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Jihaad an-Nafs: Striving Against the Soul

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Jihād an-Nafs: Striving Against the Soul

By Shaykh Hasan Ayyūb – may Allāh preserve him -

from the first chapter of his book '*Fiqh al-Jihād fil-Islām*'

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The world, in its overwhelming majority, is encountering waves upon waves of evil and is being struck by evil passions and trials and tribulations, and it is being overtaken by various kinds of destructive evils, and it is being governed by Satanic ideas and selfish, imposing laws, and concepts that destroy all aspects of the human being that can be considered virtuous and noble. We are surrounded by an environment that has deviated from the truth, submitted to its desires and has been put to trial by its forbidden passions. And the human being inherits all that those who came before him have left for him of corruption in belief, entrenchment in misguidance, submission to the *Sharī'ah* of the Devil, permitting the forbidden, forbidding the permissible, and beautifying the lowest of actions and the most disgusting sins. And he is - with this - longing to satisfy his desires as he has been surrounded by the devils of the humans and *Jinn*.

So, he is a product of the environment, culture, upbringing, thoughts and all that he is surrounded by, and affected by; beginning with his family, his people, all the way to the general human population.

This human being, if Divine Guidance was sent down for his sake, and Allāh showed him ways of living in happiness in this life and the next, and he was given from Allāh a Book, and He favored him – by His Favor – with a Messenger to take him by the hand to that which is better and higher, and organizes the affairs of his life on the basis of justice and mercy, and saves him from everything that could be a cause of his destruction in this life and the next; if all of this occurred, then his situation would be quite different.

From the people, however, are those who have been defeated by this accumulation in

evil, and are pressured by these influences, so they don't pay any attention to the religion and give it not the slightest consideration. Rather, he belittles the religion, and mocks it, and has enmity to those who call to it, and fights all those who try to change his ways and plant a pure seed in his head in place of the filthy Satanic seed that is in place.

Allāh – the Exalted – said: { "*Rather! On their hearts is the black spot of the sins that they used to earn...*" } [al-Mutaffifin; 14]

And He – the Exalted – said: { "*And if it is said to them 'Come to that which Allāh has revealed and to the Messenger!' they said 'What we found our fathers upon is enough for us.' Were it not that their fathers knew nothing and were not guided...*" } [al-Mā'idah; 104]

And He – the Exalted – said: { "*Verily, those who disbelieve will not believe whether you warn them or not.*" } [al-Baqarah; 6]

And yet, there is another type of person that you might see who is ready to reflect calmly and with deep insight, and remove himself from any outside influences in order to look at the issues that are important, and puts aside all that he has been fed in order for his research to be upon clarity. So if he is guided and comes to know, he turns and changes and becomes another person.

This human being struggles against (*yu jāhid*) his soul that commands him with evil, as well as his overwhelming passions and transgressing innate nature, deviated desires, misguided cultural practices, and bad habits.

He says: there is none worthy of worship except Allāh, certain that it means: none is rightly deserving of being served or worshipped except for Allāh, and none deserves to be submitted to or humbled before except Allāh, and none has the right to command or forbid except Allāh, and there is no legislation of laws except by Allāh, and by Him – the Exalted – the Muslim takes his steps, and with this, he submits himself to Allāh in a complete manner – in every way, shape and form – so he is called a *Muslim* (a submitter).

And he believes in everything that Allāh has revealed - so he is called a *Mu'min* (believer).

And he stands watch over the devils among the humans and *Jinn*, so he does not allow them to affect him – so he is called a *Sābir* (an endurer).

And he stops at the limits set by Allāh, and does not cross them unless in a moment of heedlessness (in which case he repents) – so he is called a *Murābit* (one who guards his territory).

And he sacrifices himself and his wealth for the sake of his belief, and he lives as a fugitive who has been uprooted from his home – so he is called a *Mujāhid* (one who strives).

And regarding this, the Exalted says: { *"And those who strive in Our cause, we will guide them to Our ways, and verily, Allāh is with those who do good."* } [*al-'Ankabūt*; 69]

And He – the Exalted – says: { *"O you who believe! Endure and be patient and guard your territory and fear Allāh so that you may be successful."* } [*Āl 'Imrān*; 200]

This kind of person, wherever he is found in a land or amongst a certain group of people, he is like a rising sun whose rays are sweet-smelling perfume; by him, the Earth is connected to the Heavens, and upon him descends the Mercy of Allāh, and surrounding him are the Angels of the Most Merciful.

He has a heart with the innocence of children, and a tongue with the purity of water from a rain cloud, and a helping hand that extends as if it was sent from Allāh, and a face that shines with the truth as if it were the morning light, and firmness upon the religion of Allāh as if he himself was a firm mountain.

If you walk with him he benefits you, and if you befriend him he serves you, and if you consult him he advises you, and if you wrong him he excuses you, and if you comfort him he thanks you, and if you are at odds with him he forgives you. Truthful; easygoing; trustworthy; he fears Allāh, so he is as Allāh says regarding him: { *"Muhammad is the Messenger of Allāh, and those who are with him are harsh against the disbelievers and merciful between each other. You see them bowing and prostrating, seeking Favor from Allāh and His Pleasure. Their distinctive sign is the mark of prostration on their faces."* } [*al-Fat'h*; 29]

And the struggle of the soul (*jihād an-nafs*) is the severest type of struggle, and the hardest and longest-lasting. It is a struggle at night, and during the day; in times of hardship, in times of ease; in times of relaxation and tension. It is a struggle in your beliefs and worship and interactions; while you are secluded from the people as well as when you are mixing with them. And it is a struggle by way of remembrance, prayer, fasting, and patience – as well as all things that strengthen your soul. And it is a struggle

that calls for the person to be fully awake, aware and knowledgeable of the weak points of the enemy, the strategies of the Devil, the incoming waves of falsehood, the possible entrance points of doubts and confusions, as well as knowledge of the permissible and forbidden, and the commands of Allāh and his prohibitions, etc.

And without this struggle (*Jihād*) that polishes and purifies the soul, and changes everything in the life of the believer, and makes the Muslim a *leader* not a follower, and makes him a head and not a tail, and one who initiates change in others as opposed to one who is changed by others; without this type of struggle, a person is known simply as a Muslim – not a believer – and this is not a name that he would even be deserving of, and an outer image that does not reflect the inner truth.

And since this Muslim has given up on the struggle against his soul, he has also given up his Islāmic personality.

The struggle against the soul causes explosive changes – both internal and external – that give birth to a person that has been purified the utmost purification in comparison to the entire human race, so that the one who undergoes this change deserves to shine under the saying of Allāh:

{ "*You were the best nation brought out for the people.*" } [Āl 'Imrān; 110]