

إنما الأعمال بالنيات

أيها المؤمنون: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: « إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ » وَقَدْ بَيَّنَّ الْعُلَمَاءُ فَضْلَ هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ وَمَنْزِلَتَهُ، فَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ: إِنَّهُ تُلْتُ الْإِسْلَامَ، وَذَلِكَ لِأَنَّ كَسْبَ الْعَبْدِ يَقَعُ بِقَلْبِهِ وَلِسَانِهِ وَجَوَارِحِهِ، وَالنِّيَّةُ أَحَدُ أَقْسَامِهَا الثَّلَاثَةِ وَأَرْجَحُهَا. وَقَالَ الْإِمَامُ الْبُخَارِيُّ: لَيْسَ فِي أَخْبَارِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ شَيْءٌ أَجْمَعَ وَأَغْنَى وَأَكْثَرَ فَائِدَةٍ مِنْ هَذَا الْحَدِيثِ. وَقَالَ أَحَدُ الْعُلَمَاءِ: حَدِيثُ النِّيَّةِ يَدْخُلُ فِي سَبْعِينَ أَبَا مِنَ الْعِلْمِ. وَبَيَّنَّ هَذَا الْحَدِيثُ أَهْمِيَّةَ النِّيَّةِ وَفَضْلَهَا، وَأَنَّ قَبُولَ الْعِبَادَةِ يَتَوَقَّفُ عَلَى صِحَّتِهَا وَسَلَامَتِهَا، قَالَ تَعَالَى: (وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ) أَيِ أَخْلَصَ الْعَمَلَ لِرَبِّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، وَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ: (وَمَا أَمْرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقِيَمَةِ)

