



كنه ما لا يد للمريد منه

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الشهير بالشيخ الأكبر عبيد الكين بن عربي

The Essence Every Seeker Needs

By Muḥyiddīn Ibn ʿArabī (d. 1240)

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الشهير بالشيخ الأكبر محيي الدين بن عربي

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The following text is a draft translation of *The Essence Every Seeker Needs* by Andalusian Muslim scholar and mystic, Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Arabī al-Ḥātimī aṭ-Ṭā’ī (d. 1240), more popularly known as Shaykh al-Akbar Ibn ‘Arabī. This edition was adapted and refined by Tarif Arabi and Nohad Hemmoudeh from an open access translation by Professor James Morris of Boston College. Please do not circulate this draft.

We ask Allah to reward the author, translators, teachers, and all students who learn from this blessed work.

نسأل الله العافية وجميل العافية

The Essence Every Seeker Needs

In the Name of Allah, the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful

Praise be to Allah, the Sustainer of the Worlds. And may Allah bless our master Muhammad and his Family and Companions!

O seeker! You asked about the essence of what the seeker needs for drawing closer to Allah. The following pages will give you an answer to your question. And Allah alone is the One Who provides success.

Know, O seeker—may Allah help us all to obey Him and may He use us for what satisfies Him—that closeness to Allah is known only by His informing us of it, and He, all praise and thanks to Him, has already done that by sending messengers and scriptures, and by clarifying the paths which lead to eternal happiness. So once we believe and have faith, there only remains putting this faith, which was established in the soul of believers, into proper practice by following Islamic law.

كُنْهُ مَا لَا بُدَّ لِلْمُرِيدِ مِنْهُ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين، وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وآله وصحبه أجمعين.
سألتَ أيها المرید عن "كنه ما لا بد للمريد منه"، فأجبتك في هذه الأوراق والله الموفق
لا ربَّ غيره.

اعلم أيها المرید - وفَّقك الله وإيانا لطاعته واستعملنا وإياك بما يُرضيه - أن القرب من
الله لا يُعَلِّمُ إلا بتعريفه إيانا بذلك، وقد فعل ذلك ولله الحمد والشكر، فأرسل الرسل،
وأنزل الكتب، وأوضح السبل الموصلة إلى السعادة الأبدية، فآمنا وصدَّقنا، وما بقي إلا
استعمالُ ما وقع به الإيمان من الأعمال، وتقرر في نفوس المؤمنين من وضع الشرع في
محلّه.

O seeker! The first essential thing is to realize the unicity (*tawhid*) of your Creator and His transcendence (*tanzih*) of what does not befit Him, Exalted is He. As for realizing His *tawhid*, know that were there another god besides Allah, it would be impossible for any action to occur from those two gods because of differences in their acts of will: namely, existence and actual determination. Thus, the order will be destroyed, as He, the Almighty, said, “Had there been within the heavens and earth gods besides Allah, the heavens and earth would have both been ruined” (21:22).

Do not worry, my brother, about anyone who associates another god with Allah. You do not need to provide evidence of *tawhid* and oneness as the polytheist (*mushrik*) already affirms the existence of Allah, the Exalted, but he added an associate. Therefore, he must provide evidence of what he has added. Because time is precious and since your belief in Allah is sound, this is enough for you concerning the realization of *tawhid*. The *mushrik*, on the other hand, has no valid proof to support his claim. And all praise belongs to Allah.

ثم يجب عليك أيها المرید توحيد خالقك وتنزيهه عما لا يجوز عليه سبحانه وتعالى .
فأما توحيدہ، فلو تمَّ إله ثانٍ مع الله لامتنع وقوع الفعل من الإلهين لاختلاف الإرادات
وجوداً وتقديراً، وفسد النظام، وذلك قوله تعالى: (لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا)
(الأنبياء: 22)

ولا تبالِ يا أخي بمن أشرك، ولا تحتاج إلى إقامة دليل على الوحدانية والأحادية، فإن
المشرك قد أثبت وجود الحق تعالى معك وزاد عليه الشريك، فعليه الدليل على ما زاد.
ويكفيك هذا في التوحيد، فإن الوقت عزيز والعقد سالم. والمخالف: لا عين له
موجودة، والحمد لله.

As for His *tanzih*, it is of immense importance to you, given the existence of the literalists (*al-mushabbihah wa al-mujassimah*) in our time. So, my brother, just rely on His saying, “There is nothing like unto Him” (42:11), and that is sufficient for you. Every description that contradicts this verse should be rejected. You should not add or go beyond this meaning. Therefore, it is explained in the Sunnah that “Allah was, and there was nothing with Him.” Allah, the Sublime, transcends what the oppressors say. For each verse or hadith which makes the imagination liken Allah to His creation, whether from the language of the Arabs or those who received revelation, you must believe in what Allah, Exalted is He, intended by it, and not in what you imagine. Then simply ascribe the true intended meanings of these verses and hadiths to Allah. There is no better *tanzih* than “There is nothing like unto Him” (42:11), and no one can better affirm His *tanzih*, since He Himself has already affirmed His own *tanzih*, which is the most fitting expression of His *tanzih*.

