

Abu Hurayrah narrated that God's Messenger (peace be upon him) said that God says:

- 1 **Whoever shows enmity to a friend of Mine, I shall be at war with him.**
- 2 **My servant does not draw closer to Me with anything I love more than the religious duties I have made obligatory for him.**
- 3 **My servant continues to draw closer to Me with voluntary worship until I love him.**
- 4 **When I love him, I shall be his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his leg with which he walks.**
- 5 **Were he to ask something of Me, I would surely give it to him; and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant it to him.**
- 6 **I am never reluctant to do something I want to do as much as I am reluctant to gather a believer's soul: he hates death and I hate to upset him.⁽¹⁾**

1 Related by al-Bukhari, 6502.

From the Qur'an

- ﴿Say: 'If you love God, follow me; God will love you and forgive you your sins. God is much-forgiving, ever-merciful'.﴾ (3: 31)
- ﴿Those whom you invoke beside Him cannot give you any support, nor can they even help themselves.﴾ (7: 197)
- ﴿For certain, those who are close to God have nothing to fear, nor shall they grieve; (62) for they do believe and remain God-fearing. (63) Theirs are the glad tidings in the life of this world and in the life to come: there is no changing the word of God. This is the supreme triumph.﴾ (10: 62-64)
- ﴿God will certainly defend those who believe. For certain, God does not love anyone who betrays his trust and is bereft of gratitude.﴾ (22: 38)

The Narrator

Abu Hurayrah whose name according to the best reports was 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ṣakhr belonged to the Daws tribe, a branch of the Azd from Yemen. He embraced Islam in Year 7 AH, when the Battle of Khaybar took place. He always remained close to the Prophet and was keen to learn. He memorized numerous hadiths and was the leading narrator of hadiths among the Prophet's companions. He died in Madinah in Year 58 AH, 678 CE.

Summary

God, Exalted and Supreme, states that He defends His friends and He is always close to His devout servants. He also states how much He loves them.



Message and Meaning

1

God, Mighty and Exalted, states that He defends His believing servants. Whoever is hostile or causes harm to any of God's friends, i.e. those believers who put their faith in practice and do what is right, is warned that God is at war with him. He will defend and avenge His devout servants. Who can withstand a war against God?

2

God states that the best deed that draws a person closer to Him is the fulfilment of the duties He has made obligatory on us. Indeed, God only imposed these duties and prohibited the sinful actions so as to draw us to Himself.

3

When a person is diligent in the fulfilment of obligatory duties, and follows this with acts of worship that are recommended, not obligatory, such as voluntary (or sunnah) prayers, fasting and charity, as well as God's glorification and recitation of the Qur'an, and helping people with their needs, etc. he will earn God's love.

4

When God loves someone, He will protect his senses: thus, he will only hear what God accepts. He will not look up to anything forbidden. He will not stretch his hand to take what is unlawful, or strike anyone unlawfully. He will not walk to commit a sinful action. This is similar to the hadith saying: 'Be mindful of God, and God will protect you. Be mindful of God and you will find Him in front of you'.⁽¹⁾

5

Another aspect of the great reward granted to God's devoted servants whom He loves and who love Him is that when they pray to Him, he will answer their prayers and give them whatever they request. If they appeal to Him for protection from any evil or harm, He will remove what they fear and protect them. The Prophet says: 'Among God's servants are some who may swear by God and He will honour their oaths'.⁽²⁾

