SELECTIONS FROM RAWDAT AL-MUHIBBIN · 6

The Signs of Love

Selections from Ibn al-Qayyim's Rawdat al-Muhibbin

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah
d. 751 AH

IBN JĀZĪ · FUSTAT SERIES

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Editor's Preface

Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, known as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (691–751 AH), was a scholar of Damascus and the student of Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah. Among his many works is *Rawdat al-Muhibbin wa-Nuzhat al-Mushtaqin* (The Garden of the Lovers and the Delight of the Yearning), a book of twenty-nine chapters on love: its names, its causes, its praise and its censure, the gaze, chastity, jealousy and, at the last, the love of Allah.

This booklet draws on three chapters of that book: Chapter Twenty, "On the Signs of Love and Its Evidences"; Chapter Twenty-One, "On Love's Requirement of Singling Out the Beloved for Love and of Not Associating Anyone Else with Him in It"; and Chapter Twenty-Two, "On the Jealousy of Lovers over Their Beloveds".

The reader will find here the three kinds of souls and what each loves; the signs by which love is known, among them the gaze, remembrance, obedience, listening to the speech of the beloved, love of his house and of those he loves, solitude, humility, the giving of oneself, and agreement with the beloved; the question of whether the heart can hold more than one love, and the three kinds of love; and the kinds of jealousy, the praised and the blamed.

The text is Ibn al-Qayyim's own, abridged by selection. Cuts are shown by "...". The full translation gives the complete text.

◆ *Before the signs: three kinds of souls* ◆

Before entering into that, it is necessary to mention the kinds of souls and what they love. So we say: 366

Souls are three. A heavenly, lofty soul: its love is directed to knowledge, to the acquisition of virtues and of the perfections possible for man, and to the avoidance of vices; it is infatuated with what brings it nearer to the Highest Companion[1], and that is its strength, its nourishment and its remedy, and its occupation with anything else is its sickness.

A predatory, wrathful soul: its love is directed to domination, to wrongdoing, to exaltation upon the earth, to arrogance and to ruling over people through falsehood; its pleasure is in that, and its infatuation is with it.

And an animal, appetitive soul: its love is directed to food, drink and marriage. And at times it combines the two, so its love is directed to exaltation upon the earth and to corruption, as He تعالى said: ... ﴿تِلْكَ ٱلدَّارُ ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا وَٱلْعَـٰقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ “That home of the Hereafter We assign to those who do not desire exaltedness upon the earth or corruption. And the [best] outcome is for the righteous.” [al-Qasas 28:83]

Love in this world revolves among these three souls. Whichever of them comes upon what suits its nature, it deems it good and inclines to it, and it listens in it to no one who blames, and the blame of no blamer takes hold of it in it. And each of these kinds holds that what it is in is more deserving of preference, and that being occupied with anything else and turning to other than it is a loss and a missed portion. The heavenly soul has a natural affinity with the angels and the Highest Companion, by which it inclines to their attributes, their characters and their deeds. 367

So the angels are the allies of this kind in the world and in the Hereafter. He تعالى said: ﴿إِنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ قَالُوا۟ رَبُّنَا ٱللَّهُ ثُمَّ ٱسْتَقَـٰمُوا۟ تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ ٱلْمَلَـٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا۟ وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا۟ وَأَبْشِرُوا۟ بِٱلْجَنَّةِ ٱلَّتِى كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَآؤُكُمْ فِى ٱلْحَيَوٰةِ ٱلدُّنْيَا وَفِى ٱلْـَٔاخِرَةِ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِىٓ أَنفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ﴾ “Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allāh" and then remained on a right course - the angels

1 *Al-Rafiq al-A'la*: the words of the Prophet ﷺ at his death, "O Allah, with the Highest Companion" (al-Bukhari and Muslim).

will descend upon them, [saying], "Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised. We [angels] were your allies in worldly life and [are so] in the Hereafter. And you will have therein whatever your souls desire, and you will have therein whatever you request [or wish] As accommodation from a [Lord who is] Forgiving and Merciful."" [Fussilat 41:30–32]

