



[Signs of the Humble:](#)
Trust and Repentance

The times we live in are difficult. The trip we just return from, from Egypt / Masrah last night was one that builds a great deal of reflection into our minds and into our hearts. So I'd like to speak today on humility, *inshā'a-Llāh*. Allah Swt says in the Holy Qur'an, Surah al-Hijr:

So do not turn your eyes toward the worldly benefits We have granted some of those who cover up the truth, and do not be saddened by those who deny you, but spread the wing of your mercy over the believers. And say to the people, "Surely I am the clear warner."

Again in Surah al-Furqān:

And the worshipers of the Universally Merciful are those who walk modestly upon the earth. And if the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace."

Again Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

And do not strain your eyes with longing toward the flowers of this worldly life that I have given to other couples in order to test them. The provision of your Lord is better and more enduring. And order your family to the *salat* and persevere in it. We do not ask you for provision. We provide for you, and the best outcome will be for those who guard themselves for Allah.

Trying to grasp the relevance of our lives amidst the billions of others on this planet, and the role we play, needs to be infused with the relevance of valuing and seeking humility. If we can learn the value of what it means to be humble, the humility that embraces every circumstance and person, no matter what, then we can open the doorway to relevant action and a relevant and fulfilling life. If the qualities and characteristics of such things as humility had a voice, a language which people can understand, perhaps humility would speak about the hidden realities, the realities that are hidden in the outcomes of our actions and our day to day thoughts.

Humility can be said to be that which is undertaken for Allah, in Allah; and anything other than that is some form of deception. Whoever is humble to Allah and to Allah's Messengers, to Allah's representatives, is humble to the Truth, to the Compassion in the heart, to the Mercy that is needed in this world, to Patience and Perseverance. Allah will honor our humility over many of the other people who come to Him on the Day of Awakening, having just discovered the relevant irrelevancy of their lives at the moment of death.

There are signs of those who have humility. One humble person was asked about humility. He said, *"It means you are humble to the truth, and you follow it, even if you hear it from a child."* There are many forms of pride that come into our lives, even into the life of children, that block us from using, accepting, and following what is real knowledge. Unfortunately, we can even raise our children with our biases and prejudices, so that when they grow up, they think they are thinking their own thoughts, when truly they were the thoughts and observations we put into them ourselves. Really, often what they are thinking are derivative thoughts of their parents. *Alhamdulillah*, if the thoughts are good; and unfortunate, if the thoughts are not good.

There is a kind of pride in that, although people would never admit it. There is a pride in infecting others. There is a pride people have in deceiving others, as they, themselves, were deceived through influencing others with their own fears, selfishness, and doubts. It can be so strong, that even the content becomes lost in the force of that influence. There are certain verses about this, verses that denounce the haughtiness and heaviness of that kind of influence. People of humility have signs that are recognizable against these verses. One verse is:

And on the most elevated places there will be men who know all by their marks. Whoever from among you turns back from his faith, then Allah will bring another people whom He loves, and they shall love Him, humble toward the believers, mighty toward the unbelievers.

As Allah tells us, there will always be humble people, and real followers and believers. The root of that humility comes from Allah Swt, Himself, not from some undefineable or hard to recognize aspect of our own character. It comes from Allah Swt. Humility is always against the backdrop of something great. We become more humble when something so much more powerful, greater, beautiful, and clear than our own thoughts or ideas comes before us. Against the Majesty and the Beauty, the Jamal and Jelal that is Allah Swt, when we allow ourselves to be in awe of that process in front of us, and to be patient when we see the Far-reaching Hand of Allah Swt, not the punishing hand but the Merciful Hand of Allah Swt, that is the most important thing.

When we see the Mercy of Allah, how Allah will extend His Mercy to us. All we need to do it pray, and have real *ikhlas*/sincerity, *“O Allah, give me another chance! Allow me deeper knowledge. Permit me to see against the backdrop of Your Greatness.*

Allow me to be humble. Take from me my arrogance and my haughtiness. O Allah, make me reflect on even that which I am so sure I am right about.” Allah does it; it’s a very humbling experience to see how quick and responsive this universe is. It may come in the words of someone else, a reflection in their eyes, a reaction to our self, or a reaction to our self within our self. That Mercy of Allah does not just reach us from Allah giving us mercy; it reaches us from Allah influencing the world around us then.

We play our part by being receptive to the Will of Allah Swt. We play our part by listening to our hearts, not just to our minds; and by extending ourselves to our brothers and sisters, our parents, families, mothers, fathers, children, and neighbors. [We play our part by] forgiving others and by being patient. We want that to be first. Unless we want that to be the first response, it won’t be. We’ll have to arrive at it through some pain or difficulty, some reflection or force; or we won’t arrive at all to see our complicity in circumstances, or the patience that we didn’t have. [We play our part by] seeking out other meanings and looking behind circumstances, and not by playing out our desires and selfishness, our own wants and circumstances, which can only bring difficulty.

No one knows what the true meaning of humility is, except those of His slaves and servants who are close and connected with His Tawhid. Allah Swt said, **“The servants of the Merciful are those who walk upon this earth in humbleness, and when the ignorant address them, they say, ‘Salām (peace).”** Just think what it is for your first and last response to be: *Salām* – and to mean it, and not to be anything else but what that really means. It should not be, “I want; I don’t want. This is the way I think it should be. This is what I think you think. This is what I know is right; this is what you think is right.” It should not be this way. You’re a fool; none of that, none of those thoughts—just *Salām*.