وأما تنزيهه، فهو أكدُّ عليك، من أجل المُشَبَّهة والمُجَسِّمة الظاهرين في هذا الزمان،
فاعتمدُ يا أخي على قوله: (لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ) (الشورى: 11) وحسبك هذا. فكل
وصف يناقض هذه الآية مردود إلى ما يليق بهذه الآية، ولا تزدُ ولا تبرحُ من هذا
الموطن. لذلك جاء في السُّنَّة "كان الله ولا شيء معه" تعالى الله عما يقول الظالمون
عُلُوًّا كبيرًا. وكل آية وحديث تُوهِمُ التشبيه مما يعطيه كلام العرب، أو كلام من أُنزلَ
عليه شيء من الوحي والتبليغ فيجب عليك الإيمان به، على حد ما يعلمه الله تعالى
وما أنزله، لا على ما تتوهمه، واصرفْ علمَ ذلك إلى الله تعالى. ليس بعد - لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ
شَيْءٌ - وما ينزَّهُهُ مُنَزَّهُ إذ قد نَزَّهَ نفسه بنفسه، وهو أنزَّهُ ما ينبغي له.

Then, O seeker, you should have faith in the Messengers, may Allah bless them, and in the message they brought and what they taught us about Him. He, the Sublime, transcends your knowledge and ignorance.

Next, you should love all of the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. They should never be charged with any offense or be criticized. None of them should be raised in excellence over another, except in what his Lord has established in His Noble Book or through the words of His Prophet ﷺ.

You should respect and have esteem for whomever Allah and His Messenger have respected and esteemed. Then, you should accept and acknowledge the people of this path regarding the stories narrated about them. You should also accept everything you see from them which ordinary minds and worldly knowledge cannot encompass. In general, you should hold a good opinion of everyone, and you should have a sound heart. You should pray, especially in secret, for fellow believers. And you should serve the people of the path, recognizing their generosity in letting you into their inner circle to provide service, alleviate their load, share hardships, and maintain patience.

ثم بعد ذلك أيها المرید يجب عليك الإيمان بالرسل صلوات الله عليهم، وبما جاءوا به، وما أخبروا عنه. إنه - عز وجل - أعظم وأجل مما علمت وجهلت .

ثم حبُّ الصحابة رضي الله عنهم أجمعين . ولا سبيل إلى تجريحهم البتة، ولا الطعن فيهم، ولا تفضل أحداً على الآخر إلا بما فضَّله ربُّه في كتابه العزيز، أو على لسان نبيه صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم.

ويجب عليك تعظيم من عَظَّم الله تعالى ورسولُه، ثم التسليم لأهل هذه الطريق فيما يُحكى عنهم من الحكايات، وكل ما ترى منهم - مما لا يَسَعُ العقلُ ولا العلم - ومما يجب عليك حسن الظن بالناس أجمعين، وسلامة الصدر، والدعاء للمؤمنين بظهر الغيب، وخدمة الفقراء برؤية الفضل لهم في ذلك حيث ارتضوك خُديماً لهم تحمل كُلفهم وأذاهم وجفاهم، والصبر على أذاهم.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to keep silent, except for the remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*), reciting the Holy Qur'an, guiding someone who has gone astray, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil, reconciling those who have departed from one another, and encouraging charity (*sadaqah*)—indeed, encouraging every form of good.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to search for someone, who is in harmony with your essential nature, to assist you with what you aim for, as “the believer is stronger by his brother.” And beware of the company of the person who fundamentally opposes your goals.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to have an actively guiding spiritual master (*shaykh murshid*) and to focus on having a pure inner sincerity of intention, because if the seeker is truly sincere towards Allah, then He, Exalted is He, will turn every devil of that seeker into an angel who will rightly guide and inspire him to whatever is good. Inner sincerity is the Greatest Elixir (i.e., the perfect cure), which if applied to anything [evil], Allah will flip its essence.

ومما لا بد منه: الصمت إلا عن ذكر الله تعالى وتلاوة القرآن الكريم وإرشاد الضالّ
والأمر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر، والإصلاح بين المتهاجرين، والتحريض على
الصدقة، بل على كل خير .

ومما لا بد منه: طلب شخص موافق يُعينك على ما أنت بصدده وسبيله، فإن "المؤمن
كثير بأخيه". وإياك وصحبة الضدّ.

ومما لا بد منه: شيخٌ مُرشدٌ، والصدقُ شعار المرید، لأنه إذا صدق مع الله تعالى جعل
كلّ شيطانٍ في حقّه ملكاً، يُرشده إلى الخير، ويُلهمه الخير، فإن الصدق هو الأكسيرُ
الأعظم، ما وُضِعَ على شيءٍ إلا قلب عينه.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to search for the source of sustenance. The basis of this path is the lawful (*halal*) source of sustenance, on which the pillars of this path rest. You should neither burden anyone nor accept sustenance from anyone. You should strive to earn your own living and be scrupulous in what you acquire, what you say, what you look at, what you listen to, and in everything you do. Do not be extravagant in your clothing, housing, or food, because that which is *halal* is not easy to come by.

And know that if people plant desire in their souls, it will be so hard to uproot it after that.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to eat less, for hunger increases one's spiritual energy for obeying Allah and decreases laziness.

You should make the night and the day worthwhile. You are obligated to stand before your Lord five times daily. Do your best during the rest of the time between prayers to work and gain for one day what will suffice you for several days. Be like al-Sabti, the son of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid.

ومما لا بد منه: البحث عن هذه اللقمة، فأساس هذا الطريق اللقمة الحلال، عليها قام هذا الطريق. ولا تُثقل على أحد، ولا تقبل من أحد، واحترف، وتورع في كسبك ونُطقك ونظرك وسمعك، وفي جميع حركاتك. ولا تتوسّع في ثوب ولا مسكن، ولا مأكّل، فإن الحلال قليل لا يحتمل السرف.

واعلم أن النفوس إذا زرع الإنسان الشهوة فيها، عسّر قلْعها بعد ذلك.

ومما لا بد منه: قلة الطعام، فإن الجوع يُورث النشاط في الطاعة، ويُذهب الكسل.

