

Loving Allah

The Obligation of Loving Allah

From the obligatory and necessary aspects of the Faith is having love for Allah, love for His Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam), love for His believing slaves and love for what Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) love of faith and good deeds. This love of Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) must take precedence over the love for children, wealth and souls. Allah says in the Qur'aan:

"Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your kindred, the wealth that you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwelling in which you delight are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) and striving hard and fighting in His cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision (torment). And Allah guides not the people who are disobedient." Quran 9:24

Ibn Katheer explains this verse saying it means wait for what punishment in store for you. And such a warning only takes place when the deed is necessary obligatory or certain requirement.

Excellence of Loving Allah

Love for Allah and His Messenger above the love of everything else is one of the characteristics of Faith and a sign that he has tasted the sweetness of Faith, according to the saying of Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam):

"There are three characteristics that if one possesses then, he has tasted the sweetness of Faith; that Allah and His Messenger is more beloved to him than anyone other than them, that he loves a person and he only love him for the sake of Allah, and that he hates to return to disbelief just as he hated to be thrown into the Fire." [Bukharee and Muslim]

An Nawawi stated: "the meaning of 'the sweetness of Faith' is that the person gets pleasure out of obedience and bearing hardships and he prefers that over worldly desires."

What is Loving Allah?

The love of the slave to His Lord and His Messenger is in their Obedience and avoiding their Disobedience. One who claims to love Allah and His Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam), lacking to obey them and give precedence to their words over and above everybody else's, is indeed a liar with respect to his claim of loving Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam), since Faith has been denied for those who turn away from obeying Allah and His Messenger. He, the All-Just has declares them to be hypocrites and nonbelievers in His Book saying:

“They (hypocrite) say, “We have believed in Allah and in the Messenger and we obey, then a party of them turn away thereafter, such are not believers.” Quran 24:47

The Height of Love for Allah, the Exalted

Love of Allah has two levels: The Firsts level is a must for every Muslim to complete the obligatory aspect of Faith. It is to love Allah with a love that requires one to love what Allah has obligated upon him and to hate what Allah has forbidden for him: i.e. to perform the obligatory deeds and avoid forbidden deeds. To love His Messenger who conveyed from Him, His Commands and prohibitions and to be pleased with what he (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) has conveyed from Allah of the religion and to accept that with pleasure and submission.

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission.”
Quran 4:65

Loving the Prophets and Messengers and those who follow them in good for the sake of Allah, since He (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) said: “Indeed, the firmest handhold from eeman is that you love for Allah and hate for Allah.” [Hasan - Ahmad (4/286)]

Therefore, a Muslim loves the Prophets, the righteous ones loved by Allah, the sincere followers of the prophets, the martyrs and the

pious, since they carry out that which Allah loves, so he loves them for Allah and this is from the completion of his love for Allah since loving the beloved of the one that you love is from the completion of the love for the one that you love. Further, a Muslim hates the unbelievers, the hypocrites and the people of innovation and sin, since they do that which Allah hates so he hates them for Allah. Anyone lacking in any of these matters, is lacking the obligatory aspects of Faith.

Consequently, Loving Allah means to give precedence to what Allah loves and wants for a slave, over what the slave loves and wants for himself. He must love what Allah loves and hate what He hates, make alliances and opposition for His sake and follow the Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam). And this results to the completeness of his Faith.

The Second level of loving Allah is the level of the forerunners in good. This is where the love is raised to the loving whatever Allah loves of voluntary acts of obedience and disliking whatever Allah dislikes in the minutest aspects of disliked acts. It includes being pleased with whatever Allah decreed and foreordained of pain to the soul in the way of afflictions...

Causes that bring about Love for the Lord of the worlds

1. Recognizing the Bounties of Allah

The Bounties of Allah upon His slaves are so numerous, that it cannot be counted or enumerated, as Allah, the All Merciful says in the Final Revelation:

“If you count the blessings of Allah then you will never be able to count them.” Quran 14:34

The heart holds love for the one, who acts good to him, or when he acquires something beneficial from him. This is a common phenomenon, which takes place in every human, so according to this observable fact, in order to love Allah one should know the Great Blessings and Bounties bestowed upon him by Lord, which will lead him to loving his Allah, the Exalted.

2. Knowledge about the Names and Attributes and Actions of Allah

Another phenomenon, which leads to love, are the attributes and

actions, one may love the other being pleased by his excellent attributes or actions. So, by knowing Allah by His Exalted Names, Absolute Attributes and Righteous Actions is one of the ways that leads to His Love, since one who knows Allah loves Him. And one who knows Him obeys Him, and is honored by Him, and whomever Allah honors will have himself close to the Exalted and will consequently lead to the glad tidings.

3. Pondering over His Creation

Pondering over the Creations of Allah, the All Able, will lead one to the specific knowledge of the heavens and the earths and the all what He created, for all this will indicate His Greatness, Power, Majesty, Perfection, Eminence, Compassion, Mercy, Strength, Subjugation, and other of His beautiful Names and Attributes. One whose knowledge of Allah is strengthened, one's love for Him is also strengthened as well the love of obeying Him. He will then experience the pleasure of worship, whether it is in prayer, remembrance or other forms of worship.