The angel takes as his ally the one who suits him: by giving him sincere counsel, guidance, steadfastness and teaching; by casting what is right upon his tongue; by driving his enemy away from him; by asking forgiveness for him when he slips; by reminding him when he forgets; by consoling him when he grieves; by casting tranquillity into his heart when he fears; by waking him for prayer when he sleeps through it; by promising his companion good, urging him to believe the promise, warning him against inclining to the world, shortening his hope, and making him desire what is with Allah. So he is his companion in solitude, his ally, his teacher, his steadier, the one who calms his alarm and makes him desire the good and warns him of the evil. He asks forgiveness for him if he does wrong, and prays for steadfastness for him if he does well; and if he spends the night in purity remembering Allah, he spends the night with him in his inner garment[2]; and if an enemy of his sets out to harm him while he is asleep, he drives him off from him.

2 *Sha'ar* is the garment worn next to the skin; the sense is that the angel stays close beside him.

◆ *The allies of the devils, and the gaze of the lover* ◆

And the devils are the allies of the second kind; they bring them out from the light into the darknesses. Allah تعالى said: ﴿تَٱللَّهِ لَقَدۡ أَرۡسَلۡنَآ إِلَىٰٓ أُمَمٖ مِّن قَبۡلِكَ فَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ ٱلشَّيۡطَٰنُ أَعۡمَٰلَهُمۡ فَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمُ ٱلۡيَوۡمَ﴾ "By Allāh, We did certainly send [messengers] to nations before you, but Satan made their deeds attractive to them. And he is their [i.e., the disbelievers] ally today [as well]" [al-Nahl 16:63] 368

For this kind, there is a natural affinity between their souls and the devils, by which they incline to their attributes, their characters and their deeds. So the devils take them as allies in the opposite way to that in which the angels take as allies those who suit them: they urge them on to acts of disobedience with a goading, and they drive them to it with a driving after which they cannot settle; they make ugly things seem fair to them, make them light upon their hearts and sweet in their souls, and make acts of obedience heavy for them, hold them back from them, and make them appear ugly in their eyes; they cast upon their tongues kinds of foul speech and what is of no benefit, and they make it seem fair in the ears of those who hear it from them.

As for the third kind, they are the likes of animals; their souls are earthly and base, caring for nothing but their appetites and wanting nothing besides them. 369

When you have understood this introduction, the signs of love stand firm in the case of each kind according to its beloved and its object of desire, and by these signs one knows to which of these kinds one belongs. So we mention sections on the signs of love by which it is indicated:

Among them: constantly looking at the thing and the turning of the eye toward it. For the eye is the door of the heart, it is what expresses its inner thoughts and reveals its secrets, and it is more eloquent in that than the tongue, because its indication is by state, without the choice of its owner, while the indication of the tongue is verbal and follows his intention. So you see the gaze of the lover turn with his beloved however he turns, and move about with him in the regions and the lands ... And among them: his lowering of the eyes when his beloved looks at him, and his casting his glance toward the ground. That is from awe of him, shame before him, and his greatness in his breast. For this reason kings find it

ugly in one who addresses them while he sharpens his gaze upon them; rather, he is to be lowering his gaze to the ground.

Allah تعالى said, informing of the perfect manners of His Messenger on the Night of the Ascension: ﴿مَا زَاغَ ٱلۡبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ﴾ "The sight [of the Prophet (ﷺ)] did not swerve, nor did it transgress [its limit]." [al-Najm 53:17] And this is the utmost of good manners, for the sight did not swerve to the right or the left, nor did it reach beyond, exceeding what it saw and was facing, like one peering at what lies beyond that. 371

For this reason the Prophet ﷺ forbade most severely that the one praying lift his sight to the sky, and threatened them for it with the snatching away of their sight;[3] for this is part of perfect manners toward Him before whom the one praying stands; rather, he ought to stand with his head bowed, looking down toward the ground. And were it not that the Lord of the worlds سبحانه is above His heavens upon His Throne, there would be no difference between looking up or looking down.