وعليك بتعمير الأوقات في الليل والنهار، فأما الساعات التي دعاك الشرع فيها إلى الوقوف فيها بين يدي ربك، فهي خمسة أوقات واجبة عليك، وباقي ما بينها من الأوقات، فإن كنت صاحب حرفة، فاجتهد أن تعمل في يومٍ ما يقوئك في أيام، كالسبتيّ ابن هارون الرشيد.

Do not leave your place of worship after Fajr prayer until the sun rises, nor after Asr prayer until the sun sets, without filling those special periods with *dhikr*, humility, and submission. Nor should you let the period between Dhuhr and Asr, Maghrib, and Isha pass without standing in prayer for 20 supererogatory *rak'ahs*.

Remember to always pray 4 *rak'ahs* at the beginning of your day, before Dhuhr, and before Asr. Make your night prayer (*witr*) 13 *rak'ahs*. You should not go to sleep until you are overcome by sleep. Do not eat except when there is a need. You should dress with the intention of covering your *'awrah*, protecting yourself from heat and cold, and avoiding any harm that would prevent you from worshipping your Lord.

ولا تُفارقُ مُصَلَّاكُ بعد صلاة الصبح إلى طلوع الشمس، ومن بعد صلاة العصر إلى غروبها، إلا بذكر وخشوع وخضوع. ولا يفوتك الوقوفُ مصليًا من الظهر إلى العصر، ومن المغرب إلى العشاء الأخيرة بعشرين ركعة.

وحافظْ على أربع ركعات أول النهار وقبل الظهر وقبل العصر واجعل وتترك ثلاثة عشر ركعة، ولا تنم إلا عن غلبة، ولا تأكل إلا عن فاقة، ولا تلبس إلا عن وقاية من حر أو برد، بنية ستر العورة ودفْع الأذى القاطع عن عبادة ربك.

If you are literate, then maintain a *wird* of reciting the Qur'an from the *mushaf*. Pick up the Qur'an, place your left hand under it, and let your right hand follow the letters as you see them. Raise your voice enough so you can hear yourself while reciting slowly. Make *dua* when you come across an *ayah* that necessitates supplication, seek out the wisdom from verses offering a lesson. Treat each verse according to what befits it. Try to figure out the meaning of what a given *ayah* is describing, and check to see if you have it or not. Then thank Allah, the Sublime, for what you have, and try to acquire what you missed. If you read the description of the hypocrites and the disbelievers, then reflect as to whether or not you have any of their attributes.

وإن كنت ممن يَعْرِفُ أن يكتب، فاجعل على لسانك وردًا من القرآن في المصحف،
تُمسِكُه في حرك وتُلقي يدك اليسرى تحت المصحف وتُمشي يدك اليمنى على
حروفه وأنت تنظر إليه، وترفع صوتك بحيث تُسمع نفسك، وترتل القرآن، وتَسأل في
السورة التي توجب السؤال فيها، وتعتبر في الآية التي فيها اعتبار، وتعامل كل آية بما
يليق بها، وما تدل عليه من الصفات، فانظر ما عندك منها وما فقدت من ذلك،
فاشكره على ما عندك، وما فاتك حَصْلُهُ. وإذا قرأت وصف المنافقين والكافرين، فانظر
هل فيك من تلك الصفات شيء أم لا.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to hold yourself accountable and to observe your inner thoughts (*khawatir*) at all times. You should feel deep within your heart a shame that will prevent it from experiencing further thoughts or impulses that are neither pleasing to Allah nor deemed blameworthy by Islamic law. We used to have a sheikh who would always record his daily actions in a notebook, and then when it was night time he would set his records out before himself and take an account of his actions. I did the same, but I also added my thoughts and impulses.

ومما لا بد منه: محاسبتك نفسك، ومراعاة خواترك في الأوقات، ثم أشعر نفسك
الحياء - من قلبك - من الله تعالى، فإنك إذا استحييت من الله منعت قلبك أن يخطر
فيه خاطرٌ يذمُّه الشرع، أو تتحرك بحركة لا يرتضيها الحق. ولقد كان لنا شيخ يقيد
حركاته في صحيفة، ثم إذا جنَّ الليلُ وضعها بين يديه، ثم يحاسب نفسه على ما فيها.
وقد زدتُ على شيخي بتقييدي خواتري.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to constantly be aware of your thoughts and moments. Check what you are doing in the moment, and consider what Islamic law (shariah) expects of you. If it is time to perform a *fard* action, then do it right away. And if it is time for a *mandub* action, then get to it. And when the time comes to perform *mubah* actions, occupy yourself with any of the good deeds that Allah has recommended.

But if you start a deed that brings you closer to Allah, do not tell yourself that you will live long enough to do another one. Instead, you should act as though this is your last action in this world, keeping in mind that you will soon meet your Lord, for in doing so you shall be sincere. And acceptance accompanies sincerity.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to continuously be in a state of purity. Whenever you break your *wudu'*, renew it, and follow it by praying two *rak'ahs*, unless it is one of the three prohibited times: namely, sunrise, sunset, and noon (except on Fridays).

ومما لا بد منه: مراعاة الخواطر والأوقات، بأن تنظر في الوقت الذي أنت فيه، وتنظر فيما قال لك الشرع أن تعمل فتعمل، إن كنت في وقت فرض فأدِّهِ، أو ندبٍ فبادرُ إليه. وإن كنت في وقت مباح فاشغَلْ نفسك بما ندبكَ الحقُّ إليه من الخير على أنواعه.

وإذا شرعت في مشروع يعطي قربة: لا تحدِّثْ نفسك أن تعيش بعده إلى عملٍ آخر، فاجعل ذلك آخرَ عملٍ من الدنيا تلقَى به ربُّك. فإذا فعلت هذا أخلصت، ومع الخلاص، يكون القبول.

