The Twenty-First Word

**[This Word consists of Two Stations.]**

**First Station**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اِنَّ الصَّلاَةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْقُوتًا[[1]](#footnote-2)

One time, a man great with regard to age, body and rank said to me: "The salâh is fine, but to perform it every day five times is too much. Since it never ends, it causes weariness."

A long time after that man’s words, I listened to my nafs. I heard that it says the same words, and I looked at it and saw that it receives the same lesson from shaytan with the ear of laziness. Then I understood: It is as though that man said those words in the name of all nafs al-ammarah, or he has been made to say. So I also said: "Since my nafs is ammarah, one who does not reform his nafs cannot reform others. In which case, I shall begin with my nafs."

I said: “O nafs! Listen to **“Five Warnings”** in response to those words you said amid compounded ignorance, on the couch of laziness, in the sleep of ghaflah.”

**First Warning:** O my wretched nafs! I wonder, is your life eternal? Have you any certain proof that you will remain until next year, or even tomorrow? What causes you weariness is the imagination of eternity. You complain as though you will eternally remain in this world for joy. If you had understood that your life is short, it also passes in vain. Surely, spending one hour out of its twenty-four on a beautiful, pleasant, rahmah and easy service, which will be a means of the happiness of true eternal life, excites a serious yearning and agreeable pleasure, let alone causes weariness.

**Second Warning:** O my nafs that nourishes the abdomen! Every day you eat bread, drink water and breathe air; I wonder, do they cause you weariness? Since they do not and since the need is repeated, you do not feel weariness, but rather pleasure. In which case, the salâh which attracts the sustenance of my heart, the water of life of my rûh, and the gentle breeze of my Rabbânî subtle faculties, your companions in the house of my body, should not weary you.

Yes, sustenance and strength of a heart, which is subjected to and afflicted with the infinite sorrows and pains and which became mad with the love of infinite pleasures and desires, can be obtained by knocking on the door of a Rahîm, Who is Karîm and is powerful over all things, through supplication.

Yes, as for the water of life of a rûh, which is connected with most beings and cries out at the separation and depart from this transitory world with a perfect speed, it can be drunk by turning towards the spring of rahmah of an Eternal Mahbûb, a Ma’bûd, Who is Bâqî and Who takes the place of everything, through the salâh.

Yes, a Rabbânî subtle faculty possessing nûr and a sirr of man possessing conscious, which desire eternity by fitrah and which are created for eternity and are the mirrors of the One eternal in the past and future and which are infinitely delicate and subtle, are extremely in need of resting amidst the sorrowful, crushing, troublesome, temporary, dark and suffocating states of the world, and can only breathe through the window of the salâh.

**Third Warning:** O my impatient nafs! I wonder, is it an act of an intelligent man to suffer by thinking today of the past burden of ‘ibâdah, difficulties of the salâh and hardship of calamity, and to display impatience by imagining today the duties of ‘ibâdah, service of the salâh and sorrows of the calamity in the future days?

In being thus impatient, you resemble such a foolish commander, who, although the enemy's right flank joined his right flank and became a fresh force for him, he sends his significant force to the right flank and weakens the centre. Then, while there are no enemy soldiers on the left flank and before they come, he sends a large force there, and gives them the order to fire. He causes to lose the power of the centre completely. The enemy understands the situation and attacks the centre, defeats and scatters it.

Yes, you resemble this. Because the hardship of past days has today transformed into rahmah; its pain has gone and its pleasure has remained. Its burden has joined into karâmât and its difficulty has transformed into sawâb. In which case, it is necessary to not take weariness from it, but rather a serious zeal to continue and a fresh enthusiasm and pleasure. As for future days, since they have not yet come, to think of them now and to weary and become dispirited is madness like thinking today of hunger and thirst within those days and starting to shout and cry out.

Since this is the haqiqah, if you are intelligent, think of only today regarding ‘ibâdah and say: “I am spending one hour of it on a pleasant, beautiful and elevated service, the reward of which is high and the burden of which is few.” Then your bitter dispiritedness will transform into a sweet zeal.

Thus, O my impatient nafs! You are responsible for three sorts of patience. One is patience with obedience. Another is patience with rebellion and sin. And another is patience in the face of calamity. If you have intelligence, take as your guide the haqiqah apparent in the comparison in this Third Warning. Say bravely: “O Sabûr!”, and shoulder the three sorts of patience. If you do not scatter the wrong way the power of patience Janâb-i Haqq has given you, can be sufficient for every difficulty and calamity; resist by that power!

**Fourth Warning:** O my foolish nafs! I wonder, is this duty of ‘ubûdiyyah without result? Is its reward little that it causes you weariness? Whereas if a man gives you a little money, or intimidates you, he makes you work till evening, and you will work without becoming dispirited. I wonder, the salâh, which is sustenance and wealth for your impotent and weak heart in this guest-house of the world, and is food and light in your grave, which is a certain halting-place for you, and is a proof and patent at the assembly for the last judgment, at where you will anyway be judged, and which will be a nûr and a buraq on the bridge of sirât that will be passed willingly or unwillingly, is without result or its reward little? If someone promises you a present worth a hundred dollars, he makes you work for a hundred days. You trust the man who might break his promise and work without becoming dispirited.

I wonder, if One for Whom the breaking of a promise is impossible, promises you a reward like Jannah and a gift like eternal happiness, and employs you for a very short time in a very beautiful duty if you do not perform that service, or you accuse Him in His promise or treat His gift lightly by performing it reluctantly as someone compelled you to work, or by being weary, or by your perfunctory service, don’t you think that you will deserve a severe chastisement and terrible torment. Although you serve without being dispirited in the heaviest work in this world out of fear of imprisonment, does the fear of an eternal imprisonment like Jahannam not give you zeal for a truly light and pleasant service?

