

THE BOOK
OF
TAWHID

Nine Discourses
given between March 27th
and May 29th 2004
at Al-Jami'a Mosque,
Claremont, Cape Town

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The Book of Tawhid

Published by: Diwan Press Ltd.
311 Allerton Road
Bradford
BD15 7HA
UK

Website: www.diwanpress.com

E-mail: info@diwanpress.com

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A catalogue record of this book is available from the British Library.

978-1-914397-15-8 (casebound)

PREFACE

Due to the interregnum, soon, inshallah, to be brought to an end, which marks the period from which Islamic governance was interrupted, that is to say in the Mughal and Osmanli Dawlets, we, the Muslim World Community, experience Islam without its utterly necessary dimension of political command. One oddly regrettable result of this has been that we have started to take our Imams as leaders, making them into a priesthood, and allowing them to rule us like a slave population, which, having no power over either war or wealth, allow themselves to be commanded in the private matters of births, marriages and deaths. In this sense our Muslim population have taken on the form of a totally different religion, Shi'ism. The proof of this is that we have allowed the kuffar to

define us as belonging to “Sunni Islam”, as if accepting their definition that the Islamic religion has historically been split into two sects. There can only be one Deen al-Haqq, and it has Divine authorisation to be called Islam. Allah the Exalted says in Surat al-Ma’ida (5:3):

الْيَوْمَ يَبْسُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا
تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ
نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

Today the kuffar have despaired of overcoming your deen.
So do not be afraid of them but be afraid of Me.
Today I have perfected your deen for you
and completed My blessing upon you
and I am pleased with Islam as a deen for you.

Another result of this is, that in treating the Imam as an Authority, rather than that utterly replaceable figure whose noble task is to lead the Salat, the members of the Jama’at have lost that dynamic relationship with the text of the Qur’an on which a vibrant Islamic community has to be founded. In our books of Seerat and Hadith we find that the Sahaba used to gather after Fajr, and those among them who knew some Qur’an would recite it, after which they would reflect in order to see how they could apply its guidance to the day’s affairs.

It was in that spirit that we decided to hold a series of gatherings in order to give a start to this dynamic relationship between the Jama’at and the Book of Allah. In

reviving this Madinan 'Amal, it was only fitting that we should begin the matter by extracting from the Qur'an itself the clear explications of Allah, glory be to Him, about Himself, that is, the knowledge of Tawhid.

So it was that in these nine gatherings, each one of the Fuqara, men and women, sat with the Qur'an in front of them, and at every reference to the Qur'an in the text which follows, the Jama'at would themselves look up the Ayats, and they would also be recited by our Hafidh. As a result, by the end of the study series the group felt at home with handling the Qur'an, looking it up, and finding the Surat and the Ayat. One could say that the Jama'at, in this small event, had recovered for themselves the Clear Book which had, after all, been sent down from Allah, glory be to Him, for them, and not just some priestly class who used it to assure them a living, to take it out in the rituals of birth, marriage and death, and even, *astaghfirullah*, hold it over the householder's head when he left the house on a journey!

One could add a further result to this matter. It is precisely this Jama'at that has most fully grasped that the paid Imams (a Makruh situation in the Shari'at) have neither taught, nor called for, nor activated the need for a community to be governed by an Amir, and that the Amir, in turn, must impose with his Zakat Collectors that collected Zakat without which there simply is no Islam at all.

Shaykh Dr. Abdalqadir as-Sufi

I

MARCH 27TH 2004

We will Look at Surat al-Ahzab (33:34-35).

وَأذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ
مِنَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٤﴾
إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ
وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ
وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَاشِعِينَ وَالْخَاشِعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ
وَالْمُتَصَدِّقَاتِ وَالصَّامِتِينَ وَالصَّامِتَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ
فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

And remember the Signs of Allah
and the wise words
which are recited in your rooms.
Allah is All-Pervading, All-Aware.

Men and women who are Muslims,
men and women who are muminun,
men and women who are obedient,
men and women who are truthful,
men and women who are steadfast,
men and women who are humble,
men and women who give sadaqa,
men and women who fast,
men and women who guard their private parts,
men and women who remember Allah much:
Allah has prepared forgiveness for them
and an immense reward.

Regarding “Men and women who remember Allah much,” the Arabic term used there is “Dhikr.” It is “Men and women who do dhikr of Allah,” men and women who do the act of remembering.

وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٥﴾

Men and women who remember Allah much:
Allah has prepared forgiveness for them
and an immense reward.

Here we have the statement that is the defining ayat of the fuqara and the faqirat, this ayat defines them.

وَاذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ
 مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٦﴾

And remember the Signs of Allah
 and the wise words
 which are recited in your rooms.
 Allah is All-Pervading, All-Aware.

So Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, mentions the worship that you do – not in the mosque – but the worship that you do privately, and He begins in this ayat from that. This already distinguishes these muminun and muminat who have a special place with Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala.

وَاذْكُرْنَ مَا يُتْلَىٰ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ
 مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ لَطِيفًا خَبِيرًا ﴿٣٦﴾

And remember the Signs of Allah
 and the wise words
 which are recited in your rooms.
 Allah is All-Pervading, All-Aware.

“Buyut” here has been translated as “rooms”, and that is interesting because if you go to Surat an-Nur (24:36):

فِي بُيُوتٍ إِذْنُ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ
وَيُذَكَّرَ فِيهَا بِاسْمِهِ وَيُسَبَّحَ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ ﴿٣٦﴾

The translation is: “In houses which Allah has permitted to be built,” but it is not so much ‘houses’ – you could almost say zawiyyas. It is the place where people have set themselves apart to do dhikr of Allah, subhanahu wa ta’ala.

