they seek to deceive Allah and the believers. So, we should be far removed from the traits of the hypocrites. A person who truly believes in Allah and the Last Day remains steadfast when he is tried, and seeks ever more nearness to Allah, the Most High.

Know that you are tested according to your adherence to the Book and Sunnah and in accordance with your firmness upon the Religion. Those who are tried and afflicted the most are Prophets of Allah (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ), then those who resemble them the most as occurs in the hadeeth:

عَنْ مُصْعَبِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيُّ النَّاسِ أَشَدُّ بَلَاءً قَالَ
الْأَنْبِيَاءُ ثُمَّ الْأَمْثَلُ فَالْأَمْثَلُ فَيَبْتَلَى الرَّجُلَ عَلَى حَسَبِ دِينِهِ فَإِنْ كَانَ دِينُهُ صُلْبًا اشْتَدَّ
بَلَاؤُهُ وَإِنْ كَانَ فِي دِينِهِ رِقَّةٌ ابْتُلِيَ عَلَى حَسَبِ دِينِهِ فَمَا يَبْرُحُ الْبَلَاءُ بِالْعَبْدِ حَتَّى
يَتْرُكَهُ يَمْسِي عَلَى الْأَرْضِ مَا عَلَيْهِ خَطِيئَةٌ

Mus’ab Ibn Sa’d narrated from his father that a man said: **“O Messenger of Allah, which of the people is tried most severely?”** He (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: **“The Prophets, then those most resembling them, then those most resembling them. A man is tried according to his religion. If he is firm in his religion, then his trials are more severe, and if he is frail in his religion, then he is tried according to the strength of his religion. The servant shall continue to be tried until he is left walking upon the earth without any sins.”**¹

And who are most like the Prophets? The scholars, the steadfast students of knowledge, and those who proceed upon their methodology in obeying Allah and calling to His Religion—and they

¹ At-Tirmidhi, no 2398, authenticated by Al-Albānī.

receive harm due to that. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: **“No one has ever been harmed like I was harmed in the way of Allah.”**²

Shaikh Sālih Al-Fawzān stated: “*Fitnah*, O servants of Allah, is *ibtīlā* (trial) and *imtihān* (test).”³ The trials of the righteous is in their firmness and steadfastness in Allah in times of hardship and difficulty—the trial raises them and purifies them. The trials of the unbelievers are a torment and affliction due to their disbelief. The afflictions upon sinful Muslims are a punishment, lessons calling them to repent and expiation if they take heed. Each is a fulfilment of the promise of Allah.

There are Two Types of Fitan or Trials:

(1) *Fitan* of *shubuhāt*: The trials that throw doubts at the believers regarding their Religion.

(2) *Fitan* of *shahawāt*: The trials that entice the servants to follow their desires and fall into sin and disobedience such as fornication, usury, stealing, lying, drinking and so on.

The *fitan* of following desires are kept away through obedience to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), worship, repentance, and remembrance (*dhikr*). And the doubts are repelled through grounded knowledge of the ‘*Aqīdah*, the *Sharī’ah* and the methodology of the *Salaf*—to be firm upon that and have certainty that it is the truth from Allah.

The *fitan* of doubts (*shubuhāt*) are the onslaught against the Beliefs of a Muslim such as atheism, denial and distortion of the Names and Attributes of Allah, giving precedence to the intellect over the Revelation, denial of the questioning in the grave, its punishment and its rewards and so on. Shayṭān and his army among mankind and jinn throw these doubts to lead people into *bid’ah*, *kufr* and *shirk*. From the doubts are the *fitan* that have gripped the grave-worshippers and *Sufis*

² Reported by Ad-Daylamī, 4/51. Declared *hasan* by Al-Albānī, see *As-Silsilah*, 2222.

