



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

## UNDERSTANDING THE TRUE MEANING OF TAQWA DURING THIS RAMADAN (2021)

### INTRODUCTIONS

Many people have read the Qur'an, perhaps even with the meaning, but failed to understand its meaning and its effects on our lives in Ramadan. With the increase in use such as social media, especially with Tik Tok, you can see how many Muslims prefer to increase the number of followers rather than increase the number of times that they have submitted completely to Allah.

As human beings, we have been created weak with an increased inclination to disobey Allah. In fact, we have been informed by Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him):

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "By Him in whose hand is my soul, if you did not sin, Allah would replace you with people who would sin and they would seek forgiveness from Allah and He would forgive them."

Our soul (Nafs) was even created with an inclination to do evil, as Allah has described in surah Yusuf (12) verse 53:

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا  
مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي إِنَّ رَبِّي غَفُورٌ  
رَحِيمٌ

"...Verily, the (human) self is inclined to evil, except when my Lord bestows His Mercy (upon whom He wills). Verily, my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

That does not mean that we can now relax and do whatever we want just because we have been created this way. We must find an ability to continuously strive and struggle in order to please Allah, at all times, in all

situations. This consciousness of Allah every day in our every tasks in life is what we called Taqwa.

- Is it permissible for us to do this or that?
- Should we say this or that?
- Would Allah be pleased with us?

It does not matter that the steps that we take may lead to us being disadvantaged in this life, either in terms of our position or status in life, on our material wealth, on our relationship with others, etc. The most important thing is to maintain complete submission to Allah.

Why?

Because of our complete love for Allah that we always would like to obey Him at all times, and at the same time, our complete fear of His Punishments if we were to disobey the prohibitions that He have Imposed on us.

In the Qur'an itself, there are many verses that Allah has emphasised on "Taqwa" been mentioned about

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا  
مُسْلِمُونَ تَمُوتُونَ إِلَّا وَ أَنْتُمْ

"O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allah." 3: 102

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَا  
قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ  
بِيرُ مَا تَعْمَلُونَ اللَّهُ خ

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and keep your duty to Him. And let every person look to what he has sent forth for the morrow, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is All-Aware of what you do." 59: 18

Even the last verse in the Qur'an was revealed reminding us about Taqwa:

وَ اتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ  
إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُؤَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ  
مَا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

“And be afraid of the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every person shall be paid what he earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.” 2: 281

And lastly, of course, the famous verse which we always hear in the mosques, youtube channels and on television – on fasting when Ramadan is approaching:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ  
الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن  
قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

*O you who believe! Observing As-Saum (the fasting) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-Muttaqoon (POSSESSOR OF TAQWA)*

### THE MEANING OF TAQWA

Taqwa is acute awareness that Allah SWT knows every action that we make and fear of displeasing Him.

*Taqwa* is an Arabic word which is explained as a shield against wrongdoing and further expounded as to be “conscious of Allah” or to have “fear of Allah” or to be “cautiously aware of Allah”.

The origin of the word *Taqwa* is from the Arabic root letters *wa' ka' ya* (meaning shield) and its verb is from the word “*Ittaki*”. *Ittaki* means to be careful or to be protected or to be cautious. *Taqwa* is an internal compass on the path that leads towards Allah. The broader meaning and character of *Taqwa* is to develop one’s behaviour, so as to be cautiously aware in the worship of Allah and attain nearness to Him and in so doing, perfect oneself.

This consciousness and fear of Allah is understood as a protection and a shield against wrongdoing. The abstention of evil through this fear,

consciousness and establishing a cautious awareness of Allah, ultimately develops one's love of Him.

Abu Darda (R) said: *"From the completion of Taqwa is that the servant fears from His Lord even with regards to things, the weight of an atom."* Abu Darda's advice for servants who wish to accomplish a character of *Taqwa* should fear to commit the smallest of sins.

The messenger of Allah said in a Hadith, reported in the Sahih Muslim that, *"Taqwa is here", and he pointed to his chest.*

*Taqwa* is profoundly explained in a discussion, between Umar (R) and Kaab (R) who were companions of the Prophet (S) of Islam. Umar (R) asked Kaab (R), the meaning of *Taqwa* as he was renowned for his deep understanding of the Qur'an Al Kareem.

Kaab (R) then inquired from Umar (R), whether he had walked through a thorny bush path with his cloak. Umar (R) replied that he had done so on numerous occasions. Kaab (R) asked Umar (R) to describe **his movements through this thorny path. Umar (R) replied that he moved very cautiously, so as not to tear his clothing.** Kaab (R) said that was the description and the meaning of *Taqwa*.