ومما لا بد منه: الجلوس على طهارة دائماً، ومتى أحدثتَ توضأت، ومتى توضأت صلَّ ركعتين، إلا أن يكون وقت كراهةٍ نُهيَتْ عن إيقاع الصلاة فيه، وهي ثلاثة أوقات: عند طلوع الشمس، وعند غروبها، وعند الاستواء إلا يوم الجمعة خاصة.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to seek out noble character, implementing it one virtue at a time. Similarly, you should avoid all bad character. Whoever abandons a virtue possesses blameworthy character. You should know that morals, like people, are of different kinds. You need to learn which virtues are suitable to apply to each person. As for universal application, this entails bringing comfort to people and protecting them from harm. But this must all be done with Allah's pleasure in mind.

Know that Allah's servants are all constrained by their actions, and their destinies are controlled by the One Who moves them. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ made things easy for us when he said, "I have been sent to perfect noble character."

In any situation where Allah gives you the choice to be in control or to abstain, then choose the latter. Or if the law says, "You are free to punish" or, "You can forgive," then lean towards forgiveness.

ومما لا بد منه: البحث عن مكارم الأخلاق، وإتيانها: تُعَيَّنُ منها خُلُقًا . كذلك سوء الأخلاق: اجتنبها كلّها. واعلم أن من ترك خلقًا كريماً، فإنه ذو خلق ذميم. واعلم أن الأخلاق على أصناف، كما هم الخلق على أقسام، فينبغي أن تعرف أيَّ خُلُقٍ تستعمله. والذي يَعُمُّ أكثر الأصناف: إيصال الراحة إليهم، ودفع الأذى عنهم، لكن في رضا الله تعالى.

واعلم أن الخلق عبيدٌ مُسَخَّرُونَ، مجبورون في حركاتهم، ونواصيهم بيد محرّكهم، والنبى صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم قد أراحنا في هذا المقام، قال: "بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَكَارِمَ الْأَخْلَاقِ."

فكل موضع قال لك الشرع فيه: إن شئت أن تتصرف، وإن شئت تركت؛ اِخْتَرِ التَّركَ. أو قال لك: إن شئت جازيت، وإن شئت عفوت، فاجنح إلى العفو والتسامح.

Beware of seeking revenge for yourself against whoever has wronged you, for Allah has called that “a bad deed”, even though you are getting your lawful right. But in every situation where the shariah has ordered you to be angry and you fail to do so, then that is not praiseworthy, because getting angry for Allah’s sake is in keeping noble character with Allah. So, glad tidings for those who act for Allah’s sake, keep His company, and understand his saying, “Certainly, you are of a great moral character” (68:4).

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to stay away from opponents and those who are not on the same path—but without believing them to be evil, or even having such a thought cross your mind. Instead, it is truly essential to focus your intention on keeping company with the people of truth and preferring them over your opponents. It is also necessary that you treat all animals with sympathy and mercy, because they are among those whom Allah has subjected for your service. So, do not overburden them with work that is beyond their capacity, and do not heedlessly ride them.

وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَقْتَصَّ لِنَفْسِكَ مِمَّنْ أَسَاءَ إِلَيْكَ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ سَمَّاهَا سَيِّئَةً، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ
مِمَّا يَسُوءُ الْمُقْتَصِّ مِنْهُ. وَكُلُّ مَوْضِعٍ قَالَ لَكَ الشَّرْعُ فِيهِ: اغْضَبْ فَاغْضَبْ، فَإِنْ لَمْ
تَغْضَبْ فَمَا هُوَ بِخَلْقٍ حَمِيدٍ، لِأَنَّ الْغَضَبَ لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى مِنْ مَكَارِمِ الْأَخْلَاقِ مَعَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى.
وَطُوبَى لِمَنْ عَامَلَ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى وَصَحْبَهُ، فَسَمِعَ قَوْلَهُ (وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَى خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ) (القلم: 4).

ومما لا بد منه: مجانية الأضداد، ومن ليس من جنسك، من غير أن تعتقد فيهم
السوء، أو يخطر ذلك في خاطرك. ولكن عليك بنية صحبة الحق تعالى وأهله وإيثارهم
عليهم. كذلك فعامل سائر الحيوانات بالشفقة عليهم، والرحمة بهم، لأنهم ممن
سَخَّرَهُمُ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لَكَ، فَلَا تَحْمَلُهُمْ فَوْقَ طَاقَتِهِمْ وَلَا تَرْكَبُهُمْ بَطْرًا.

Act likewise with your servants, because they are your brothers. Allah has given you authority over them, so that He can test how you treat them. You are His servant, so however you would love Him to act towards you, then you should act precisely that way with your servants. For surely Allah shall hold you accountable. And whatever evil deeds you wish that Allah averts from you, then you should avoid them with your servants. Keep in mind people belong to Allah's family, and you are a member of that family.

If you have a child, then teach him the Qur'an for the sake of Allah not for any other purpose in this world. Oblige him to observe the appropriate behavior mentioned by the shariah in accordance with virtuous character. Encourage him to be kind and to detach himself from the world (*zuhd*) at a young age, so that he becomes accustomed to it. Do not encourage desires and cravings in his heart, but rather diminish the attractions of this life, as it leads to losing out on his benefit in the hereafter. Do not teach your child out of stinginess with your money or assets.

وكذلك ملك اليمين من الرقيق، فهم إخوانك، قد ملّك الله نواصيهم ليرى كيف تتصرف فيهم، فأنت عبد له سبحانه وتعالى، فما تحب أن يفعلَه معك، فذلك بعينه افعل مع غلمانك وجواريك، فإن الله تعالى يجازيك، وما تحب أن يصرفه عنك من القبيح والسوء؛ ذلك بعينه افعله معهم، فالكل عيال الله تعالى، وأنت من جملة العيال.