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ: وَلِلْمُسْلِمِ أَنْ يَسْتَنْمِرَ هَذَا الْحَدِيثَ فِي نَيْلِ الْأَجْرِ وَالثَّوَابِ فِي الْكَثِيرِ مِنَ الْمَجَالَاتِ فِي حَيَاتِهِ، لِأَنَّ الْمُبَاحَاتِ وَالْعَادَاتِ تَتَحَوَّلُ بِاسْتِحْضَارِ النِّيَّةِ الصَّالِحَةِ إِلَى طَاعَاتٍ وَعِبَادَاتٍ، يُؤْجِرُ عَلَيْهَا الْمُسْلِمُ، فَإِذَا أَكَلْتَ أَوْ شَرِبْتَ أَوْ نِمْتَ بِنِيَّةٍ أَنْ تَتَقَوَّى عَلَى طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى فَأَنْتَ مَاجُورٌ، وَإِذَا ذَهَبْتَ إِلَى عَمَلِكَ بِنِيَّةٍ أَنْ تَتَعَفَّفَ عَنِ السُّؤَالِ، وَتَكْتَسِبَ الْحَلَالَ، وَتَخْدِمَ وَطَنَكَ وَأَهْلَكَ فَأَنْتَ مَاجُورٌ، بَلْ إِنَّكَ إِنْ لَأَطَفْتَ أَوْلَادَكَ، وَأَحْسَنْتَ مُعَامَلَةَ أَهْلِكَ بِنِيَّةٍ بِرِّهِمْ وَالْحِفَاطِ عَلَى اسْتِقْرَارِ الْأُسْرَةِ وَتَمَاسُكِهَا فَأَنْتَ مَاجُورٌ، وَالزَّوْجَةُ إِذَا أَحْسَنْتَ رِعَايَةَ زَوْجِهَا وَأَسْرَتَهَا بِنِيَّةِ التَّقَرُّبِ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى فَهِيَ مَاجُورَةٌ، وَطَالِبُ الْعِلْمِ إِذَا حَرَصَ عَلَى تَحْصِيلِ الْعِلْمِ بِنِيَّةٍ أَنْ يَنْفَعَ نَفْسَهُ وَمَجْتَمَعَهُ وَوَطَنَهُ فَهُوَ مَاجُورٌ. وَقَدْ فَهَمَ الصَّحَابَةُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ أَهْمِيَّةَ النِّيَّةِ فِي الْأَعْمَالِ، فَكَانُوا يَسْتَحْضِرُونَ النِّيَّاتِ الصَّالِحَاتِ قَبْلَ الْعَادَاتِ وَالْمُبَاحَاتِ، قَالَ مُعَاذُ بْنُ جَبَلٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ: أَحْتَسِبُ نَوْمِي كَمَا أَحْتَسِبُ قَوْمِي. وَمِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى عَلَيْنَا أَنَّهُ تَعَبَّدْنَا بِحُسْنِ النُّوَايَا، فَلِلْمَرْءِ أَنْ يُرَبِّي نَفْسَهُ عَلَى حُسْنِ النِّيَّةِ فِي التَّعَامُلِ مَعَ النَّاسِ بِالْبِرِّ وَالْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ، فَيُنَالُ الْأَجْرَ وَالثَّوَابَ، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: « إِنَّمَا الدُّنْيَا لِأَرْبَعَةِ نَفَرٍ: عَبْدٍ رَزَقَهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا وَعِلْمًا، فَهُوَ يَتَّقِي فِيهِ رَبَّهُ، وَيَصِلُ فِيهِ رَحْمَتَهُ، وَيَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ فِيهِ حَقًّا، فَهَذَا بِأَفْضَلِ الْمَنَازِلِ. وَعَبْدٍ رَزَقَهُ اللَّهُ عِلْمًا، وَلَمْ يَرْزُقْهُ مَالًا، فَهُوَ صَادِقُ النِّيَّةِ، يَقُولُ: لَوْ أَنَّ لِي مَالًا لَعَمِلْتُ بِعَمَلِ فُلَانٍ، فَهُوَ بِنِيَّتِهِ، فَأَجْرُهُمَا سَوَاءٌ. وَعَبْدٍ رَزَقَهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا، وَلَمْ يَرْزُقْهُ عِلْمًا، فَهُوَ يَخْبِطُ فِي مَالِهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ، لَا يَتَّقِي فِيهِ رَبَّهُ، وَلَا يَصِلُ فِيهِ رَحْمَتَهُ، وَلَا يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ فِيهِ حَقًّا، فَهَذَا بِأَخْبَثِ الْمَنَازِلِ. وَعَبْدٍ لَمْ يَرْزُقْهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا وَلَا عِلْمًا، فَهُوَ يَقُولُ: لَوْ أَنَّ لِي مَالًا لَعَمِلْتُ فِيهِ بِعَمَلِ فُلَانٍ، فَهُوَ بِنِيَّتِهِ، فَوَزْرُهُمَا سَوَاءٌ ». وَفِي الْحَدِيثِ دَلَالَةٌ عَلَى أَنَّ الْمَرْءَ يَنَالُ أَعْلَى الْمَرَاتِبِ بِالنِّيَّةِ الصَّالِحَةِ. وَقَدْ عَزَّزَ الْإِسْلَامُ هَذَا التَّوَجُّهَ لِبِنَاءِ مُجْتَمَعٍ يَقُومُ عَلَى النِّيَّةِ الصَّالِحَةِ، حَتَّى إِذَا تَمَكَّنَ مِنْ تَحْقِيقِهَا عَمَرَ الْأَرْضَ بِالْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: « إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَتَبَ الْحَسَنَاتِ وَالسَّيِّئَاتِ ثُمَّ بَيَّنَّ ذَلِكَ، فَمَنْ هَمَّ بِحَسَنَةٍ فَلَمْ يَعْمَلْهَا كَتَبَهَا اللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حَسَنَةً كَامِلَةً، وَإِنْ هَمَّ بِهَا فَعَمَلَهَا كَتَبَهَا اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ عِنْدَهُ عَشْرَ حَسَنَاتٍ إِلَى سَبْعِمِائَةٍ ضِعْفٍ إِلَى أَضْعَافٍ كَثِيرَةٍ، وَإِنْ هَمَّ بِسَيِّئَةٍ فَلَمْ يَعْمَلْهَا كَتَبَهَا اللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حَسَنَةً كَامِلَةً، وَإِنْ هَمَّ بِهَا فَعَمَلَهَا كَتَبَهَا اللَّهُ سَيِّئَةً وَاحِدَةً ». »

فَانظُرُوا يَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ كَيْفَ عَدَّ مُجَرَّدَ النِّيَّةِ لِلْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ ثَوَابًا، وَضَاعَفَهُ بِأَدَاءِ الْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ.

فَاللَّهُمَّ أَصْلِحْ لَنَا نِيَّاتِنَا، وَسَدِّدْ أَقْوَالَنَا وَأَعْمَالَنَا، وَوَقِّفْنَا لَطَاعَتِكَ.