3 From the hadith of Anas: "What is the matter with people who lift their eyes to the sky in their prayer?... They must stop it, or their sight will be snatched away"; al-Bukhari (750).

◆ *Remembrance and obedience* ◆

And among them: frequent mention of the beloved, and being devoted to speaking of him and to talk about him. For whoever loves something mentions it often with his heart and his tongue. For this reason Allah سبحانه commanded His servants to remember Him in all circumstances, and commanded them to remember Him when they are most fearful, so He تعالى said: ﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ إِذَا لَقِيتُمۡ فِئَةً فَٱثۡبُتُواْ وَٱذۡكُرُواْ ٱللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمۡ تُفۡلِحُونَ﴾ "O you who have believed, when you encounter a company [from the enemy forces], stand firm and remember Allāh much that you may be successful." [al-Anfal 8:45]

So the sign of true love is the mention of the beloved in hope and in dread. One of the lovers said of his beloved: [372]

يذكرنيك الخير والشر والذي ◆ أخاف وأرجو والذي أتوقع

Good and evil remind me of you, and what I fear,
and what I hope and expect: all bring you near.

Good and evil remind me of you, and what ◆ I fear and hope and what I expect

And among the mention that indicates the truth of love is that the mention of the beloved comes first to the lover's heart and tongue at the first moment of his waking from his sleep, and that his mention be the last thing he sleeps upon, as one of them said:

آخر شيء أنت في كل هجعة ◆ وأول شيء أنت وقت هبوبي

You are the last thing in every slumber's close,
and the first thing at the moment I arose.

You are the last thing in every slumber, ◆ and the first thing when I rise

The highest kind of mention of the Beloved is that the lover confine his tongue to mentioning Him, then confine his heart to his tongue, then confine his heart and his tongue to witnessing Him whom he mentions. And just as mention is among the results of love, so love is also among the results of mention; each of the two bears fruit in the other, and the seed of love is watered only with the water of mention, and the best mention is that which issues from love. [373]

And among its signs: obedience to the command of the beloved, and

preferring it to the lover's own wish; indeed, the wish of the lover and the beloved become one. This is the true union, not the union spoken of by the heretics, the brothers of the Christians; there is no union except in the wish. And this union is the sign of true love, such that the wish of the beloved and the lover is one. He is not a true lover who has a will that opposes the wish of his beloved concerning him; rather, he is one who wants something from his beloved, not one who wants him; and if he does want him, he is not one who wants what he wants.

And lovers are of three kinds: among them is one who wants from the beloved, and among them is one who wants the beloved, and among them is one who wants what the beloved wants together with wanting the beloved; and this is the highest of the kinds of lovers, and his renunciation is the highest kind of renunciation, for he has renounced every will that opposes the wish of his beloved; and between this and renunciation of the world is more than what lies between the heaven and the earth.

And renunciation is of five kinds: renunciation of the world, renunciation of the self, renunciation of status and leadership, renunciation of everything besides the beloved, and renunciation of every will that opposes the wish of the beloved. And this is attained only by perfect following of the messenger of the Beloved. [374]

Allah تعالى said: ﴿قُلْ إِن كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ ٱللَّهَ فَٱتَّبِعُونِى يُحْبِبْكُمُ ٱللَّهُ﴾ "Say, [O Muḥammad], "If you should love Allāh, then follow me, [so] Allāh will love you" [Al Imran 3:31] So He سبحانه made following His Messenger the cause of their love for Him; and the servant's being beloved of Allah is higher than his being a lover of Him. The matter is not that you love Allah, but that Allah love you. So obedience to the beloved is the emblem of loving him, as it was said:

تعصي الإلٰه وأنت تزعم حبه ◆ هذا محال في القياس بديع

You claim to love Allah, yet disobey His word:
by analogy, impossible, and strange, absurd.

You disobey Allah while you claim to love Him
this, by analogy, is an impossibility, an astounding thing

لو كان حبك صادقا لأطعته ◆ إن المحب لمن يحب مطيع

Had your love been true, His will you would have done;
for the lover obeys the beloved one.