فإن كان لك ولد، فعلمه القرآن، لا لغرض من أغراض الدنيا. وألزمه محافظة آداب الشريعة الإسلامية والأخلاق الدينية. واحمله على الرفق والزهد من صغره كي يعتادها. ولا تزرع الشهوات في قلبه، وبِعَضِّ إليه زينة الحياة الدنيا، وما يؤولُ صاحبها من نقص الحظ في الآخرة. ولا تعمل ذلك شحًا على درهمك ومالك.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, not to come near the gates of power, nor should you keep company with those who are competing for this world, since they will drag your heart away from Allah. But if you are obligated to keep their company, then always offer them advice and never cheat them. For in reality, you are interacting with Allah, and whatever you do, you will always be served by them. Therefore, keep your intention directed towards Allah, and turn to Him to always elevate your state to what is better for your faith.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to always be mindful of Allah in times of action and at times of rest.

ومما لا بد منه: ألا تقترب من أبواب السلطان، ولا تصاحب المتنافسين في الدنيا، فإنهم يأخذون بقلبك عن الله تعالى. فإن اضطررت أمر إلى صحبتهم، فعاملهم بالنصيحة، ولا تغشهم، فإنك تعامل الحق تعالى. ومهما فعلت سُخِّروا لك في عموم أحوالك، فتوجه إلى الله في تخليصك مما أنت فيه، بما هو أحسن لك في دينك.

ومما لا بد منه: الحضور مع الله تعالى في جميع حركاتك وسكناتك .

I recommend you spend generously at all times whether good or bad, during times of hardship or prosperity. Spending from your wealth is a proof of your heart's confidence in Allah Almighty's provision, as the stingy person is a coward whom Satan comes to, extending his hope in prolonging the span of his life, and says to him, "If you spend your money, you will be lost, and your friends and peers will make fun of you. So, hold on to what you have, and prepare for any calamities. Do not be deceived by the wealth you have collected, and remember that you do not know what Allah will do next year."

If in times of distress and hardship, Satan says to you, "Hold on to your wealth, as you do not know when this hardship will end. Perhaps this state will become more difficult, so protect yourself, because no one will benefit you if you lose everything. You will be left behind, a burden on people, and you shall lose your dignity." If the whispering persists in the heart of this person, it will definitely lead him to stinginess and miserliness, and he will not be categorized with the successful group mentioned in the verse, "And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul, it is those who will be the successful" (64:16), but he would be wronging himself, as mentioned in the verse, "And whoever withholds, only withholds benefit from himself" (47:38).

Along this path we say that if a man joins the people of Allah, Exalted is He, and later becomes stingy, he will be replaced and will lose his status, as revealed by Allah, "And if you turn away, He will replace you with another people" (47:38). He will also lose the benefits mentioned in the verse, "Whatever you spend in His cause, He will compensate it" (34:39). And he will be from those whom Allah has said, "[And Moses said,]... 'Our Lord, destroy their wealth and harden their hearts'" (10:88). Such people ignored the needy ones who then died of starvation.

وأوصيك بالإففاق في السراء والضراء، والشدة والرخاء. فإن ذلك دليل على ثقة القلب بما عند الله تعالى؛ فإن البخيل جبانٌ يأتيه الشيطان فيمُدُّ أمله، ويطيل عمره، ويقول له: "إن أنفقت مالك هلكت وبقيت بلا شيءٍ مثلاً بين أقرانك وأصحابك، فأمسك عليك، واستعدّ لنوائب الزمان، ولا تغترّ بهذا الرخاء الذي أنت فيه، فما تدري ما يحدثُ الله في العام المقبل.

وإن كانت أوقات شدةٍ وضراء، فيقول لك: "أمسك عليك شيئاً فإنك لا تدري متى تنقضي هذه الشدة ولعل هذا الأمر لا يزداد إلا صعوبة، واحفظ على نفسك، فما أحد ينفعك إذا لم يبق معك شيء، وتتأخر، وتثقل على الخلق، وتذهب ماء وجهك." فإن استمرت هذه الوسوسة على قلب هذا المسكين، أدته إلى الشح والبخل، وحالت بينه وبين قوله تعالى (وَمَنْ يُوقَ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ) (التغابن: 16) وبين قوله تعالى (وَمَنْ يَخْلُ فَإِنَّمَا يَخْلُ عَنِ نَفْسِهِ) (محمد: 38).

وعندنا في هذا الطريق، إذا التحق رجل بأهل الله تعالى، ثم بخل، فإنه يُستبدل، وينزل عن ذلك المقام، كما في قوله تعالى (وَإِنْ تَتَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبَدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ) (محمد: 38)، وحال بينه وبين قوله تعالى (وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ) (سبأ: 39). وحال بينه وبين قوله تعالى (رَبَّنَا اطْمِسْ عَلَيَّ أَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاشْدُدْ عَلَيَّ قُلُوبَهُمْ) (يونس ٨٨) فضيّعوا فقراءهم، فماتوا جوعاً.

They also missed the advice of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, when he said, “Spend, O Bilal, and never fear that Allah will decrease your wealth.” They even missed the reward mentioned in the narration, “Every morning two angels call out, ‘O Allah, give recompense to each person who spends, and damage to those who withhold.’” This group of people did not understand that when Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was given the two treasures (i.e., gold and silver) he chose to leave them both.

