

Friendship – You Will Be With Those You Love

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Children of Ādam are created to love companionship and friendship, and the one who is given wisdom seeks the company of those who will aid him in the world and likewise in the hereafter. So from the people are those who take the noble, pious and truthful as their friends and companions because they benefit each other. And then there are those who prefer the glitter of this life and its decoration and they seek only to satisfy their desires, whims and lusts, so they take evil doers and transgressors as their friends and they mutually harm each other instead of benefitting each other and they lead each other further and further away from Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى).

Having those noble companions are a blessing from Allāh in this world and the hereafter.

Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has said,

الْأَخِلَاءُ يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ إِلَّا الْمُتَّقِينَ

“Friends on that Day will be enemies one to another except al-Muttaqūn (pious).” [Sūrah az-Zukhruf 43:67]

Meaning, that in this life you were close to them and would accompany them and travel with them, yet they were evildoers. They were not obedient to Allāh and they did not call you to the obedience of Allāh. When you saw them, they did not remind you of Allāh and you never made dhikr of Allāh in their company, nor did you remember or revise the sayings of Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم); you did not enjoin the good and you did not forbid the evil. You

were friends in this life but on Yawmul-Qiyāmah, you will be enemies to each other and will seek to flee from each other. Friendship with the evildoers will be a source of loss, regret and sorrow on the Day of Resurrection.

Allāh mentions the one who harmed the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Instead of keeping company with him, he harmed the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) because his friends were goading him to harm Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم), to speak ill of him and physically attack him. His companions wanted proof that he hated Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم). So on that day,

وَيَوْمَ يَعَضُّ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ يَقُولُ لِيَلَيْتَنِي اتَّخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا

يُؤْيَلْتَنِي لِيَلَيْتَنِي لِمَ اتَّخَذْتُ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا

لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ جَاءَنِي وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلْإِنْسَانِ خَذُولًا

“And (remember) the Day when the *Zālim* (wrong-doer, oppressor, polytheist, etc.) will bite at his hands, he will say: ‘O! Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger (Muḥammad). Ah! Woe to me! Would that I had never taken so-and-so as a friend! He indeed led me astray from the Reminder (this Qur’ān) after it had come to me. And Shayṭān (Satan) is ever a deserter to man in the hour of need.’” [Sūrah al-Furqān 25: 27-28]

On that Day, Shayṭān will desert you, and your friends who used to goad you on to do evil will flee from you, each one worried about his own nafs, saying, “Nafsī, nafsī (my soul, my soul)!” In this world they will embrace you and want to be your friends but on Yawmul-Qiyāmah they will be your enemies, fleeing and freeing themselves from you.

Abū Mūsá al-Ash‘arī (رضى الله عنه) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “*The similitude of a good companion and a bad companion is like keeping company with the seller of musk or keeping company with the blacksmith. The seller of musk, if you keep his*

company, either he will offer you some free of charge or you will buy it from him or you will smell its pleasant fragrance. As for the blacksmith, either he will burn your clothes, or you will smell a repugnant odour.”

Abū Hurayrah (رضى الله عنه) reported that Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) stated, “*A man is upon the religion of his close friend. So each of you should pay attention to whom he takes as his friend.*”[Tirmidhī]

This means that he takes on the habits, path and lifestyle of his friend. So this is why the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to “pay attention”, meaning, reflect and ponder over who you are taking as your friend.

Muḥammad Shamsul-Ḥaqq al-‘Aẓīm Ābādī (رحمه الله) said in his explanation of Abū Dāwūd, “So if you are pleased with his religion and character, then befriend him. And if not, keep away from him. For indeed, the temperament and the nature of people are stolen goods.”

Meaning, you take your character from your close friends. The temperament of a human being is that he steals from others in character. So if you keep company with a good person, you will steal some of that good character and you will have it. If you keep company with the evil doers, you will steal their evil character and you will take that evil character as your own because the character is a thief. The nature of people is that they borrow/take from the character of others. You are influenced by others such that you adopt the way they speak, behave, their manners and etiquettes—you will steal it from them.

And that is why a wise poet said, “About a person, do not ask. Rather, ask concerning his friend. For every person is a follower of his close friend.”

Every person has a propensity to follow his close friends and to be affected by them because the souls are like gathered troops.

Abū Hurayrah (رضى الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, *“The souls are like gathered troops; those that were [created to be] acquainted with each other will come together [in this world]. And those that were [created to be] averse to each other will differ and oppose one another [in this world].”* [al-Bukhārī and Muslim]

The author of *‘Awn al-Ma‘būd*, the explanation of the Sunan of Abū Dāwūd said that the souls created by Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) are either blissful or wretched. They are of two categories, one opposite to the other. When they unite with the body in this world, they either attract or differ according to how they were created. So good people will incline towards good people and evil people will incline towards evil people.