Had your love been true, you would have obeyed Him;
indeed the lover is obedient to the one he loves

◆ *Patience, listening, and love of what is His* ◆

And among its signs: the little patience of the lover away from the beloved; rather, his patience is turned to patience in obeying Him, patience in refraining from disobeying Him, and patience under His rulings. This is the patience of the lover. As for patience away from Him, it is the patience of one who is free of love for Him, occupied with another. ... So whoever is patient away from his beloved, his patience leads him to the loss of what he seeks. 375

And among them: turning to his speech and lending him one's whole hearing, such that one empties one's hearing and one's heart for his speech. And if some turning to another appears from him, it is a borrowed turning, in which the affectation is evident to whoever observes him ... And if he lacks the speech of the beloved himself, then the dearest thing to him is talk about him, especially when he is spoken of through his own words, for that takes the place of his address. As one said: There is nothing more delightful to the hearts of lovers than hearing the speech of their beloved, and in it is the utmost of what they seek. For this reason nothing was more delightful to the people of love than hearing the Qur'an. It is established in the *Sahih*, from Ibn Mas'ud, who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Recite to me." I said: Shall I recite to you, when it was sent down upon you? He said: "I love to hear it from someone other than myself." So I recited to him from the beginning of Surat al-Nisa' until I reached His saying: ﴿فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍۭ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَٰٓؤُلَآءِ شَهِيدًا﴾ "So how [will it be] when We bring from every nation a witness and We bring you, [O Muḥammad], against these [people] as a witness?" [al-Nisa' 4:41] He said: "That is enough for you." I raised my head, and his eyes were flowing with tears![4]

4 Al-Bukhari (4582, 5049, 5050, 5056) and Muslim (800).

And Allah سبحانه, who is the One who spoke the Qur'an, gives ear and listens to the reciter with a beautiful voice, out of His love for hearing His speech from him, as he ﷺ said: "Allah listens more intently to the reciter with a beautiful voice than the owner of a singing girl to his singing girl."[5] 377

And among them: love of the beloved's abode and house, even love of the place where he has settled. And this is the secret for which hearts have devoted themselves to love of the Ka'bah, the Sacred House, until lovers found it sweet, in reaching it, to leave their homelands and loved ones, and travel, which is a portion of torment, became delightful to them in it. So they ventured upon perils, crossed deserts and wastes, and bore the utmost hardships in reaching it, and had it been possible for them, they would have gone to it upon their eyelids and the pupils of their eyes. 378

And the secret of this love is the Lord سبحانه's attributing it to Himself in His saying: ﴿طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ﴾ "purify My House" [al-Hajj 22:26] 379

And everything attributed to the beloved is beloved: ﴿وَأَنَّهُۥ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ ٱللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُواْ يَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا﴾ "And that when the Servant [i.e., Prophet] of Allāh stood up supplicating Him, they almost became about him a compacted mass."" [al-Jinn 72:19] ﴿سُبْحَـٰنَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَسْرَىٰ بِعَبْدِهِۦ﴾ "Exalted is He who took His Servant [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)] by night" [al-Isra' 17:1] ... And whoever understands the meaning of this understands the meaning of His saying تعالى: ﴿بِيَدِكَ ٱلْخَيْرُ﴾ "In Your hand is [all] good." [Al Imran 3:26] and the saying of His servant and messenger ﷺ: "At Your service, at Your pleasure, and the good is in Your hands, and the evil is not attributed to You."[6]

And if one who loves a creature like himself loves his home ... then how of Him who has nothing like Him, and whose love has no love like it?!

And among them: hastening toward Him on the journey, urging on the mounts toward Him, covering the stages in reaching Him, striving to draw near and close to Him, cutting off every obstacle that cuts one off from Him, casting aside the occupations that distract from Him,

5 Ahmad (6/19, 420), Ibn Majah (1340), Ibn Hibban (659, *Mawarid*) and al-Hakim, *al-Mustadrak* (1/571), from the hadith of Fadalah ibn Ubayd. Al-Busiri calls it *hasan* and al-Hakim *sahih*.