They also did not get the message behind the story of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq ؓ when he came to the Prophet ﷺ giving all his wealth for charity. The Prophet ﷺ asked, “O Abu Bakr, what did you leave for your family?” Abu Bakr replied, “Allah and His messenger.” Sayyiduna Omar ؓ also came to the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ bringing half of his wealth. The Prophet ﷺ asked, “What is left for your family?” Omar said, “Half, and I donated the other half.” He ؓ said, “The difference between the two of you is the difference between your answer.” Spending is the reason for generating sustenance from the Ultimate Sustainer both in this world and in the hereafter. He who withholds his wealth is doubtful and is relying upon his own money. His belief in his money is much greater than his confidence in his Lord. This, in itself, is a challenge to his faith. May Allah save us all.

You must spend in hardship, and never fear poverty. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “...except the one who spends his money here and there” giving charity left and right. Allah, Exalted is He, will certainly fulfill His promise to you, whether or not you or the whole world like it. A generous person never perishes. I wish not to prolong this matter, otherwise, I would have mentioned many stories supporting what was just mentioned.

وحالت بينه وبين قول النبي صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم: " أنفق بلائاً ولا تخش من ذي العرش إقلالاً" وبينه وبين قوله: "إن لله ملكين في كل يوم يناديان عند الصباح: اللهم أعطِ مُنْفِقًا خَلْفًا، وأعطِ مُمَسِكًا تَلْفًا". وحالت بينه وبين حال النبي صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم حين أُعطي الكَنْزَيْنِ، فاختر تركهما على أخذِهِمَا.

وبين حال أبي بكر الصديق رضي الله تعالى عنه حين جاء إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم بجميع ماله فقال: "ما أبقيت لأهلك يا أبا بكر؟" قال: "الله ورسوله". وجاء عمر بن الخطاب بنصف ماله، فقال: "ما أبقيت لأهلك؟" قال: "النصف، وتصدقت بالنصف". قال صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم: "ما بينكما كما بين كلمتيكما." فالإنفاق سبب لاستجلاب الرزق من الرزاق في الدنيا والآخرة. فكلُّ مَنْ أمسك فهو لله تعالى مُتَّهَمٌ، وعلى درهمه معتمد، وكانت ثقته بدرهمه أعظمَ من ثقته بربه. وهذا طعن بإيمانه، فنسأل الله تعالى العافية.

وعليك بالإنفاق في الشدة، ولا تخف الفقر، فليس إلا كما قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم: "من قال بماله هكذا هكذا"، يميناً وشمالاً، والله تعالى مؤفٍ لك ما وعدك شئت أم أبيت، وشاء العالم أم أبي، فما هلك سخيُّ قطُّ. ولولا قصدي الاختصار لَسَقْنَا من الأخبار ما يتأيد به ما ذكرناه.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to restrain your anger, for that is a sign of the vastness of the heart. When you control your anger, you please the All-Compassionate (*al-Rahman*), enrage Satan, and suppress your *nafs*, because you have not sought victory for its sake. Rather, you have brought delight to the heart of the person for whom you have restrained your anger, that is, by not punishing him. Perhaps this will be the cause for his return to The Truth, and his fairness, admitting that he has wronged you. He might even regret what he has done, so you should acknowledge and accept this. Strive to be like this.

The greatest result and the highest merit is achieved when you restrain your anger against someone who has been angry with you. If you do this, Allah will reward you for this deed. What is more rewarding than forgiving your brother, bearing his harm, and restraining your anger? Allah will treat you the same way you treat his servants. So, strive for this attribute, as it instills affection in the hearts of people. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ ordered us to practice love and affection towards one another. And this is among the loftiest means for generating love.

وعليك بكظم الغيظ، فإنه دليل على سعة الصدر. فإنك إذا كظمت غيظك، أرضيت الرحمن، وأسخطت الشيطان وقمعت نفسك وردعتها، حيث لم تنتصر لها، وأدخلت السرور على قلب من كظمت غيظك عنه، ولم تجاز به بفعله. وكان ذلك سبباً في رجوعه إلى الحق وإنصافه وإقراره بالجفاء عليك والتعدي. وربما كان ندم على ما وقع منه. فعليك بواقع القبول، فتخلق بذلك.

ثم الفائدة الكبرى، والفضيلة العظمى: أنك إذا كظمت غيظك عمن فعل ذلك الغضب، جازاك الله تعالى على فعلك. فأى فائدة أتم من عفوك عن أخيك، وتحمّل أذاه، وكظم غيظك؟ وما أراد الحق منك أن تفعله مع عبده، فقد أراد من نفسه أن يفعله معك بعينه. فاجتهد في هذه الصفات، فإنها تورث المودة في قلوب الناس، فإن النبي صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم قد أمرنا بالتودد والتحابب، وهذا من أعلى الأسباب المؤدية إلى المحبة.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to have sincerity and perfection in worship (*ihsan*), which is a sign of modesty before Allah and a mark of glorifying Allah in the heart of the good doer. Sayyiduna Jibril ﷺ asked, “What is *ihsan*?” The Prophet ﷺ replied, “It is to worship Allah as if you see Him, for if you are unable to see Him, He certainly sees you.” In another narration, the Prophet ﷺ said, “Shame is part of true faith,” and “Shame is entirely good.” So, ultimately, it is impossible for the person of true faith to do evil.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to remember Allah (*dhikr*) and to seek His forgiveness. Seeking His forgiveness after you have sinned erases and removes the sin, but after doing good deeds, it brings much light and joy. *Dhikr* clears stress and purifies thoughts. If you tire of making much *dhikr*, move to the Book of Allah willfully and reflectively. Glorify your Lord and exalt Him. Respond with *dua* when you come across an *ayah* requiring supplication, and with fear and awe in verses containing fear, threatening, and wisdom. A reciter of the Qur’an is never sufficed due to its infinite meanings.