³ *Al-Khutub Al-Mimbariyyah*, 5/334.

who exaggerated in their reverence of the dead, taking them as objects of worship, calling upon them through supplication (*du'ā*), seeking their intercession (*shafā'ah*) and help (*isti'ānah*)—and how many have fallen into this evil among the nations, past and present! So, these *fitan* encapsulate the calls of the people of disbelief, polytheism, innovation, and atheism. And this is worse than the *fitan* of the desires that call to sin and disobedience because the doubts may cause a Muslim to exit Islam into unbelief, whereas the sins (other than polytheism) do not cause a person to exit Islam.

Falling into trials is made easier when the people abandon the Book and Sunnah, and they abandon the way of the *Salaf* and the well-known scholars and instead follow those who call to deviations and innovations in Belief and Methodology. Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said in a narration ascribed to Allah's Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ):

“How will you be when you are surrounded by *fitan* (innovations, desires and misguidance)? A time wherein the youngster grows old knowing only *fitnah* and the old one reaches old age knowing only *fitnah*. It will become so engrained that if the *fitnah* is abandoned, it will be said, ‘The *Sunnah* has been abandoned.’” It was said to Ibn Mas'ūd (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ): **“When will that happen O father of ‘Abdur-Rahmān?”** Ibn Mas'ūd replied: **“When your scholars pass away and the ignorant among you are numerous, when the reciters among you are plenty, when the men of understanding (*fuqahā*) among you are scarce, your leaders are numerous and the trustworthy among you are little—when the worldly possessions are sought through the deeds of the Hereafter and the Religion is studied for other than the Religion.”**⁴ And there occurs in a hadeeth:

⁴ The translation of the hadīth has been made according to its correct meaning. It is *sahīh*, reported by ad-Dāriimee, 191-192 and Shaikh Al-Albānī (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said in *Qiyām Ramadān* (p.3): **“It is authentic as the statement of Ibn Mas'ūd and in its ruling, it is elevated to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ).”**

وَعَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ
 أَرْبَعٌ إِذَا كُنَّ فِيكَ فَلَا عَلَيْكَ مَا فَاتَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا: حِفْظُ أَمَانَةٍ وَصِدْقُ حَدِيثٍ
 وَحُسْنُ خَلِيقَةٍ وَعِمَّةٌ فِي طُعْمَةٍ

Abdullah ibn ‘Amr (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: **“As long as there are four traits in you, it matters not what you lose from the world: fulfilling the trusts, truthfulness in speech, excellent character and moderation in food.”**⁵

To find relief from these trials and *fitan*, one is obligated to return back to the Religion as it was in the time of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and his Companions (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ).

Abu Wāqid al-Laithi (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said: **“Whilst we were sitting with the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) on a rug spread out, he said: ‘Indeed there will be *fitnah*!’ It was said: ‘How should we behave O Allah’s Messenger?’ So, he took firm hold of the rug and said: ‘You will behave like this!’”** In another narration from Mu’ādh ibn Jabal (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ), Allah’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: **‘Indeed there will be *fitnah*!’** But the people were not listening, so Mu’ādh (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) said: **‘Did you not hear what Allah’s Messenger said?’** They asked: **‘What did he say?’** He said: **‘Indeed there will be *fitnah*.’** So, they asked: **‘How should we conduct ourselves, O Messenger of Allah?’** He replied: **‘You should return back to the affair as it was in the beginning.’”**⁶

A person should not imagine that every trial that afflicts him is due to him resembling the Prophets (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ). Yes, if a person obeys Allah and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), worships Allāh alone, acts upon the *Sunnah*, calls to it, treads the path of the *Salaf* and keeps company with the righteous from *Ahlus-Sunnah*—then he is harmed due to that,

⁵ Reported by Ahmad, graded *sahīh* by Al-Albānī in *As-Silsilatus-Sahīhah* 2/270.

⁶ Teported by at-Tabarānī in *Al-Kabeer* no. 3307, *Al-Awsat* no. 8679 and graded *sahīh* by Al-Albānī, see *As-Sahīhah*, 3165.

so he is fired from his job, or his family treat him harshly, his children leave him, he is boycotted and warned against, her family abuse her, she is mocked for wearing the *hijāb* and so on—then that trial is due to their adherence to the Religion and the *Sunnah*—and that is what the followers of the Prophets are tried with in the Path of Allāh.