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ

الْخُطْبَةُ الثَّانِيَّةُ

أَمَّا بَعْدُ: فَأَوْصِيكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ وَنَفْسِي بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ مِنْ ثَمَرَاتِ النِّيَّةِ الصَّالِحَةِ أَنَّهَا تَحْفَظُ لِلْمُسْلِمِ دِيْمَوْمَةَ ثَوَابِ الْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ إِذَا مَا انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ لِعُذْرٍ، فَمَنْ اعْتَادَ عَلَى عَمَلٍ صَالِحٍ يَفْعَلُهُ ككِفَالَةِ يَتِيمٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ قِيَامِ لَيْلٍ، ثُمَّ حَبَسَهُ عُذْرٌ كَالْمَرِيضِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يُثَبِّتُ لَهُ ثَوَابَ الْعَمَلِ بِنِيَّتِهِ الصَّالِحَةِ، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «إِذَا مَرَضَ الْعَبْدُ أَوْ سَافَرَ كُتِبَ لَهُ مِثْلُ مَا كَانَ يَعْمَلُ مُقِيمًا صَاحِحًا». وَقَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «مَنْ أَتَى فِرَاشَهُ وَهُوَ يَنْوِي أَنْ يَفُومَ يُصَلِّيَ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَعَلَبْتُهُ عَيْنَاهُ حَتَّى أَصْبَحَ كُتِبَ لَهُ مَا نَوَى، وَكَانَ نَوْمُهُ صَدَقَةً عَلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.»

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَمَرَكُمْ بِأَمْرٍ بَدَأَ فِيهِ بِنَفْسِهِ وَتَنَّى فِيهِ بِمَلَائِكَتِهِ فَقَالَ تَعَالَى: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا) وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ صَلَاةً صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ بِهَا عَشْرًا» اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَنَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ،

Clarity of Intention

It is related from the Commander of the Believers Abu Hafs `Umar ibn al-Khattab -- may God be well pleased with him -- that he said: "I heard God's Messenger say : **"Actions are only according to intentions, and to each only what he intended. Whoever emigrates towards God and His Messenger, his emigration is towards God and His Messenger; whoever emigrates for the attainment of a worldly goal or in order to marry a woman, then his emigration is only towards what he emigrated to."**

The hadith indicates that the intention is a yardstick for making one's actions sound. Only insofar as the intention is correct is the action correct, and insofar as the intention is wrong is the action wrong.

The first sentence of the hadith, "**Actions are only according to intentions**" is a declaration that the voluntary actions of a person are a consequence only of that person's purpose to perform the act or bring it into existence. The second sentence, "**and to each only what he intended**" is a declaration of religion's judgment of the act in question.

Niyya/intention is used in two senses by the scholars of Islam. The first is to distinguish some acts of worship from others, e.g., salat al-zuhr from salat al-'asr or to distinguish acts of worship ('ibadat) from mundane matters ('adat). This is the primary usage of the term in the books of the fuqaha`. The second usage is to distinguish an action that is performed for the sake of Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, from an act done for the sake of Allah and others, or just for the sake of other than Allah.

Despite the importance of having a good niyya, and its centrality to Islam, it is among the most difficult things to achieve. Thus, Sufyan al-Thawri is reported to have said, "Nothing is more difficult for me to treat than my intention (niyya) for indeed it turns on me!."

An act that is not done sincerely for the sake of Allah may be divided into parts:

The first is that which is solely for display (riya`) such that its sole motivation is to be seen by others in order to achieve a goal in the profane world, as was the case of the Hypocrites in their performance of prayer, where Allah described them as "When they join prayer, they go lazily [with the purpose] of displaying [themselves] to the people."

At other times, an action might be partially for the sake of Allah and partially to display one's self in front of the people. If the desire to display one's self arose at the origin of the action, then the action is vain. Imam Ahmad reports that the Prophet (S) said, "When Allah gathers the first [of His creation] and the last [of His creation] for that Day for which there is no doubt, a crier will call out, 'Whosoever associated with Me another in his actions let him seek his reward from other than Allah, for Allah is the most independent of any association. Allah accepts no deeds other than those that are performed solely for His sake and by which His face is sought.

If one's intention is corrupted with something other than the desire to display one's self, e.g., to earn profit whilst on a jihad in the path of Allah, such an intention reduces one's reward from jihad, but does not negate it entirely.

Abu Hurairah (radi Allahu anhu) narrated that Rasul Allah (sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam) said: "The first of men (whose case) will be decided on the Day of Judgement will be a man who died as a martyr. He

shall be brought forth. Allah will make him recount His blessings (i. e. the blessings which He had bestowed upon him) and he will recount them (and admit having enjoyed them in his life). (Then) will Allah say: 'What did you do (to requite these blessings)?' He will say: 'I fought for You until I died as a martyr.' Allah will say: 'You have told a lie. You fought so that you may be called a brave warrior. And you were called so.' (Then) orders will be passed against him and he will be dragged with his face downward and cast into Hell.