**Fifth Warning:** O my nafs performing ‘ibâdah to the world! I wonder, does your dispiritedness in ‘ibâdah and deficiency in the salâh arise from the superabundance of your worldly occupations, or because you cannot find time due to the occupation of the struggle for livelihood? I wonder if you were created only for this world that you spend all your time on it?

You know that regarding your capacities you are superior to all the animals, but regarding the power of procuring the necessities of worldly life, you cannot reach even a sparrow. Why do you not understand from it that your fundamental duty is not to struggle like an animal, but rather to strive for a true eternal life, like a true human being. In addition, the things you call worldly occupations are mostly the occupations that do not belong to you and useless matters with which you meddle and which you mingle unnecessarily. Leaving the most essential one, you spend your time with the most redundant information as though you have a life of thousand years.

For example, you spend your precious time on valueless things like what is the condition of the rings around Saturn or how many chickens are there in America. As though you obtain perfection from the sciences of astronomy or statistics.

**If you say:** “What detains me from the salâh and ‘ibâdah and makes me dispirited is not unnecessary things like that, but necessary matters of the struggle for livelihood”.

**In which case, I will say to you:** if you work for a daily wage of one hundred cents, then someone comes to you and says: “Come and dig here for ten minutes, you will find a brilliant and an emerald worth a hundred dollar”. If you say to him: “No, I won't come, because ten cents will be cut from my daily wage and my subsistence will be less”, you surely know what a lunatic pretext it is.

In just the same way, you work in this orchard for your subsistence. If you abandon the fardh salâh, all the fruits of your work will be restricted to only a worldly and unimportant subsistence without barakah. If you spend your resting and breathing times on the salâh, which is a means for the ease of the rûh and the breath of the heart, you will find two mines, which are an important source for your subsistence and provisions of the âkhirah as well as the worldly subsistence with barakah.

**First Mine:** Through a beautiful intention, you will receive a share of the tasbîhât of all the plants and trees — whether flowering or fruit-bearing — that you grow in your orchard. {**Note:** This Station was a lesson for a person in an orchard, so it was declared in this style.}

**Second Mine:** Whoever eats from the crops yielded from this orchard — whether animal or man, cattle or fly, buyer or thieve — it is a sadaqah for you. But on condition that you dispose in the name of the True Razzâq and within the sphere of His permission, and see yourself as a distribution official giving His property to His creatures.

Thus, look what a great damage he will wilfully do who abandons the salâh and what significant wealth he loses. And he will be deprived of those two results and mines which give the zeal to work and ensure a great ma’nawî strength for deeds; he becomes bankrupt. Even, as he grows old, he will grow weary of gardening and become dispirited. He will say, “What is it to me? I am anyway leaving this world, why should I suffer this much difficulty?” and will throw himself into laziness. But the first man says: “I will work more for the halal endeavour as well as ‘ibâdah so that I will send more abundant light to my grave and procure more provisions for my âkhirah.”

**In Short:** O nafs! Know that yesterday is out of your hand. As for tomorrow, you have no proof that you possess it. In which case, know that your true life is the present day. Throw at least one of its hours into a masjid or a sajjâda which is a coffer of the âkhirah formed for the true future like a reserve fund.

Know too that each new day is the door to a new ‘âlam for you and for everyone. If you do not perform the salâh, your ‘âlam of that day goes in a dark and wretched state and testifies against you in al-‘âlam al-mithâl. For, everyone has a private ‘âlam out of this ‘âlam every day. Also, the condition of that ‘âlam is dependent on the person's heart and deeds. Just as a magnificent palace that appears in your mirror takes the colour of the mirror. If it is black, it appears black; if it is red, it appears red. It also takes the condition of the mirror. If the glass of the mirror is smooth, it shows the palace as beautiful; if it is not, it shows it as ugly. It shows the most delicate things as coarse. In the same way, you change the shape of your own ‘âlam with your heart, mind, deeds and feelings. You can make it testify either for you or against you. If you perform the salâh, and if you turn towards As-Sâni’ Zuljalâl of that ‘âlam through the salâh, suddenly your ‘âlam, which looks to you, will become luminous. It is as though your salâh is an electric lamp and your intention to perform it is touching its switch, it disperses the darkness of that ‘âlam and shows the changes and movements amidst the disorder and the confused devastation of the world’s turmoils being the order with hikmah and meaningful writing of Qoudrah. It sprinkles one nûr of the âyah filled with nûr [[2]](#footnote-3)اَللّٰهُ نُورُ السَّمٰوَاتِ وَاْلاَرْضِ over your heart. It illuminates your ‘âlam on that day through the reflection of that nûr and causes it to testify in your favour through its luminosity.

**Beware, do not say:** “There is no comparison between my salâh and the haqiqah of the salâh?”. Because a seed of a date describes its own tree like a date tree. The difference is only concerning the summary and details; the salâh of ordinary people like you and me — even if they do not feel it — have a share of that nûr and possess a mystery from this haqiqah like the salâh of a great walî — even if your conscious does not perceive it —. But the unfolding and illumination differ according to the degrees.

Just as there are many stages and degrees from the seed of a date to the date tree, so too, there might be found more stages and degrees within the degrees of the salâh. But the essence of that luminous haqiqah is present in all those degrees.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى مَنْ قَالَ اَلصَّلاَةُ عِمَادُ الدِّينِ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ اَجْمَعِينَ

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1. (Surely salâh are made obligatory for the mu’mins at their prescribed times.) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. (Allah is the nûr of the samâwât and the earth.) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)