If you are a disobedient sinner who transgresses against his own soul and against others, you don't pray, or give *Zakāh* or fast in *Ramadān*, you listen to music and keep evil company, then your *fitan* and afflictions are due to your sins, they are a warning, a lesson and reminder that you must return to your Religion. Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) stated:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

“Corruption has appeared in the land and sea due to what the hands of people have earned so that Allah may let them taste a part of the consequence of what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness].” (Ar-Rūm: 41)

And Allāh, the Most High, stated:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ ءَامَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ
وَلَكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾ أَفَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَىٰ أَن يَأْتِيَهُمْ
بَأْسُنَا بَيِّنًا وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾ أَوَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَىٰ أَن يَأْتِيَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا ضُحًى وَهُمْ
يَلْعَبُونَ ﴿١٠٣﴾ أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

“And if the people of the towns had believed and had the piety and fear of Allāh, certainly, We should have opened for them blessings from the heaven and the earth, but they denied the Messengers. So, We took them with punishment for what they used to earn. Did the people of the towns then feel secure against the coming of Our punishment by night while they were asleep? Or did the people of the towns then feel secure against the coming of Our punishment in

the forenoon while they were playing? Did they then feel secure against the plan of Allāh? None feels secure from the plan of Allāh except the people who are the losers.” (Al-A’rāf: 96-99)

Furthermore, disobedience of the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and opposing his *Sunnah* will lead to *fitnah* and punishment just as Allāh (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) stated:

فَلْيَحْذَرِ الَّذِينَ يُخَالِفُونَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِ أَنْ تُصِيبَهُمْ فِتْنَةٌ أَوْ يُصِيبَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

“And let those who oppose the Messenger’s commandment beware, lest some *fitnah* (severe trial) should befall them, or a painful torment be inflicted on them.” (An-Nūr: 63)

Servants of Allah, guard yourselves from trials and don’t feel secure from going astray—the temptations are many and hearts are between the two Fingers of the Most Merciful. Nawwās Ibn Al-Kilābī narrated that Allah’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) would say:

مَا مِنْ قَلْبٍ إِلَّا بَيْنَ إِصْبَعَيْنِ مِنْ أَصَابِعِ الرَّحْمَنِ إِنْ شَاءَ أَقَامَهُ وَإِنْ شَاءَ أَرَاغَهُ وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ

“There is no heart that is not between two of the Fingers of the Most Merciful. If He wills, He guides it and if He wills, He sends it astray.”

And the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) used to say:

يَا مُتَّبِتِ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قُلُوبَنَا عَلَى دِينِكَ

“O you who makes hearts steadfast, make our hearts steadfast upon your religion.”⁷ So, save yourselves by hastening to do righteous deeds. Abu Hurayrah (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

⁷ Ibn Mājah, no. 199, *sahīh*.

بَادِرُوا بِالْأَعْمَالِ فِتْنًا كَقَطْعِ اللَّيْلِ الْمُظْلِمِ يُصْبِحُ الرَّجُلُ مُؤْمِنًا وَيُمْسِي كَافِرًا وَيُمْسِي
مُؤْمِنًا وَيُصْبِحُ كَافِرًا يَبِيعُ أَحَدُهُمْ دِينَهُ بِعَرَضٍ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا

“Rush to do good deeds. *Fitnah* will occur like a portion of a dark night—morning will come upon a man as a believer, and he will be a disbeliever by the evening—and evening will come upon a believer, and he will be a disbeliever by the morning. He will sell his religion for the possessions of the world.”⁸

Enticements and trials related to following the desires and lusts are many such as looking at women. The sexual exploitation of women has reached levels previously unheard due to the proliferation of social media. So, beware of watching or viewing that which is *harām*—and the same applies to the sisters. Guard yourselves, your honour and your virtue from the sights of men and their approaches. All of this is *fitnah*—and it is from the most severe of the trials of our times that affects both men and women. The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