6 Muslim (771), from the hadith of Ali ibn Abi Talib.

renouncing them and turning away from them, belittling everything that is a cause of His anger and abhorrence, however great, and desiring everything that brings one near to Him, however hard ... And among them: love of the loved ones of the beloved, his neighbours, his servants, and whatever is connected with him, even his craft, his trade, his vessels, his food and his drink. 380

And Anas ibn Malik used to love gourds greatly, when he saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ picking them out from the sides of the dish.[7] 381

7 Al-Bukhari (2092) and Muslim (2041), from Anas.

◆ *Jealousy for the Beloved* ◆

And among them: his jealousy for his beloved and over his beloved. Jealousy for him is that he hate what he hates, and feel jealousy when his beloved is disobeyed, his right violated and his command neglected. This is the jealousy of the lover in truth, and the whole religion is under this jealousy. 384

The strongest of people in religion is the greatest of them in jealousy. And the Prophet ﷺ said in the sahih hadith: "Do you wonder at the jealousy of Sa'd? I am more jealous than he, and Allah is more jealous than I!"[8] 385

So the lover of Allah and His Messenger feels jealousy for Allah and His Messenger in proportion to his love and veneration. And if his heart is empty of jealousy for Allah and His Messenger, then he is emptier of love, even if he claims to be among the lovers. For he lies who claims love of someone beloved among people while he sees another violating the sanctity of his beloved, striving to harm him and to provoke his displeasure, belittling his right and making light of his command, and he feels no jealousy at that, but his heart is cold. So how can it be sound for a servant to claim love of Allah while he feels no jealousy for His prohibitions when they are violated, nor for His rights when they are neglected?

And when this jealousy departs from the heart, love departs from it too, and indeed religion departs from it, even if its traces remain in it. And this jealousy is the root of jihad, of commanding the right and forbidding the wrong, and it is what drives to that. For if the heart is empty of it, he will not strive, nor command the right, nor forbid the wrong, for he only comes with that out of jealousy on behalf of his Lord. For that reason He سبحانه made jihad the sign of His love and of being beloved by Him, so He تعالى said: ﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ مَن يَرْتَدَّ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِۦ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِى ٱللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُۥٓ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى ٱلْكَـٰفِرِينَ يُجَـٰهِدُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَآئِمٍ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ ٱللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَآءُ ۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾ "O you who have believed, whoever of you should revert from his religion - Allāh will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him [who are] humble toward the believers,

8 Al-Bukhari (6846, 7416) and Muslim (1499), from the hadith of al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah. Sa'd is Sa'd ibn Ubadah, chief of the Khazraj among the Ansar.

strong against the disbelievers; they strive in the cause of Allāh and do not fear the blame of a critic. That is the favor of Allāh; He bestows it upon whom He wills. And Allāh is all-Encompassing and Knowing." [al-Ma'idah 5:54]

As for jealousy over the beloved, it is praiseworthy only where exclusive possession of the beloved is praised and sharing in him is blameworthy by the Law and by reason, such as a person's jealousy over his wife and his slave woman, and the thing which he alone possesses, so he feels jealous of another's exposing himself to mention of it and sharing it with him. 386

And this jealousy is particular to the created being and cannot be conceived in the case of the Creator. Rather, the lover of his Lord loves that all people love Him, mention Him, worship Him and praise Him, and nothing is more pleasing to his eye than that; indeed, he calls to that by his word and his deed.