Then a man will be brought forward who acquired knowledge and imparted it (to others) and recited the Qur'an. He will be brought forth and Allah will make him recount His blessings and he will recount them (and admit having enjoyed them in his lifetime). Then Allah will ask: 'What did you do (to requite these blessings)?' He will say: 'I acquired knowledge and disseminated it and recited the Qur'an seeking Your pleasure.' Allah will say: 'You have told a lie. You acquired knowledge so that you may be called a scholar, and you recited the Qur'an so that you may be called a Qari and such has been said.' Then orders will be passed against him and he shall be dragged with his face downward and cast into the Fire.

Then a man will be brought whom Allah had made abundantly rich and had granted every kind of wealth. He will be brought forth and Allah will make him recount His blessings and he will recount them and (admit having enjoyed them in his lifetime). Allah will (then) ask: 'What have you done (to requite these blessings)?' He will say: 'I spent money in every cause in which You wished that it should be spent.' Allah will say: 'You are lying. You did so, so that you may be called a generous person, and so it was said.' Then Allah will pass orders and he will be dragged with his face downward and thrown into Hell." [Book on Government: Sahih Muslim]

Thus, it is imperative that whatever good we do, we do it sincerely seeking Allah's pleasure and His approval alone. A wise man once coined the similitude of a person who performs actions to show off to others as that person who fills his purse with stones instead of money. These will not help him at all. It will only make the purse seem heavy to others, who will think that he is wealthy. In a similar manner, the ostentatious person will appear to be pious to others, but will receive no reward for his actions from Allah (subhana wa ta'ala).

When talking of intentions, it is important to point out that it isn't **only** the intentions that matter in making an action acceptable (to Allah) or not. If someone were to carry out an action that was not sanctioned or by Islam, ie a haraam action, then the purity of his intentions would have no bearing on the matter; that is, he would still be guilty of sin and liable for punishment for disobeying Allah, regardless of his intentions. For example, someone might lie to his parents, or to his children, with the "intention" of pleasing them, but that doesn't make his actions acceptable. Someone might make a false witness testimony or make a false insurance or benefit claim, with the "intention" of helping someone or of feeding his family, but this intention is meaningless if the action itself is haraam. A boy might go out with a girl and enter into a haraam relationship, with the "intention" of marriage, but such an intention is meaningless if the action itself is unacceptable. These "intentions" are the deceptive tricks of the devious Shaytaan who tries to beautify all forbidden actions.

In conclusion, the saying of Sahl b. 'Abd Allah is most beautiful in this regard: Nothing is more difficult on a person than sincerity because the person gains no share of that [act]. Ibn 'Uyayna said that Mutarrif b. 'Abdallah would repeat the following prayer, "O Allah! I seek Your forgiveness for that

which I sought your repentance but to which I subsequently returned; I seek Your forgiveness from that which I rendered to You from my self, but then, I was not able to maintain faithfully; and, I seek Your forgiveness from that by which I claimed I desired your Face but my heart became corrupted with that which I did."

We ask Allah (swt) to purify our hearts and our intentions, and to strengthen our Imaan so we can stick to the Straight Path, and to forgive our sins and overlook our shortcomings, Ameen.

Clarity of Intention

It is related from the Commander of the Believers Abu Hafsa `Umar ibn al-Khattab -- may God be well pleased with him -- that he said: "I heard God's Messenger say : **"Actions are only according to intentions, and to each only what he intended. Whoever emigrates towards God and His Messenger, his emigration is towards God and His Messenger; whoever emigrates for the attainment of a worldly goal or in order to marry a woman, then his emigration is only towards what he emigrated to."**

The hadith indicates that the intention is a yardstick for making one's actions sound. Only insofar as the intention is correct is the action correct, and insofar as the intention is wrong is the action wrong.

The first sentence of the hadith, "**Actions are only according to intentions**" is a declaration that the voluntary actions of a person are a consequence only of that person's purpose to perform the act or bring it into existence. The second sentence, "**and to each only what he intended**" is a declaration of religion's judgment of the act in question.

Niyya/intention is used in two senses by the scholars of Islam. The first is to distinguish some acts of worship from others, e.g., salat al-zuhr from salat al-'asr or to distinguish acts of worship (ibadat) from mundane matters ('adat). This is the primary usage of the term in the books of the fuqaha`. The second usage is to distinguish an action that is performed for the sake of Allah, subhanahu wa ta'ala, from an act done for the sake of Allah and others, or just for the sake of other than Allah.

Despite the importance of having a good niyya, and its centrality to Islam, it is among the most difficult things to achieve. Thus, Sufyan al-Thawri is reported to have said, "Nothing is more difficult for me to treat than my intention (niyya) for indeed it turns on me!."