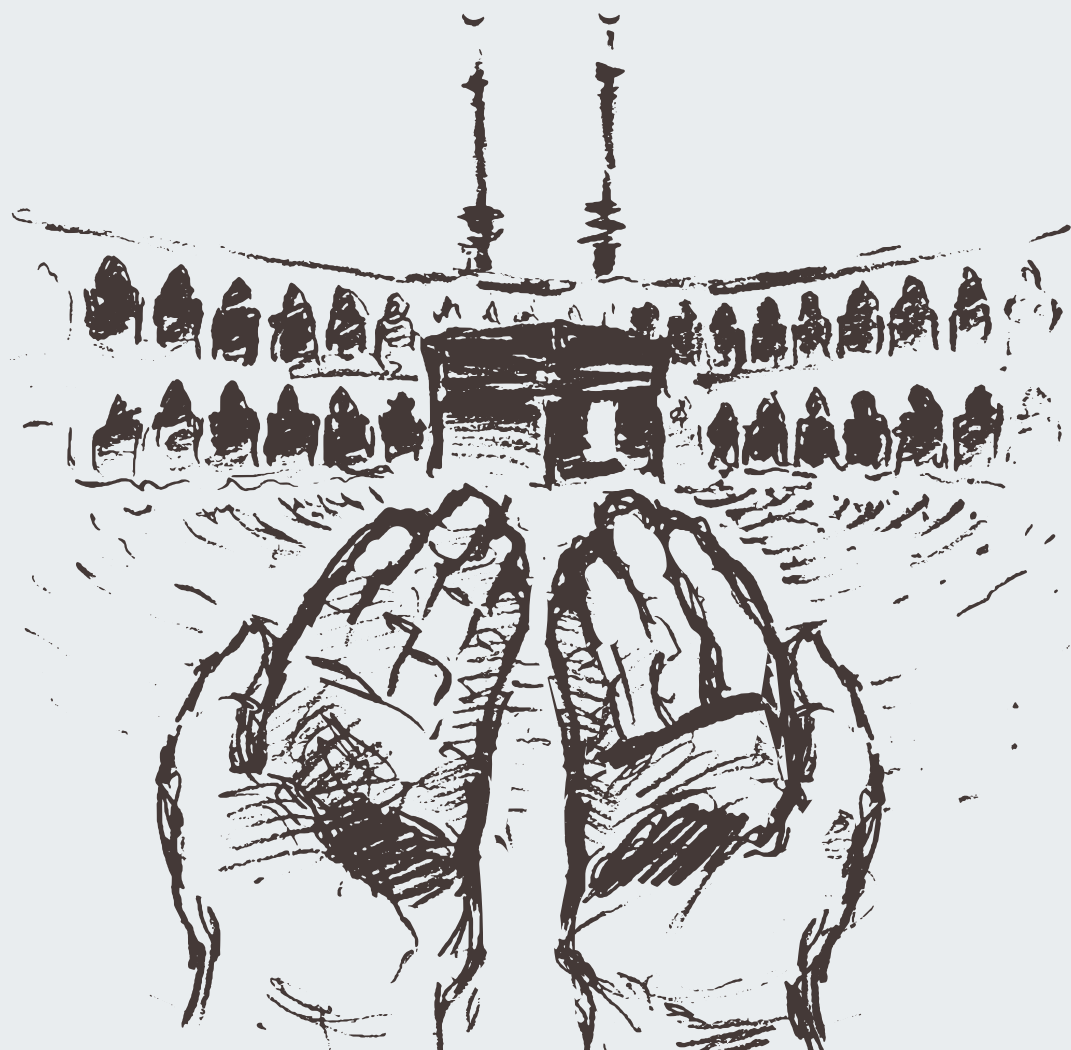
6

God then says that He loves what a believer loves and dislikes that he suffers any harm, even death which God has ordained for all His creation. He hates to inflict it on a believer because he hates and fears it. As such, a believer's death is something that God wills to impose, but He dislikes it in another sense. This is the essence of reluctance. God imposes death on a believer, despite the fact that He loves him and dislikes upsetting him. This is different from the situation of an unbeliever whom God dislikes and wants to upset.

1 Related by Ahmad, 2669; al-Tirmidhī, 2516.

2 Related by al-Bukhari, 2703; Muslim, 1675.

That a devout servant dislikes death is part of human nature. All people fear and dislike to die. However, when a good believer is about to die, God will give him the happy news of his great prospects in the life to come. He will then love nothing more than death. The Prophet said: 'When a person loves to meet God, God will love to meet him, and when a person dislikes to meet God, God dislikes to meet him'. 'Ā'ishah or another wife of the Prophet said: 'We all hate death'. He said: 'Not so. When a believer is given the happy news of receiving God's mercy, pleasure and admittance into Heaven, nothing is more pleasing to him than his prospects. He will love to meet God, and God will love to meet him. When an unbeliever is given the news of having to suffer God's punishment and displeasure, nothing is more hateful to him than his prospects. He will hate to meet God and God will dislike to meet him'.⁽¹⁾



1 Related by al-Bukhari, 6507; Muslim, 2683.

Implementation

1

Whoever wants to rely on mighty support which guards him against all harm should hold on to his bond with God. He is the Almighty who undertakes defending His devoted servants.

2

If God is with us, why will we care who is against us? Who can fight a war against God?