◆ *Giving oneself for the Beloved* ◆

And among them: the lover's spending, in the pleasure of his beloved, whatever he is able to, of what he used to enjoy apart from love. And the lover has three states in this. One: he spends it with affectation and hardship; this is at the beginning of the matter. Then, when love grows strong, he spends it willingly and readily. Then, when it has taken hold of the heart to the utmost, he spends it asking and imploring, as though he were taking it from the beloved, to the point that he spends his own self for his beloved, as the Companions used to shield the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in war with their own selves, until they were laid low around him ... And whoever prefers his beloved to himself in regard to his self prefers him all the more with his wealth. Allah تعالى said: ﴿ٱلنَّبِيُّ أَوۡلَىٰ بِٱلۡمُؤۡمِنِينَ مِنۡ أَنفُسِهِمۡ﴾ "The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves" [al-Ahzab 33:6] And the station of faith is not complete for them until the Messenger is dearer to them than their own selves, let alone their sons and their fathers, as it is authentically reported from him ﷺ that he said: "None of you believes until I am dearer to him than his child, his father and all people."[9] And Umar said to him: By Allah, O Messenger of Allah! You are dearer to me than everything except my own self. He said: "No, O Umar! Until I am dearer to you than your own self." He said: By Allah, now you are dearer to me than my own self! He said: "Now, O Umar!"[10] 387

So if this is the matter of love for His servant and messenger, how then of love for Him سبحانه? And this kind of love cannot be except for Allah and His Messenger, by Law and by decree. And if there is found among people one who prefers his beloved to himself with his self and his wealth, that is in reality only out of love for his own aim in him; so love of his aim moved him to spend his self and his wealth on him, and his love for that beloved is not for his own sake, but for his aim from him. And this beloved has his like, and his love has its like; but as for love of Allah, it has no like, nor has the Beloved any like. For this reason the Companions made the Messenger of Allah ﷺ judge over their selves and their wealth,

9 Al-Bukhari (15) and Muslim (44), from the hadith of Anas.

10 Al-Bukhari (3694, 6264, 6632).

and said: Here is our wealth before you, so judge in it as you wish, and here are ourselves before you; if you were to take us through the sea, we would plunge into it; we fight before you, behind you, on your right and on your left. 388

◆ *Joy in what pleases the Beloved* ◆

And among them: his joy in what pleases his beloved, whatever it may be, even if his own self dislikes it, so it is with him like bitter medicine: he dislikes it by nature and loves it for the cure in it. So it is with the lover and his beloved: what his beloved is pleased with pleases him, even if it is hateful to his own self. But whoever stands only with what his own self desires of his beloved's pleasures, his love is not true, but a flawed love, so that he is pleased with what has displeased him as well as what has pleased him of his beloved's pleasures. And if this is found in the love of created beings for one another, then the One loved for His own sake is more deserving of it. ... 389

And this is the state of everyone who loved something besides Allah along with Him, for he will come to this end, inevitably, and it will become plain to him, when the covering is removed, that he was only deluded, deceived by a wish that his soul attained during his life, then it was cut off, and left regret and remorse after it. He تعالى said: ﴿إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتُّبِعُواْ مِنَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُواْ وَرَأَوُاْ ٱلْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ ٱلْأَسْبَابُ وَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُواْ لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَتَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُواْ مِنَّا كَذَٰلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ ٱللَّهُ أَعْمَـٰلَهُمْ حَسَرَٰتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا هُم بِخَـٰرِجِينَ مِنَ ٱلنَّارِ﴾ "when those who have been followed disassociate themselves from those who followed [them], and they [all] see the punishment, and cut off from them are the ties [of relationship], Those who followed will say, "If only we had another turn [at worldly life] so we could disassociate ourselves from them as they have disassociated themselves from us." Thus will Allāh show them their deeds as regrets upon them. And they are never to emerge from the Fire." [al-Baqarah 2:166–167] The ties that were cut off from them are: the unions, the attachments and the affections that were for other than Allah and not for the sake of Allah; and these are what He سبحانه advanced upon and made into scattered dust. So every love for other than Him is a torment to its owner and a regret to him, except love of Him and love of what calls to love of Him and helps toward obedience to Him and His pleasure; for this is what remains in the heart on the day when secrets are tried, as he said: 392

ستبقى لكم في مضمر القلب والحشا ◆ سريرة حب يوم تبلى السرائر

For you, hidden in heart and inmost parts, will abide
a secret of love, on the day when secrets are tried.

