



Scrupulousness In Islam
by Marc Manley

إن الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه و نستغفروه و عليه نتوكل، و نعوذ به من شرور أنفسنا و سيئات أعمالنا،
فمن يهده الله فلا مضل له، و من يضله فلا هادي له،
و أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله، وحده لا شريك له،
و أشهد أن محمدا، النبي الأمي، عبده و رسوله، ختم الأنبياء و أشرف المرسلين، صلى الله عليه و على آله و أزواجه و أصحابه و أنصاره و ذرياته و سلم. إن الله و ملائكته يصلون على النبي، يا أيها الذين ءامنوا صلوا عليه و سلموا تسليما، و بعد

Verily all praise belongs to God - thus we praise Him, seek His aid, repent our sins to Him and in Him do we place our trust. We seek protection in Him from the evil whisperings of our own souls as well as from blameworthy actions and deeds.

For the one God has chosen to guide, there is no misguider for him. And as for one whom God has misguided, there is no guidance. And we bear testimony that there is no god but God, Allah, One is He, with no partner, Lord of lords. We also bear witness that Muhammad, the Unlettered Prophet, is His slave and messenger, Seal of the Prophets and most noble of the Messengers. May God send peace and blessings upon him, his family, his wives, his companions, his helpers, and his progeny. Surely God and His Angels send blessings upon the Prophet therefore O' you who believe!, send prayers and blessings upon him abundantly.

Dear respected brothers and sisters in Islam, I greet you today with the greeting of Paradise, “as-Salaamu ‘alaykum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuhu”.

First Khutbah – Main Points

اقترب للناس حسابهم و هم في غفلة معرضون

“The Reckoning is ever drawing closer to Mankind, yet they are woefully heedless of it, turning away.”

[Q: 21: 1]

The Hour is upon us all. The previous *āyah*, from *surah al-Anbiyā’* demonstrates the sense of urgency that man should have but often doesn’t. This is mainly due to *ghaflah*, or heedlessness.

This *āyah* does not distinguish between Muslim/non-Muslim.

In the English language we have a saying: “Strike while the iron is hot.”

We should not waste any time in regards to perfecting our Islam, our character. For as the hadith says:

أثقل ما يوضع في الميزان يوم القيامة تقوى الله و حسن الخلق

“The heaviest thing to be weighed on the Scale on the Day of Judgment will be taqwā of God and goodness of character.”

This is in accordance with the *Sunnah* of our beloved Prophet [s], where he says this about charity:

لأن يتصدق المرء في حياته بدرهم خير له من أن يتصدق بمائة
عند موته

“It is better for a man to give a single dirhām in charity during his lifetime than to donate a hundred at his demise.”

No time to waste – strike while the iron is before the Fire is hot!

So what is *taqwā*? Let’s examine a couple of aspects:

The scholar, at-Tabrīzī gives us a good starting point:

الإتقاء أن تجعل بينك و بين ما تخافه حاجزا يحفظك

“Taqwā is the idea that you [A] place something [C] between yourself and that which you fear could destroy you [B].”

Taqwā, in a sense, is a type of self-defense or self-preservation system or technique to ward off destruction by placing something between yourself and that impending doom. For us as Muslims, that pending doom is the *‘adhāb* of Allah – the Divine Chastisement.

The word *taqwā* existed in the *Jāhili* times. In the *Mu’allaqah*, Zuhayr boldly states:

سَأَقْضِي حَاجَتِي ثُمَّ أَتَقِي * عَدُوِي بِأَلْفٍ مِنْ وَرَائِي مَلْجَمٍ

“I will satisfy my vengeance [on my brother’s killer by taking his life!], then I will defend myself from their reprisal with a thousand horses, all bridled in support of my cause!”

This idea of guarding oneself coincides with the Qur’an’s many uses of *taqwā*. One example from *suwrah al-Baqarah*:

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا
يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ

“Defend yourself against a day that will come where no soul shall be of assistance to another whatsoever – nor shall it put forth an intercessor in its place – no compensation will be taken from it – nor shall there be anyone to come to its aid.” [Q: 2:47]

To summarize, *taqwā* is a means of protecting and guarding oneself from Allah’s Divine Punishment.

Second part of the khutbah we’ll examine another aspect of the *taqwā /akhlāq* relationship and that’s *wara’*.

Second Khutbah – Main Points

Taking Stock – *Wara'*

In order to affect change in ourselves we must first, turn to Allah and ask Him to change us, to make us better Muslims. To make sincere *istigfār* [asking for forgiveness] and *tawbah* [repentance].

The second is then to take stock.

In the science of *Tasawwuf*, one of those means is termed *wara'* [ورع]. Some helpful translations would be: scrupulousness, conscientious, critical, fastidious, heedful, honest, meticulous, moral, particular, precise, rigorous, principled, and so forth.

The dictionary meaning of *wara'* itself means: to pause, give examination, or hesitate.

To help concretize what it means to *do wara'*, and how it relates to *taqwā*, let's look at our Intellectual Tradition:

Imam al-Ghazālī and Imam al-Haddād list several of these as steps to obtaining and practicing *wara'*:

In a sound hadīth, the Prophet [s] said:

من اتقى الشبهات فقد استبرأ لدينه و عرضه

“The one who guards [taqwā] himself from falling into dubious actions has protected his religion and his his honor.”

و من وقع في الشبهات وقع في الحرام

“And for the one who falls into dubious actions then he falls into the Harām.”

The use of the word *taqwā* in this hadīth shows again that *taqwā* is that self-defense mechanism – in this case, defending oneself from Allah's Punishment by avoiding “grey areas”.

Wara', the habitual act of being scrupulous or heedful, negates *ghaflah*, heedlessness.

Busy ourselves with what concerns us most – our own demises; our families; our children; our health; our wealth; our communities; our character. In one week alone, Allah showed us clear signs of the Hour, Big or Small: Michael Jackson. Ed McMahon. Farrah Fawcett. Billy Mays. Celebrity is no guard from the Hour. Big or Small. Contemplate on it – prepare for it. Do not wait to give that single dirham on your deathbed – give it now, in sha'Allah.

May Allah make us the people of *'irfān*, the people who realize and actualize *Lā ilāha illa Allah* in their public and private lives. Amin.

We close now with a *du'ah* from the Prophet Muhammad [s] regarding the condition of the world we live in, asking Allah to protect us from its *fitnah*, so our souls may have salvation on the Day of Judgment:

اللهم إني أعوذ بك من قلب لا يخشع

و دعاء لا يسمع

و من نفس لا يشبع

و من علم لا ينفع

اللهم إني أعوذ بك من هؤلاء الأربعة

*"O' Allah! I seek protection in you from a heart that has no humility,
And from a supplication that is not heard,
And from a soul that cannot be satiated,
And from knowledge that has no benefit.
O' Allah!, I seek refuge in you from all four of these!
Amin.*