مَا تَرَكْتُ بَعْدِي فِتْنَةً أَضَرَّ عَلَى الرَّجَالِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ

“I have not left a temptation after me a temptation more harmful upon the men than the temptation of women.”⁹ And he (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا حُلْوَةٌ خَضِرَةٌ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مُسْتَخْلِفُكُمْ فِيهَا فَيَنْظُرُ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ
فَاتَّقُوا الدُّنْيَا وَاتَّقُوا النِّسَاءَ فَإِنَّ أَوَّلَ فِتْنَةٍ بَنَى إِسْرَائِيلَ كَانَتْ فِي النِّسَاءِ

“The world is green, sweet and dazzling—and Allah has you put in charge of it to see how you will act and what you will do. So, beware of this world and beware of the allurements of women, for the first

⁸ At-Tirmidhi no. 2195, Muslim no. 188.

⁹ Al-Bukhāri, no. 5096.

***fitnah* (temptation) that befell the Children of Israel was that of women.”¹⁰**

For this reason, Allah commanded us to lower our gazes, not to expose ourselves to immoral behaviour and lewd conduct—and we are commanded to be virtuous and to dress modestly in order to protect ourselves, our families and society. Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) stated:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ
بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا
يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا ۖ وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ

“Tell the believing men to lower their gazes and protect their private parts [from fornication]—and that is purer for them—verily, Allah is All-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gazes and protect their private parts [from fornication] and not to show off their adornment except only that which is apparent (hands and face)—and they must draw their veils (*khimārs*) over their upper bodies.” (An-Noor 30-31) The allurements of sexual immorality are prevalent in these times and can easily be accessed by anyone through social media and the internet. So, we must be on guard from falling into what is *harām*. Al-Bukhārī reported in his *Sahīh*:

عَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ أَنَّ رَجُلًا أَصَابَ مِنْ امْرَأَةٍ قُبْلَةً فَأَتَى النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
فَأَخْبَرَهُ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ ﴿أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَرُفْعًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُدْهِبْنَ
السَّيِّئَاتِ﴾ فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَلَيْبِي هَذَا قَالَ لِجَمِيعِ أُمَّتِي كُلِّهِمْ

Abdullāh Ibn Mas’ūd said that a man kissed a woman who was forbidden for him [to touch]. He went to the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) and informed him. So, Allah revealed: **“Offer *Salāh* at the two ends of the day and in some hours of the night. Verily, good deeds wipe away the**

¹⁰ Muslim, no. 2742.

lesser sins.” (Hood: 114). The man asked Allah’s Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): **“Is this just for me?”** He said, **“Rather, it is for all my followers.”**¹¹

Likewise, we must be mindful of the *fitnah* brought about by the tongue that leads a person to vain and wicked speech that Allāh has prohibited such as foul language, cursing, scandalmongering, carrying tales, gossiping, backbiting, lying and slandering. Shaikh Sālih Al-Fawzān stated: “Perhaps a single word uttered by a person will cause him to fall into the Fire a distance greater than what is between the east and the west—and due to it Allah writes His anger upon him until the Day he meets Him (عَزَّوَجَلَّ).”¹² Allah (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) stated:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ

“Not a word does he utter but there is a watcher by him ready to record it.” (Qāf: 18) And He (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) said:

وَتَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ مَا لَيْسَ لَكُم بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَتَحْسَبُونَهُ هَيِّنًا وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيمٌ

“When you were uttering with your mouths concerning that of which you had no knowledge, you regarded it to be a little thing, while with Allāh it was very great.” (An-Noor: 15)

Mu’adh Ibn Jabal (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) narrated that the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said:

رَأْسُ الْأَمْرِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَعَمُودُهُ الصَّلَاةُ وَذُرُوعُهُ سَنَامِهِ الْجِهَادُ ثُمَّ قَالَ أَلَا أُخْبِرُكَ بِمِلَاحِكِ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ قُلْتُ بَلَى فَأَخَذَ بِلِسَانِهِ فَقَالَ تَكُفُّ عَلَيْكَ هَذَا قُلْتُ يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّا لَمُؤَاخِدُونَ بِمَا نَتَكَلَّمُ بِهِ قَالَ ثَكَلْتِكَ أُمَّكَ يَا مُعَاذُ وَهَلْ يَكُفُّ النَّاسَ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ فِي النَّارِ إِلَّا حَصَائِدُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ

¹¹ Al-Bukhārī, no. 526.

¹² Al-Khutub Al-Mimbariyyah, 5/332.

“The head of the matter is Islam, its supporting pillar is prayer, and the top of its hump is *Jihād*.” Then he said: **“Shall I not tell you what governs all of that?”** I said: **“Yes.”** He took hold of his tongue then said: **“Restrain this.”** I said: **“O Prophet of Allāh, will we be brought to account for what we say?”** He said: **“Are the people tossed into the Fire upon their faces, or upon their noses, except due to what their tongues have harvested?”**¹³

My sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, remain steadfast upon the Religion and know that your wealth, your wives and children are a test and a trial. Through them you can attain great reward or great trials. I have seen how a man is led astray by his wife and children due to his extreme love of them and his desire please them with the things of this world—even if that means disobeying Allah and His Messenger (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ). And I have seen the same in women who will commit sins to please their husbands and children—and they see that as a price worth paying—and Allāh’s aid is sought. Allāh (سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى) mentioned this trial in His Book and then followed it up with the cure:

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٣٠﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ
 ءَامَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ
 وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

“And know that your possessions and your children are but a trial and that surely with Allāh is a mighty reward. O you who believe, if you obey and fear Allāh, He will grant you a criterion to judge between right and wrong, and will expiate your sins for you, and forgive you. And Allah is the Owner of the Great Bounty.” (Al-Anfāl: 29-30)

For this reason, fathers, husbands, and parents are held accountable for the safeguarding of their children—to protect them from misguidance, corruption, and *fitnah* (the doubts and desires). They are obligated to command them with obedience to Allāh, and to enjoin the

¹³ At-Tirmidhi, no. 2616, *hasan*.

good and forbid what is wrong when they witness it. Unfortunately, we find in these times that some husbands and fathers don't take this responsibility seriously enough and they abandon what Allāh has obligated upon them—and they are neglectful over their duties. So, the woman (wife and mother) steps forward and courageously establishes the Islamic cultivation of the children, teaches them Islam, calls them to all that is good and safeguards them from corruption. These are women who are steadfast and truthful, and their reward is with Allāh, and may Allāh guide their husbands.

So, rectification for each of us should begin with ourselves and our families—learning what is obligatory for us to know, teaching that to our families and cultivating them upon good, constantly. Allah (تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى) stated:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاطٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

“O you who believe, save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones—over which are appointed angels stern and severe, who disobey not from executing the commands they receive from Allāh and they do that which they are commanded.” (At-Tahreem: 6)

Know that there is no salvation from *fitnah* except by adherence to the Book and *Sunnah* and asking Allāh to save you from deviations of the heart. The firmly grounded scholars supplicate saying:

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ

“Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate from the truth after You have guided us and grant us mercy from Yourself. Truly, for you are the Bestower.” (Aali ‘Imrān: 8) And the believer ask:

رَبَّنَا لَا تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

“Our Lord! Make us not a trial for the disbelievers, and forgive us, Our Lord! Verily, You, only You, are the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.” (Al-Mumtahanah: 5)

And I too, finish this with this supplication.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all creation; may Allah extol the mention of our noble Prophet Muhammad in the highest company of Angels and give him peace and security—and his family, his Companions and all those who follow him correctly until the establishment of the Hour.

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