If Islam means submission (which we know it does), and if in that submission there is an overriding concept of safety and security (which I've said thousands of times and which it is in Arabic), and if encoded in that safety and security is an even greater *raison d'etre*, when the circumstances surround it in which knowledge can come about, which we know it is from the Arabic language itself, then humility and fear, *taqwa*, piety, sensitivity and modesty, care and concern, all appear as a result of our trust in Allah, to our turning to Allah, to the Prophet (sal), to our faith, and to that which has brought us to Islam (be it our *shaykh*, our society, our birthright, or whatever), and as a result of having faith override immediate circumstances.

Real, perfect nobility is a gift. It is given only to those who find repose in peacefulness in *dhat* (the Essence of Allah Swt), and in real truth and real evidence, and in relying on Allah truly, in real *tawakkul*. It is said that trust is a sealed cup. Nothing can leak out of it. Real *tawakkul* is something that cannot be lost, cannot be compromised, can't be subverted. It is a cup that is sealed with the seal of Allah, with the seal of the Prophet Mohammed (sal), and with the seal of one's heart, and with the seal of all the *shuyukh*. No one can break the seal of that cup. No one can taste what is within that cup, but those who are trustworthy and who have proven their trustworthiness. Allah Swt said in the Holy Qur'an:

On Allah should the trustful rely, and on Allah should you rely if you are a believer.

Not on our minds, not on what we think is happening, not on what we think might happen, not what we think someone even said or did, but that trust is a key to our belief. If the trust is of a lesser nature, if the trust is trust until something better comes along, or until something appears to go wrong, as opposed to trusting until

that trust bears fruit, then we see that belief is immediately undercut. People cease praying. They cease to understand the importance of timely prayers. They cease to understand the importance of contemplative prayer. They cease to engage with Qur'an and with the Hadith. They cease to speak with those who are set above them. They turn only to their desires and wants. They react to instead of act towards Allah. The reality of trust is not complex. They choose to be among people who are not believers. They choose to be among people who they deem to be their "friend," but it is a friendship that is very, very transient.

Trust can be defined as when we prefer others to ourselves; when you give yourself to the circumstance of your own ego. The root for that is to speak of the other person's inner and outer needs, and put them before your own. If we trust or prefer only the external things in life, as opposed to the inner and transformational aspects, then there is a veil that goes between us and the Truth. If we prefer to understand and come near to the cause of events, the cause of the trust, the Creator Allah Swt, then we remain near to Allah. If we want to be a person of trust, and not a person of causes... and there is a lot of power in being a person of causes. Someone comes to you, and you just cause things to happen. You cause outer things to happen. You cause inner states to come about. You cause turmoil. You cause clarity.

But if you would rather be a person of trust, [then it is done] by your own example and striving, by your own failures, and standing up and transforming yourself, even if it takes time and it takes the patience of those around you. It is said that we should make *takbir* over the *rūh* five times. We should say "Allahu Akbar" over our own nature, and then bid farewell to all our hopes and dreams, just like death is a farewell to life. Then Allah will provide, and you will be a trustworthy being. If the lowest level of trust is nothing more than placing our own highest aspirations before our own advancement, our own spiritual aspiration in the sense of service against

our physical aspirations or advancement; and if we are not seeking a position of wealth or power and influence for ourselves; if we are not looking for what it is we think we want, or any of those things that could break the bond between ourselves and Allah; if we really want to live by the marks of a humble and trustworthy individual, and therefore by the trust of Allah Swt, then we have to hold very, very strongly to this attitude of placing others first.

It's related that one of the men of trust came to one of the imams of the Shi'a, and said to him: "Show me compassion by answering a question about trust." The imam knew the man to be of excellent trustworthiness and a very scrupulous individual, and he saw in him sincerity. The man asked him the question, and the imam said, "Stay here and wait for me a while." While he was formulating an answer, a poor man passed by. The imam put his hand into his pocket, and taking something out, gave it to that poor man. Then he turned to the questioner and said, "Come, ask me about what you have seen." The man said, "O imam, I know you could have given me the answer to my question before making me wait. Why then did you delay?"

He replied, "Belief means reflecting on the meaning before I speak. For how could I be negligent of my innermost being, when my Lord perceives it? How could I discuss the science of trust while there is a coin left in my own pocket? It's not permitted for me to discuss that, until I have given to someone. So understand." The questioner sighed deeply and swore that he would not live in a house nor rely on any other human being as long as he lived.

That's a pretty high level of trust. When you think about how we use circumstances and attitudes and other people's difficulties, our own doubts and questions, our own wants, our self-reflection about what we have and don't have, what we want, what

we think we should want or shouldn't want; what we should or shouldn't do, what we should have or should not have, what should and should not be... when we put all that before our trustworthiness, and then we go to someone and say, "Let me help you," it's very hard. Every one of us needs to spend a lot of time contemplating humility, trust, repentance, knowing that the least we could do is to seek forgiveness of Allah Swt, and help the person next to us and believe in those who believe. But we can't help the person in front of us until we help ourselves, until we repent to Allah.

We should be very careful in what we think we know, and what we think we think, and what we know we think we know. [Let us] not be of those who can just get through life in *dunya*, having whatever they want, doing whatever they want, justifying whatever they want, and seeming to get no punishment for it. It's not that the world is so bad and that we are so good. It is that there are those who can see, and those who cannot see. To purposely blind yourself, to put dark glasses on so you can't see, and therefore become part of that world is so self-destructive that it destroys yourself and others. That is terrible. It's a terrible crime against our souls; therefore, we should say "*Allahu akbar*" five times to our *rūh*. "O Allah, you gave us this spirit and this power."

We should try to do something with our lives to the last breath we have, not just for 20 years, or 25 years, or 30 years, or even a hundred. For whatever time we have, we should keep trying. We can only live our own lives. We cannot live someone else's life, but if we accept the trust that Allah gave us, then we can help others and we can be helped by others also, *inshā'a-Llāh. Asalaamu aleykum.*