وعليك بالإحسان، فهو دليل على الحياء من الله تعالى، وعلى تعظيم الله تعالى في قلب المحسن. قال جبريل عليه السلام: ما الإحسان؟ قال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: "أن تعبد الله كأنك تراه، فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك". قال عليه الصلاة والسلام: "إن الحياء من الإيمان" و"الحياء خير كله". فمن المحال أن يكون عند المؤمن شر.

وعليك بلزوم الذكر والاستغفار، فإن كان عقيب ذنب محاه وأزاله، وإن كان عقيب طاعة وإحسان، فنور على نور، وسرور على سرور، فإن الذكر أجمع اللهم، وأصفي للخاطر. فإن سئمت فانتقل إلى تلاوة كتاب الله مرتلاً بتدبر وتفكر وتعظيم وتنزيه، وسؤال عند آية السؤال، وخوف وتضرع عند آية خوف ووعيد واعتبار، فإن القرءان لا يسأم قارئه، لاختلاف المعاني فيه.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to untie the knot of persistent sinning from your heart. You can do that only by talking to your *nafs*. Ask it, “O *nafs*! Are you sure you can take the next breath? Allah knows best that the breath you are taking now might be your last in this world, to which you are so attached. And you are still sinning persistently. Allah Almighty warns persistent sinners of severe punishment the likes of which lofty mountains cannot bear. How can you bear this punishment given your weakness? Repent to Allah, and remember that death can surprise you at any moment. Allah Almighty has revealed in His book, ‘Repentance is not accepted from those who continue to do evil deeds up until when death comes to one of them, he says, ‘Indeed, I have repented now’ (4:18). The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, said, ‘Allah Almighty accepts the repentance of the servant so long as he does not experience the pangs of death.’ How many people suddenly die while eating, drinking, or getting married? People go to bed but never awaken.” This is how you should counsel yourself. The extent to which you do this is the extent to which the knot of persistence will loosen.

وعليك بحل عقدة الإصرار من قلبك، ولا تطيق ذلك إلا أن تقول لنفسك في النَّفس الخارج: هل تدرين يا نفس أن النَّفس الآخر يأتيك، أم لا؟ فلعل - والله تعالى أعلم - ربما تموتين في هذا النَّفس، فإنه آخر أنفاسك في الدنيا، وأنت مُصِرَّةٌ على السوء، وعند الله تعالى للمصرين على الذنوب من العذاب ما لا تطيقه الجبال الشامخة، كيف بضعيفة مثلك؟ فتوبي إلى الله تعالى، فإنك لا تدرين متى يفاجئك الموت، فإن الله تعالى يقول: (وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْآنَ) (النساء: 18). وقال سيد الخلق، رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "إن الله تعالى يقبل توبة العبد ما لم يغرغ". وكم من شخص فجأه الموت وهو يأكل ويشرب وينكح، أو وهو نائم: تخرج روحه فلا يستيقظ. وعِظُ نفسك بمثل هذا، فإنه متى كثر منك هذا، انحلت عقدة الإصرار.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to remain cautiously aware of Allah (*taqwa*), both inwardly and outwardly, for *taqwa* is to take precaution in avoiding His punishment. The person who is afraid of Allah's punishment will hasten to do what pleases Him. Allah says, "And Allah warns you of Himself" (3:28). He also says, "And know that Allah knows what is within yourselves, so beware of Him" (2:235). Thus, the word *taqwa* is linguistically derived from *wiqayah* (taking precaution). So have *taqwa* of Allah in order to avoid His punishment, as the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, "I take refuge in You from You." You should avoid the path leading to anything you fear or dread, for sin is a path that leads to misery and distress, while obedience is the path that leads to eternal happiness.

وعليك بتقوى الله في السر والعلانية. ومعنى التقوى الحذر من عقابه، فإنه من خاف من عقابه بادر إلى الفعل الذي يرضي الله تعالى، والله تعالى يقول: (وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ) (آل عمران: 28) ويقول: (وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ) (البقرة: 235). فالتقوى مشتق من الوقاية. فاتق الله من فعل الله، كما قال المصطفى صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم: "أعوذ بك منك". فكل شيء تخافه وتخشاه، فاجتنب الطريق الموصلة إليه، فإن المعصية طريق موصلة إلى الشقاوة. والطاعة طريق موصلة إلى السعادة.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to avoid self-deception, which is deceiving yourself of the generosity of Allah and His patience while you continue to disobey Him. The accursed Satan deludes you by saying, “Had it not been for your sins and disobedience, how would His generosity, mercy, and forgiveness be manifested?” He will also say, “There is no way out for those who do good, because Allah’s mercy has enveloped them in this world and in the hereafter.” Do not get deceived by Satan’s words. Instead, tell him, “As for His mercy, what you have already mentioned is correct. Had it not been for disobedience and sins, the effects of these traits, as you claimed, would not be shown, as reports and narrations clearly indicate. O you who is cursed, your purpose is to delude me by Allah’s generosity. How would I be sure that He Almighty has forgiven me? Yes, His endless generosity, mercy, and forgiveness will be manifested to whomever He wills from his servants, just as His punishment and revenge will be shown towards whomever he wills from amongst the disobedient. I do not know which of the two groups I am in when I sin. Just as Allah has currently prevented my repenting from disobedience, perhaps He will also prevent me from His forgiveness which will lead to His punishing me in hell. Indeed, sins lead to disbelief. If I knew for certain that I would be forgiven and that no punishment awaits me, I would be deceived by your words, but that is utter stupidity and ignorance. Rather, I should do my best to obey Allah, be grateful to Him, and show that I am ashamed of Him, for He is the One who deserves to be ashamed of. How can I listen to you, while I have not been given glad tidings of my salvation? Allah has left me in my state of disobedience regardless of whether He shall forgive or punish me. How can I be deceived by your false testimony and that of my *nafs* which commands evil?”