3

Friendship with God is not earned by claims. It is rather earned by strong faith, righteousness and placing trust in Him. Many a wretched person falsely claims that he is befriended by God.

4

The only way to earn friendship with God is to follow His guidance which has been given by His Messenger (peace be upon him). The Jews and Christians claimed that they are God's friends and beloved ones. Yet they disbelieve in His Messenger and discard His law.

5

Beware of being at war with God's friends. You have no power to fight a war with God Almighty.

6

If a person wants to draw close to God and earn His love, he should fulfil what He commands and desist from what He has forbidden. True love means abiding by what He dictates.

7

No one should claim to love another when he is fully distracted from what his love desires. A true lover only wishes what his loved one wants and desires.

8

'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz said in one of his speeches: 'The best type of worship is the fulfilment of what is obligatory and refraining from what is prohibited. God has only made these duties obligatory so that He can bring His servants closer to Himself and make them earn His pleasure and grace'.⁽¹⁾

9

A believer should draw closer to God by offering voluntary and recommended worship. Whoever fulfils what God has made obligatory and refrains from sinful actions, then performs what God loves but has not made obligatory earns God's love.

10

One must not slacken in the performance of recommended worship. God praised His prophets and devoted servants, saying: 'They all would vie with one another in doing good works, and would call on Us in yearning and awe. They were always humble before Us'. (21: 90)

11

Everyone should choose for themselves a position in between two grades: either to be one who limits oneself to doing what is obligatory and refraining from what is forbidden, or one of the leaders who attain the grade of love and friendship by being diligent in doing what is recommended and avoiding what is reprehensible and distraction.

12

No one should imagine that doing what is recommended and voluntary while ignoring what is obligatory will be of benefit or will draw a person closer to God. The fulfilment of the obligatory comes first. Abu Bakr said to 'Umar: 'God does not accept a voluntary act of worship until the obligatory one is complete'.

13

Love of God is the greatest blessing anyone can aspire to. Prophet David (peace be upon him)

1 Ibn Rajab, *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm wal-Hikam*, Vol. 2, p. 336.

used to say in his supplication: 'My Lord, I appeal to You to grant me Your love, and the love of those who love You, the love of the deeds that lead me to Your love. My Lord, make Your love dearer to me than my own soul, family and wealth and dearer than cool water'.⁽¹⁾

14

If you encounter strong temptation to commit sin, draw closer to God by doing what is obligatory and what is recommended. He will then protect you and your body, so that you will not incline towards sin and will not be tempted to disobey Him.

15

Action draws its fitting recompense: if one stays within the boundaries God has drawn and fulfils His bidding, God will protect his senses for him. On the other hand, the one who ignores God's law will be ignored by God and He will leave him to his own devices.

16

One of the greatest results of God's love of His servant is that He commands all creation to love him. The Prophet says: 'When God loves one of His servants, He calls Gabriel and says to him: "I love so-and-so. Love him". So Gabriel loves him, then calls out to the people of Heaven and says: "God loves so-and-so. Love him". So the people of Heaven love him. Then he is granted acceptability among people on earth'.⁽²⁾

17

If you want your prayers to be answered, you should endeavour to obtain its most important reason, which is deserving God's love by drawing closer to Him through doing what is recommended.

18

If you feel that your prayers remain hanging, despite having earnestly appealed to God, support them with drawing closer to God. You should know that you have not attained the grade of God's friends.

19

Whoever seeks God's help and equips himself by obeying Him will be protected by God against all harm and evil.

20

God says: 'For certain, those who are close to God have nothing to fear, nor shall they grieve'. (10: 62) What will anyone who is sure of God's support fear or be grieved at? When they were chased by their enemies, the Prophet said to Abu Bakr: 'Do not grieve, for God is with us'. (9: 40)

21

God dislikes causing what upsets a believer. So, how come someone is prepared to let God see him committing a sinful action that he knows He dislikes?

22

Reluctance is a negative quality which does not apply to God. What the hadith refers to is something that is wanted in one way although it is disliked in a different way. However, this is not accompanied by any indecision of the sort experienced by man. No negative quality applies to God in any sense.

23

The hadith attributes to God the two characteristics of love and hate. We confirm that they apply to God, but we give them no form or explanation, nor do we negate them.

1 Ibid., p. 340.

2 Related by al-Bukhari, 7485; Muslim, 2637.