Fruits of Good Companionship:

1. They will help you to be obedient to Allāh, to worship Him and to keep away from disobedience and sins.

وَالْعَصْرِ

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِفِي خُسْرٍ

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

“By (the phenomenon of) time (which Allāh manifests through His creation of night and day and in which the servants perform their deeds). Indeed, (all of) mankind is in loss. Except those who believe (in Allāh, His Angels, Books, Prophets, the Last Day and the Divine Decree) and work righteous deeds (which are sincere and correct) and mutually advise each other (in calling to and abiding by) the truth and mutually advise each other with patience (in facing the inevitable harms brought by calling to the truth).” [Sūrah al-Aṣr 103: 1-3]

Who is going to advise you with the truth? The drinker? The smoker? The musician? The one who courts girls and is promiscuous and watches movies and looks at what is ḥarām? Is he going to encourage you to the truth and to patience? Or is it the one who remembers Allāh much, who prays, fasts Ramaḍān, obeys the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and sits in the gatherings of knowledge, enjoins what is good and forbids what is evil. Is this not the one who is going to encourage you with the truth and with patience?

You have to make a decision for yourselves as grown men and women. You are responsible for your deeds and actions; you choose your companions. You either stick to those who follow fashion and duniyā or you cling to those who take the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his Companions (رضى الله عنهم) as examples to be followed. Allāh has given you the ability to make a choice. If you make the choice Allāh loves for you and has commanded you with, then that is for your success and goodness in this life and the hereafter. If you choose those companions that will lead you to the hellfire and you want to be standing with them on Yawmul-Qiyāmah, and you want to be from those who bites his hands in regret and sorrow because he made the wrong choice, even though Allāh commanded him to be with the people of khayr (goodness), then that is your fault and you have no one to blame but yourself.

2. They make you race to do good deeds and you compete to do good and be obedient to Allāh. You remind each other to attend the masjid, to sit in the gatherings of knowledge and to act upon what you learn. Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) stated in this regard,

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

“And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for al-Muttaqūn (the pious).” [Sūrah Āl Imrān 3: 133]

Likewise, Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) has said about good companionship,

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيمُونَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

“The believers, men and women, are Awliyā’ (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another, they enjoin (on the people) al-Ma’rūf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islām orders one to do), and forbid (people) from al-Munkar (i.e. polytheism and disbelief of all kinds, and all that Islām has forbidden); they perform aṣ-Ṣalāt and give the Zakāt, and obey Allāh and His Messenger. Allāh will have His Mercy on them. Surely Allāh is All-Mighty, All-Wise.” [Sūrah at-Tawbah 9: 71]

There is no doubt that when you hasten to keep good company, you will hasten to do good deeds. Allāh said,

يُسْقَوْنَ مِنْ رَحِيقٍ مَخْتُومٍ
خَتْمُهُ مِسْكٌ وَفِي ذَلِكَ فَلْيَتَنَافَسِ الْمُتَنَفِسُونَ

“They will be given to drink from a pure (wholesome) wine, (which had been) sealed (so none has ever touched it). Its remnant is (the smell of) musk (or: its residue is musk) (or: its outcome is musk). And for this (reward) then let those who compete, compete with each other (by hastening to piety and righteousness).” [Sūrah al-Muṭaffifīn 83:25-26]

This hastening and competing to do good will never be in the company of evil doers and bad companions. This competition and hastening to do good is only in good company.

Even when a young person is getting married, they should know that their spouse is a companion for life, Inshā' Allāh, so be sure it is a choice you make carefully. Seek references from those who are known to him/her. Who are their companions? Are they truthful? Do they sit in the gatherings of knowledge? Do they act upon what they know? Be diligent in asking the important questions. Ask not about a person; rather, ask about his companion. So do not rush in that regard. Even with respect to marriage, ask who are the people they mix with. An evil companion in a marriage is a calamity. But you will know if they are evil based on who they keep company with. Who are the ones they befriend and sit with? That will let you know whether a person is good or wicked. And we ask Allāh to guide us to the best of companions.

3. Being in the company of the righteous in gatherings where Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى) is mentioned and the ḥadīth of the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) are revised. Where are you going to find this except with good companions? Those are the gatherings of mercy and forgiveness from Allāh.

Abū Hurayrah (رضى الله عنه) narrated that Allāh's Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, *"There is a group of angels who move about the streets searching for the people who mention Allāh. When they find a group doing that those angels call upon each other and say, 'Here is what you were looking for.' Then they cover that group with their wings right up to the sky. When these angels return to the heavens their Lord asks them, though He already knows, 'What were my servants saying?' So they say, 'They were glorifying You and mentioning Your Greatness. They were busy in praising You and mentioning Your Perfection.' So Allāh then asks, 'Have they seen Me?' They reply, 'By Allāh, they*

have not seen You.’ So then Allāh says, ‘What would they have done if they could see Me?’ The angels respond, ‘They would have been even more ardent in their worship, glorification and praise.’ Then Allāh asks them, ‘What did they want from Me?’ The angels reply, ‘They asked you for Jannah.’ Then Allāh says to them, ‘Have they seen it?’ They reply, ‘No, by You, they have not seen it.’ Then Allāh asks, ‘What would they have done if they had seen it?’ They say, ‘If they had seen it they would desire it more eagerly and would work harder to be deserving of it.’ Then Allāh asks, ‘From what thing did they seek Me to protect them from?’ So the angels answer, ‘They want protection from Hell.’ Allāh asks, ‘Have they seen it?’ They answer, ‘No, by You, they have not seen it.’ So then Allāh says, ‘What would they have done if they had seen it?’ Then they say, ‘If they had seen it, they would have feared it and would have run away from it even more.’ Then Allāh says, ‘Be My witnesses, for indeed I have forgiven them.’ So one of the angels says, ‘O Allāh, among them there was a man who was not even from them, he had simply come for something he needed.’ So Allāh replies, ‘I have forgiven him too, just because he happened to sit with them. Anyone who sits with these people will not be a loser.’”