An act that is not done sincerely for the sake of Allah may be divided into parts:

The first is that which is solely for display (riya`) such that its sole motivation is to be seen by others in order to achieve a goal in the profane world, as was the case of the Hypocrites in their performance of prayer, where Allah described them as "When they join prayer, they go lazily [with the purpose] of displaying [themselves] to the people."

At other times, an action might be partially for the sake of Allah and partially to display one's self in front of the people. If the desire to display one's self arose at the origin of the action, then the action is vain. Imam Ahmad reports that the Prophet (S) said, "When Allah gathers the first [of His creation] and the last [of His creation] for that Day for which there is no doubt, a crier will call out, 'Whosoever associated with Me another in his actions let him seek his reward from other than Allah, for Allah is the most independent of any association. Allah accepts no deeds other than those that are performed solely for His sake and by which His face is sought.'

If one's intention is corrupted with something other than the desire to display one's self, e.g., to earn profit whilst on a jihad in the path of Allah, such an intention reduces one's reward from jihad, but does not negate it entirely.

Abu Hurairah (radi Allahu anhu) narrated that Rasul Allah (sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam) said: "The first of men (whose case) will be decided on the Day of Judgement will be a man who died as a martyr. He shall be brought forth. Allah will make him recount His blessings (i. e. the blessings which He had bestowed upon him) and he will recount them (and admit having enjoyed them in his life). (Then) will Allah say: 'What did you do (to requite these blessings)?' He will say: 'I fought for You until I died as a martyr.' Allah will say: 'You have told a lie. You fought so that you may be called a brave warrior. And you were

called so.' (Then) orders will be passed against him and he will be dragged with his face downward and cast into Hell.

Then a man will be brought forward who acquired knowledge and imparted it (to others) and recited the Qur'an. He will be brought forth and Allah will make him recount His blessings and he will recount them (and admit having enjoyed them in his lifetime). Then Allah will ask: 'What did you do (to requite these blessings)?' He will say: 'I acquired knowledge and disseminated it and recited the Qur'an seeking Your pleasure.' Allah will say: 'You have told a lie. You acquired knowledge so that you may be called a scholar, and you recited the Qur'an so that you may be called a Qari and such has been said.' Then orders will be passed against him and he shall be dragged with his face downward and cast into the Fire.

Then a man will be brought whom Allah had made abundantly rich and had granted every kind of wealth. He will be brought forth and Allah will make him recount His blessings and he will recount them and (admit having enjoyed them in his lifetime). Allah will (then) ask: 'What have you done (to requite these blessings)?' He will say: 'I spent money in every cause in which You wished that it should be spent.' Allah will say: 'You are lying. You did so, so that you may be called a generous person, and so it was said.' Then Allah will pass orders and he will be dragged with his face downward and thrown into Hell." [Book on Government: Sahih Muslim]

Thus, it is imperative that whatever good we do, we do it sincerely seeking Allah's pleasure and His approval alone. A wise man once coined the similitude of a person who performs actions to show off to others as that person who fills his purse with stones instead of money. These will not help him at all. It will only make the purse seem heavy to others, who will think that he is wealthy. In a similar manner, the ostentatious person will appear to be pious to others, but will receive no reward for his actions from Allah (subhana wa ta'ala).

When talking of intentions, it is important to point out that it isn't **only** the intentions that matter in making an action acceptable (to Allah) or not. If someone were to carry out an action that was not sanctioned or by Islam, ie a haraam action, then the purity of his intentions would have no bearing on the matter; that is, he would still be guilty of sin and liable for punishment for disobeying Allah, regardless of his intentions. For example, someone might lie to his parents, or to his children, with the "intention" of pleasing them, but that doesn't make his actions acceptable. Someone might make a false witness testimony or make a false insurance or benefit claim, with the "intention" of helping someone or of feeding his family, but this intention is meaningless if the action itself is haraam. A boy might go out with a girl and enter into a haraam relationship, with the "intention" of marriage, but such an intention is meaningless if the action itself is unacceptable. These "intentions" are the deceptive tricks of the devious Shaytaan who tries to beautify all forbidden actions.

In conclusion, the saying of Sahl b. 'Abd Allah is most beautiful in this regard: Nothing is more difficult on a person than sincerity because the person gains no share of that [act]. Ibn 'Uyayna said that Mutarrif b. 'Abdallah would repeat the following prayer, "O Allah! I seek Your forgiveness for that which I sought your repentance but to which I subsequently returned; I seek Your forgiveness from that which I rendered to You from my self, but then, I was not able to maintain faithfully; and, I seek Your forgiveness from that by which I claimed I desired your Face but my heart became corrupted with that which I did."

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