4. Acting towards Allah with Sincerity

To act towards Allah with sincerity and purity, while going against one's desires is a cause of Allah to bless a slave and when the slave is blessed, he further loves his Lord.

5. Remembrance of Allah

One of the greatest causes that bring about one's love for Allah is increasing one's remembrance of Allah. Whenever a person loves something, he remembers him more often. And it is through the remembrance of Allah that the hearts find tranquility:

"Yes, verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find tranquility"[Soorah ar-R'ad Quran 13:28

And in fact one of the signs of love for Allah is the constant remembrance of Allah by one's heart and tongue.

6. Reciting the Qur'aan and pondering over its verse.

One of the causes that bring about Allah's love for His Slaves is reciting the Qur'aan and pondering over its verses, in particular those verses that contain Allah's Names, Attributes and Actions.

Having fondness for His Actions will lead the slave to love Allah and Allah to love Him.

7. Remembering the Day when the believers will meet their Lords.

Another of the cause of love for Allah is remembering what has been mentioned in the Qur'aan and Sunnah concerning the believers seeing their Lord in the Hereafter, visiting them and gathering them on the Day of Abundance.

Ibn al-Qayyim mentioned ten causes that result in Allah's love for a slave and the slave's love for His Lord.

1. Reciting the Qur'aan while pondering over its meaning and what is meant by it.

2. Getting closer to Allah by performing voluntary deeds completing obligatory deeds. This is as in the Hadeeth al-Qudsi: "My slave continues to getting closer to Me by performing voluntary deeds until I love him." [Saheeh Bukharee]

3. Continual remembrance of Allah under all circumstances, with one's tongue, heart and actions.

4. Giving precedence to what He loves over what you love when you are overtaken by your desires.

5. The heart being avid of Allah's Names, Attributes and the heart roaming in that garden of knowledge.

6. Observing Allah's kindness, goodness and bounties, both open and hidden.

7. And this is the most wonderful: the heart becoming soft, subdued and meek before Allah.

8. Being alone with Allah during the time when the Lord descends during the last portion of the night while reading His Book and ending by asking for forgiveness and repenting.

9. Sitting with the beloved and sincere, benefiting from the most fruitful of their speech. And not to speak unless speaking is more

beneficial and you know that it will improve your state and be beneficial to others.

10. Remaining away from every cause that comes between the heart and Allah.

These ten causes take the lovers to the station of true love and bring them to their Beloved. [Ibn al-Qayyim, Madaarij-us-Saalikeen, vol. 3, pp.17, 18]

Signs of Sincere Love

From the signs of sincere love for Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam) is adherence to obedience of Allah, Jihād in His path, seeking the pleasure of the reproach one may face for his striving and following the way of His Messenger. Allah has said:

“O believers! Whoever from among you turns back from his religion, Allah will bring a people whom He will love and they will love Him, humble towards the believers, stern towards the disbelievers, fighting in the way of Allah, and never afraid of the blame of the blamers. That is the Grace of Allah, which He bestows on whom He wills. And Allah is All Sufficient for His creatures needs, All Knower”
Quran 5:54

And He says: “Say (O Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam)): “If you truly love Allah then follow me, Allah will love you and forgive you your sins.” Quran 3:31

Allah has described those who love Him with five characters:

1. They are humble towards the believers. That is they are soft, compassionate, and merciful towards the believers. They ‘lower their wings’ to them in mercy and kindness. Allah says: “And be kind and humble to the believer who follow you” Quran 26:215

2. Allah describes them as harsh against disbelievers. The meaning of this is toughness and harshness to them. Allah says: “O Prophet! Strive hard against the disbeliever and the hypocrites, and be severe against them.” Quran 66:9

This is related to the fact that those who love Allah must dislike His enemies. This is a necessary component of sincere love.

3. They strive in the way of Allah. They strive against His enemies with their souls, hand, wealth and tongue. This is a part of the completeness of one's enmity towards the enemies of Allah, which is a required component of love.

4. They do not fear the reproach of anyone who may reproach them. That is, they strive to perform those acts that He is pleased with and they do not care if anyone reproaches them as long as they are doing a deed, which is pleasing to their Lord. The lover is occupied with what his Beloved loves and to him it is the same if he is reproached or praised by the people for his deeds.

5. He follows the way of the Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam), obeys him, implements his commands and refrains from what he prohibited. Allah has associated love for Him with love for His Messenger in His Words:

"...are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger (sallallahu alaihi wa-sallam)" Quran 9:24

Consequently, the love of Allah cannot be sought except through following the path and obeying His Messenger and neither can one have complete Faith except by following His Messenger as He, the Exalted says:

"But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission."

Quran 4:65

» It hurts us to see people die on Shirk (polytheism) «

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