The shāhid (point of benefit) of this ḥadīth is that a man who sits in a gathering of knowledge and is not from them and he did not come for that purpose, rather he came simply for another need that he had, just by virtue of being in the company of those people, Allāh forgives him because no one who sits with these people could be a loser. This is the faḍl of sitting with the righteous.

‘Umar (رضي الله عنه) used to say, “Were it not for three things, I would not like to live the life of this world: The thirst of the hottest part of the day whilst fasting, enduring through the hours of the night in worship, and sitting with people who choose the best of speech just as one chooses the best of dates.”

How many have been guided and went from those who did not pray to those who guard their prayer. They abandoned the companionship of the evil people they used to mix with before so they become righteous, and then they become from those who invite to Allāh (سبحانه وتعالى). All of this—after the Guidance of Allāh and His Bounty upon them—due to the good companionship they kept.

Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (رضى الله عنه) narrated that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, *“Do not keep company except with a believer, and none should eat your food except one who fears Allāh and is dutiful.”* [Tirmidhī]

Al-Khaṭṭābī (رحمه الله) said that this ḥadīth refers to the food that is given when you invite people to a gathering, and it does not refer to the food given to the needy because food that is given to the needy can be given even to the one who is sinful or a disbeliever.

وَيُطْعَمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا

“And they give food, in spite of their love for it (or for the love of Him), to Miskīn (poor), the orphan, and the captive.” [Sūrah al-Insān 76: 8]

Al-Khaṭṭābī said that it is known that they had captives who were non-Muslims. They were not believers and were not from the muttaqīn, yet they would feed them.

So Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) is referring to those you invite because of your love for them, because sharing meals brings about affection and love in the hearts.

Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) warned us from evil companions, even upon the deathbed of his own uncle Abū Ṭālib. Bukhārī and Muslim report from Saʿīd Ibn al-Musayyib from his father, that when Abū Ṭālib was upon his deathbed, Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) came to him and found Abū Jahl and ‘Abdullāh Ibn Abī Umayyah Ibn al-Mughīrah sitting next to his uncle. So he said to Abū Ṭālib, *“O my*

uncle, say *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*, a sentence with which I will bear witness for you in front of Allāh.” So Abū Jahl and ‘Abdullāh Ibn Abī Umayyah, two of the heads of shirk, said to Abū Ṭālib, “O Abū Ṭālib, would you abandon the religion of ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib?” So the Messenger of Allāh (صلى الله عليه وسلم) continued, and he did not cease to present these words to him and repeat them up until the last words which Abū Ṭālib uttered to all three of them were that he would remain upon the religion of ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib (the religion of the mushrikīn), and he refused to say *Lā ilāha illa Allāh*. So Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “By Allāh, I will continue to seek forgiveness for you so long as I am not forbidden to do so.” So then Allāh revealed to him,

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أَوْلَىٰ قُرْبَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ

“It is not (proper) for the Prophet and those who believe to ask Allāh’s Forgiveness for the Mushrikūn (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allāh) even though they be of kin, after it has become clear to them that they are the dwellers of the Fire (because they died in a state of disbelief).” [Sūrah at-Tawbah: 113]

And then Allāh revealed concerning Abū Ṭālib, addressing the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) directly,

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

“Verily! You (O Muḥammad) guide not whom you like, but Allāh guides whom He wills. And He knows best those who are the guided.” [Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ 28: 56]

The gatherings where Allāh is not mentioned and the people call you to evil, this is the natījah (end result): Regret, sorrow and the biting of hands on Yawmul-Qiyāmah.

Abū Hurayrah (رضى الله عنه) narrated that the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, *“There is no gathering of people wherein Allāh is not remembered and the salutations and security are not invoked for their Prophet, except that it will be a cause of regret and loss for them. If Allāh wills, He will punish them, and if He wills, He will forgive them.”*
[Tirmidhī]

This shows that the gatherings where Allāh is not mentioned and the salutations upon the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) are not invoked, then those gatherings are gatherings of loss, sorrow and regret. So be in the company of those who remember Allāh much. Look to whom you take as your companions. On Yawmul-Qiyāmah you will be with those whom you love, as Allāh’s Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said to that Bedouin who came to him. He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, *“You will be with those whom you love.”*

So keep good companionship and love those who love the Sunnah, those who love Allāh, and you will be with them on Yawmul-Qiyāmah—may Allāh make us from amongst them.

والحمد لله رب العالمين