وإياك والاعتزاز، وهو أن تَخْدَعَكَ نفسك لكرم الله تعالى وحلمه، مع استمرارك على معصيته، ويخدعك إبليس لعنة الله عليه بأن يقول لك: لولا ذنبك ومخالفتك من أين يظهر كرمه ورحمته وعفوه ومغفرته. ويقول لك: ما على المحسنين من سبيل، فإن الرحمة سبقت لهم من الله تعالى في الدنيا والآخرة. فلا يغرنك هذا الكلام، فقل له: أما رحمته وما ذكرت منه، فصحيح أنه لولا المخالفة والذنوب لما ظهرت آثار هذه الصفات على زعمك، والآثار والأخبار فيها صحيحة. لكن يا ملعون تريد أن تغرني بكرم الله تعالى. ومن أين أعلم أنني ممن يُعْفَى عنه أو يغفر له. نعم يُلْحَق كرمه ورحمته ومغفرته وعفوه بمن شاء من عباده، كما يلحق عقوبته ونقمته بمن شاء من عُصاته، وأنا لا أدري من أي الفريقين أنا عند فعلي هذا. ولعل الله تعالى كما حرمني التوبة من المعصية هنا، يحرمني عفوه قبل دخولي النار، فينتقم مني. ألا وإن الذنب بريد الكفر، فلو علمت قطعاً أنني ممن يُعْفَى عنه قطعاً، ولا يؤخذ بذنب، ربما اغتررت بكلامك، وذلك حمق مني وجهل. بل كان الواجب أن أبذل جهدي في طاعة الله، شكراً لله تعالى، وحياء منه، فإنه أولى من أستحي منه. كيف وما بشرني على التعيين، ولا أمّني، بل تركني مُهْمَلًا في معصيتي بين عفوه وعذابه. كيف أغتر بزورك وبزور نفسي الأمانة بالسوء.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to practice piety (*wara'*), which is an intuition to avoid something wrong that you feel in your heart. The Prophet ﷺ said, “Leave that which is doubtful for what is not doubtful,” even if you really need it and you cannot find anything else. Leave it for the sake of Allah, and He will provide you with what is better than what you left. Do not hasten when making decisions, for piety is the very foundation of religion. If you practice it, your deeds will be pure and sincere, your states of being will be good, your statements will be complete, and all sorts of blessed wonders will hasten toward you, and you will surely be under divine protection. So beware of Allah, beware of Allah, my dear brother. Practice piety and devoutness!

وعليك بالورع، وهو اجتناب ما حاك في صدرك. قال النبي صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم: "دع ما يريبك إلى ما لا يريبك" ولو لم تجد غيره وأنت محتاج إليه، واتركه لله يعوّضك الله خيرًا منه. ولا تستعجل، فالورع أساس الدين، فإذا استعملته زكت أفعالك، ونجحت أحوالك، وكملت أقوالك، وسارعت إليك الكراماتُ وكنت محفوظًا في جميع أمورك حفظًا إلهيًا لا شك فيه. الله الله يا أخي. الورع الورع.

It is necessary for you, O seeker, to practice detachment (*zuhd*) from this world and to reduce your desire for it. Completely remove that love from your heart. But if you must seek it out, then restrict yourself to what you need, and never compete with those who are devoted to it, for it is nothing but spoiled merchandise. The people desiring this world will never attain their goal, because Allah only gives each person what He has apportioned for them. Indeed, the person desiring this world will continually be saddened by it and hated in Allah's sight. Truly the likeness of the person seeking this world is like someone who drinks sea water: the more he drinks, the thirstier he becomes! It should suffice you to take note of the Prophet's likening of this world to a dead body and a dunghill: only dogs gather there.

Allah said in a divine narration, "O child of Adam, if you are content with what I have apportioned to you, then your heart and your body will be at peace; your daily sustenance will reach you and you will be worthy of Allah's praise. But if you are not content with what I have apportioned to you, your heart and body will both be wearied as you chase after this world like beasts racing in the wild. By My Glory and Majesty, you will only attain from it what I have assigned to you, and you will deserve blame."

وعليك بالزهد في الدنيا، وقلة الرغبة فيها، بل اعدمها من قلبك جملة واحدة. وإن كنت لا بد لها طالبًا، فاقصر على طلب القوت منها من وجهه، فلا تنافس أبناءها، فإنها عرض لا يبقى، ولا ينال الراغب منها مراده أبدًا. والله تعالى لا يعطيه إلا ما قَسَمَ له. والراغب فيها لا يزال كثير الحزن عليها، ممقوتًا عند الله تعالى، فإن مثل الطالب لها كمثل شارب ماء البحر؛ كلما ازداد شربًا ازداد عطشًا. وحسبك من تشبيه النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم للدنيا بالجيفة والمزبلة. وهل يجتمع على الجيفة والمزبلة إلا الكلاب؟

قال الله تعالى: "يا ابن آدم، إن رضيت بما قسمتُ لك أرحتَ قلبك وبدنك، وجاءك رزقك وأنت محمود، وإن لم ترض بما قسمت لك، أتعبتَ قلبك وبدنك، حتى تركض وراءها ركض الوحوش في البرية، ثم وعزتي وجلالي لا ينالك منها إلا ما قَدَّرْتُ لك، وأنت مذموم."

Praise be to Allah, Sustainer of the Worlds!

May Allah's peace and blessings be upon our master Muhammad
and on his Family and Companions.

This work has been completed by Allah's grace and assistance.

والحمد لله رب العالمين
وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد
وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم.

تمت بحمد الله وحسن عونه.