The path that inculcates and embraces a character of *Taqwa* is one that must be carefully and cautiously treaded. On this path one must be completely aware of oneself and one's surroundings, to be disciplined with the correct action and behaviour which will achieve one's closeness to Allah.

*Taqwa* is one of the most profound concepts in Islam. It is an avenue by which Muslims relate to one another in society and a means to channel actions for the pleasure of Allah. Possessors of *Tawqa* are called *Al-Muttaqun* or *Muttaqeen*.

## SEVERAL THINGS TO TAKE NOTE ABOUT TAQWA

1. It is from Allah. Therefore, we must strive to seek it by
  - Seeking knowledge
  - Make du'a to Allah
  - Obey the commands of Allah and complete submission to Allah
  - Reciting the Qur'an, understand and implement it to get Guidance
  - Seeking refuge in Allah from shaytan
  - Keeping good company

2. Taqwa must last UNTIL DEATH - look how iblis made a huge mistake and disobeyed Allah, even though iblis was very pious prior to his infamous disobedience which eventually led him to be cursed by Allah eternally.
3. Taqwa is from the heart and NOT from outward appearance - therefore, don't judge people by appearance.
4. Be wary of factors which will affect Taqwa - like dunya, culture and traditions, sinning, etc.
5. It is ONLY ALLAH who Knows who truly has Taqwa to Allah:

فَلَا تُزَكُّوْا اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۗ هُوَ  
اَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ اَتَّقَى

*So ascribe not purity to yourselves. He knows best him who fears Allah and keep his duty to Him (i.e. those who are Al-Muttaqoon (pious) 53: 32*

### THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR PEOPLE OF TAQWA

Allah summarises for us very clearly in Surah Al Baqarah (2: 2-5) of the principle for people of TAQWA -

2. This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear(or are conscious) of Allah (*Taqwa*).
3. Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them;
4. And who believe in the Revelation sent to you, and sent before your time, and (in their hearts) have the assurance of the Hereafter.
5. They are on (true) guidance, from their Lord, and it is these who will prosper.

**In addition, in the Qur'an surah Ali 'Imran (3) verses 133-136**

**133.** 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-Muttaqun* (the pious).

134. Those who spend [in Allah's Cause – deeds of charity, alms, etc.] in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon men; verily, Allah loves *Al-Muhsinun* (the good-doers).

135. And those who, when they have committed *Fahishah* (illegal sexual intercourse etc.) or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins; – and none can forgive sins but Allah – And do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know.

136. For such, the reward is Forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath (Paradise), wherein they shall abide forever. How excellent is this reward for the doers (who do righteous deeds according to Allah's Orders).

### THE BENEFITS OF TAQWA

Allah SWT has promised those with TAQWA many benefits and rewards:

#### 1. Allah SWT will be with them (2: 194)

وَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَ اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ  
مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ

*And fear Allah, and know that Allah is with Al-Muttaqoon*

#### 2. Allah SWT loves them (3:76)

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ وَ اتَّقَىٰ  
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ

*Yes, whoever fulfils his pledge and fears Allah much; verily, then Allah loves those who are Al-Muttaqoon.*

#### 3. Allah SWT will Honour them (49: 13)

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ  
أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ  
خَبِيرٌ

*Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqwa (i.e. one of the Muttaqoonnh. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.*

4. Allah SWT only accepts their actions (5: 27)

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ  
الْمُتَّقِينَ

*Verily, Allah accepts only from those who are Al-Muttaqoon.*

5. Allah SWT will give them the Criterion (an ability to discriminate/judge what is right or wrong) and other great rewards.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنِ  
تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ  
فُرْقَانًا وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ  
سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ  
ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

*O you who believe! If you obey and fear Allah, He will grant you Furqan a criterion ((to judge between right and wrong), or (Makhrāj, i.e. making a way for you to get out from every difficulty)), and will expiate for you your sins, and forgive you, and Allah is the Owner of the Great Bounty. (8:29)*

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا  
اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ  
يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ  
وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ  
وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ  
رَحِيمٌ

*O you who believe! Fear Allah, and believe too in His Messenger (Muhammad SAW), He will give you a double portion of His Mercy, and He will give you a light by which you shall walk (straight), and He will forgive you. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (57:28)*

6. Allah SWT will give them Barakat (Blessings) (7: 96)

وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا  
وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ  
مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ

*And if the people of the towns had believed and had the Taqwa (piety), certainly,  
We should have opened for them blessings from the heaven and the earth.*

**7. TAQWA is one of the signs of the Awliya (Friends of Allah) - (10: 62-63)**

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ  
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ  
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا  
يَتَّقُونَ

*No doubt! Verily, the Auliya of Allah (i.e. those who believe in the Oneness of Allah and fear Allah much (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which he has forbidden), and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained)), no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve, -*

*Those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism), and used to fear Allah much (by abstaining from evil deeds and sins and by doing righteous deeds).*

**8. Allah SWT will open up His Treasures to someone who has TAQWA (65: 2-5)**

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ  
مَخْرَجًا  
وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۗ  
وَمَنْ يَتَّوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ  
حَسْبُهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَالِغُ



أَمْرِهِ ۖ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ  
شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا  
وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مِنْ  
أَمْرِهِ يُسْرًا  
وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَكْفِرْ عَنْهُ  
سَيِّئَاتِهِ وَيُعْظِمْ لَهُ أَجْرًا

- ...And whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out (from every difficulty).
- And He will provide him from (sources) he never could imagine. And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him. Verily, Allah will accomplish his purpose. Indeed Allah has set a measure for all things.
- ...and whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him.
- ...and whosoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will remit his sins from him, and will enlarge his reward.

**9. Allah SWT Promise them the Garden (Paradise). (19:63)**

تِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي نُورِثُ مِنْ  
عِبَادِنَا مَنْ كَانَ تَقِيًّا

Such is the Garden/Paradise which We shall give as an inheritance to those of Our slaves who have been Al-Muttaqoon

**10. They will be saved in the next world (19: 71-72)**

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا ۖ  
كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا  
ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا  
وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا

- There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with your Lord; a Decree which must be accomplished.

- Then We shall save those who use to fear Allah and were dutiful to Him. And We shall leave the Zalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers, etc.) therein (humbled) to their knees (in Hell).

**11. They will be delivered to a place of safety (39: 61)**

وَيُنَجِّي اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا  
بِمَفَازَتِهِمْ لَا يَمَسُّهُمُ السُّوءُ  
وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

*And Allah will deliver those who are the Muttaqoon to their places of success (Paradise). Evil shall touch them not, nor shall they grieve.*

**12. Allah SWT Promise them the Shade of Allah's Throne on the Day of Judgment where there is no shade except the shade of Allah.**

**THE SIGNS OF TAQWA**

**1. Turning back to Allah SWT if we forget or commit a sin**

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ  
طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا  
فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ

*Verily, those who are Al-Muttaqoon, when an evil thought comes to them from Shaitan (Satan), they remember (Allah), and (indeed) they then see (aright). (7: 201)*

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ  
ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ  
فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ  
يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ  
يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ  
يَعْلَمُونَ

*And those who, when they have committed Fahishah (illegal sexual intercourse*

*etc.) or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins; - and none can forgive sins but Allah - And do not persist in what (wrong) they have done, while they know. (3: 135)*

## **2. Fear of Allah SWT on hearing verses of the Quran and total Reliance of Allah**

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

*The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Quran) are recited unto them, they (i.e. the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone); (8: 2)*

## **3. Other signs (23: 57-61)**

- *Verily! Those who live in awe for fear of their Lord;*
- *And those who believe in the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) of their Lord,*
- *And those who join not anyone (in worship) as partners with their Lord;*
- *And those who give that (their charity) which they give (and also do other good deeds) with their hearts full of fear (whether their alms and charities, etc., have been accepted or not), because they are sure to return to their Lord (for reckoning).*
- *It is these who race for the good deeds, and they are foremost in them (e.g. offering the compulsory Salat (prayers) in their (early) stated, fixed times and so on).*

## **CONCLUSION**

Ramadan is just around the corner and time is passing by very quickly. Very soon we will meet Ramadan with His Will. Do make every effort to ensure than inshaAllah this is the Ramadan which we will make a fundamental change in our lives. This will be the moment when we truly understand that our purpose of life in to worship Allah (Qur'an surah 51 verse 56) and nothing is more important than that. We strive to achieve excellence inshaAllah this Ramadan when Allah will Help us to remove some of the obstacles which will improve our Taqwa in Ramadan inshaAllah. The heaven door is opened and hellfire is closed. Shaytan will be locked. With the reward of fasting - which is Taqwa - as mentioned above in surah 2 verse 183, may Allah Increase our Iman and Taqwa this Ramadan, and may TAQWA lasts until our last breath.