Now Allah specifies the spiritual, ruhani qualities of these special people in the next ayat:

إِنَّ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْقَانِتِينَ
وَالْقَانِتَاتِ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالصَّادِقَاتِ وَالصَّابِرِينَ
وَالصَّابِرَاتِ وَالْخَشِيعِينَ وَالْخَشِيعَاتِ وَالْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ
وَالْمُنْتَصِدِقَاتِ وَالصَّيِّمِينَ وَالصَّيِّمَاتِ وَالْحَافِظِينَ
فُرُوجَهُمْ وَالْحَافِظَاتِ وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا
وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٣٧﴾

Men and women who are Muslims,
men and women who are mumininun,
men and women who are obedient,
men and women who are truthful,
men and women who are steadfast,
men and women who are humble,
men and women who give sadaqa,

men and women who fast,
 men and women who guard their private parts,
 men and women who remember Allah much:
 Allah has prepared forgiveness for them
 and an immense reward.

So Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, has meant that for these people, there is something prepared for them. They have a reward. This group of people have the reward with Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala. They have forgiveness and a vast reward. What would be the vast reward after forgiveness? For the common people it would be like the bill being paid. But there is more than that, there is a vast reward. With Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, there is only one thing that would be fitting for the people He has defined and that would be Ma'rifa. The reward of Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, is Ma'rifa.

The Arabic word for reward is 'ajra'. This word comes again and again in the Qur'an, and it is to do with this contract Allah has made with the special mumminun, the ones who are picked out, the ones who are elevated, and this is the vast reward.

Now we look at Surat al-'Ankabut (29:45):

أَتْلُ مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ
 وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ نَهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ
 وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book
and establish Salat.

Salat precludes indecency and wrongdoing.

And remembrance of Allah is greater still.

Allah knows what you do.

أَتْلُ مَا أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ

Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book
and establish Salat.

So the first order is the recitation of Qur'an. Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, puts the two together because the Salat implies the recitation of Qur'an, thus it is really one thing. This, again, is the command to Salat which has built into it the recitation of the Book. There are three stages, and this is the first stage. The next stage is:

إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ

Salat precludes indecency and wrongdoing.

Having established that, Allah then puts another level on to constructing the complete human being. The next level is, "Salat precludes indecency and wrongdoing," so the moral behaviour cannot be imposed on him if you have not already established the recitation of Qur'an, and the Salat. Then you can impose on man the correct moral behaviour. It is as if the kuffar, who are nowadays attacking Islam, were saying that we are harsh with people, and in fact you could say that people in Arabia are harsh with their own people because they have not

established the recitation of Qur'an which leads to the understanding of its meaning, and the Salat – so then they can ask of their people to have a moral behaviour and if they do not, with that situation the Shari'ah is there to put the limits on human behaviour. Human behaviour has to be limited, otherwise man will go to the extremes of destruction.

وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

And remembrance of Allah is greater still.

So the highest aspect of this is that you are now another type of human being. You are people who make Salat, who worship Allah with the knowledge of the words of Qur'an, and therefore you have taken on this correct behaviour – but greater is the dhikr of Allah. So that which gives you access to Ma'rifatullah is the highest aspect of the human being. Then we come to the inescapable reality of the Muslim situation:

وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُونَ ﴿٤٥﴾

Allah knows what you do.

The dynamic of this superior being, the Muslim – that is superior to the kuffar – is that he knows that Allah knows what he does. This is another kind of being. The Wird as-Sahh, of the great Sufi of the East, Sahl at-Tustari was from Qur'an:

اللَّهُ مَعِيَ اللَّهُ نَاطِرٌ إِلَيَّ اللَّهُ شَاهِدٌ عَلَيَّ

Allah is with me, Allah sees me,
Allah is the Witness of my acts.

This is what made him have direct experience, 'Ilm al-laduni, of Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala.

Now we go to Surat al-Baqara (2:152):

فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونِ ﴿١٥٢﴾

Remember Me – I will remember you.
Give thanks to Me and do not be ungrateful.

This ayat is an ayat 'adhim because this is a very high thing that Allah is telling the muminun. Look at the construction:

فَاذْكُرُونِي

Remember Me,

أَذْكُرْكُمْ

I will remember you.

It has exactly the same construct but is like a mirror image of it. It is like saying “If we remember Him, He remembers us” – and the Sufis say, “Who is the rememberer?” Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, says, “Remember Me and I remember you.” So the lover becomes the beloved. Who is the lover and who is the beloved? This is the secret, this is the very heart of what can be spoken,

because beyond that you cannot say. But Allah, subhana-hu wa ta'ala, has openly said in the Qur'an that the lover is the beloved and the beloved is the lover. "Remember Me – I will remember You." Love Me and I will love you.

Let us look now at Surat al-Muzzammil (73:8-9):

وَاذْكُرْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ﴿٨﴾ رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ
وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا ﴿٩﴾

Remember the Name of your Lord,
and devote yourself to Him completely.
Lord of the East and West –
there is no god but Him –
so take Him as your Guardian.

This is the command. This is what runs through the Qur'an. Remember that the Qur'an is full of very ferocious things, terrible things – it is full of these warnings to the kuffar about the Fire, about the destruction of cities, about the punishment of Allah, about how He will not allow these deviations of the human beings and how in every age He has smashed them. But then underneath this running all the time is this message to the mumminun: "Allah has prepared forgiveness for them and an immense reward." This is what you have to do. This is your business. "Remember the Name of your Lord." Dhikr is the order on these ones who are the elite, and the elite of the elite is to be people who live in dhikr. They are created for dhikr because Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, says in Surat adh-Dhariyat (51:56):