It will remain for you in the hidden recess of the heart and inmost parts,
a secret of love, on the day when secrets are tried

◆ *Solitude and humility* ◆

And among them: love of solitude, finding companionship in seclusion, and being alone away from people, as though love had been fixed upon that. For nothing is sweeter to the true lover than his seclusion and his being alone, for if he gains his beloved, he loves his seclusion with him, and utterly hates whoever comes between the two. 393

For this secret - and Allah knows best - the Prophet ﷺ commanded turning back the one who passes in front of the one praying, even commanding fighting him, and informed that if he knew what he bears of sin, his standing forty would be better for him than his passing in front of him.[11] And only a heart present before its beloved, turned toward Him, with others lifted away between it and Him, finds the pain of passing and its severity; so the passing of the one who passes between him and his Lord is like the entering of a hated one between the lover and his beloved. And this is a matter in which taste is the judge, and one does not deny it.

And also, the lover finds companionship in the mention of his beloved and his being in his heart, never leaving it, so he is his companion and his sitting-mate; he finds companionship in none besides him, and so he is made lonely by whoever distracts him from him. And Taqi al-Din ibn Shuqayr narrated to me,[12] saying: Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah went out one day, and I went out behind him. When he reached the open country and was alone away from the people, where no one could see him, I heard him reciting the saying of the poet:

وأخرج من بين البيوت لعلني ◆ أحدث عنك القلب بالسر خاليا

I go out from among the houses, to be apart,
perhaps to speak of you, in secret, to my heart.
And I go out from among the houses, perhaps I may
speak of you to my heart in secret, being alone

So the seclusion of the lover with his beloved is the utmost of his wish; if he gains it, well; and if not, he is alone with him in his secret, and that makes him lonely toward others. 394

11 Al-Bukhari (510) and Muslim (507), from the hadith of Abu Juhaym.

12 Taqi al-Din ibn Shuqayr al-Harrani al-Hanbali, a Damascene scholar and a close student of Ibn Taymiyyah.

And among them: the lover's submission to his beloved, his abasement and humility before him; and love is built upon humility. And the mighty one who is humble before nothing does not disdain humility toward his beloved, nor count it a deficiency or a flaw ... And when humility and love become firmly rooted, it becomes servitude, and the heart of the lover becomes a place of worship for his beloved. And this rank is not fitting to attach to a created being, and is suitable only for Allah alone.

And among them: his abandoning every cause that removes him from his beloved and that the beloved hates, and his delight in every cause that brings him near him and wins him praise with him when it reaches him about him. ... So the beneficial love is that which falls upon a perfect beloved whose passionate love moves you to seek perfection; and the calamity, all of the calamity, is to be afflicted with love of an idle, empty person, void of every good, whose love moves you to imitate him. [396]

◆ *Agreement between lover and Beloved* ◆

And among them: the agreement that occurs between lover and beloved, especially if the love is a love of likeness and affinity. Often the lover falls ill with the illness of his beloved and moves with his movement, and neither of them is aware of the other, and the beloved speaks words and the lover speaks those very words by coincidence. Look at the saying of the Prophet ﷺ to Umar ibn al-Khattab on the day of al-Hudaybiyyah, when he said to him: Are we not on the truth, and our enemy on falsehood? He said: "Yes." He said: Then why should we give the humiliation in our religion? He said: "I am the Messenger of Allah, and He is my helper, and I do not disobey Him." He said: Did you not used to tell us that we would come to the House and circle it? He said: "Did I tell you that you would come to it this year?" He said: No. He said: "Then you will come to it and circle it." Then he came to Abu Bakr al-Siddiq and said to him: O Abu Bakr! Are we not on the truth, and our enemy on falsehood? He said: Yes! He said: Then why should we give the humiliation in our religion and return, when Allah has not yet judged between us? He said: He is the Messenger of Allah, and He is his helper, and he does not disobey Him. He said: Did he not used to tell us that we would come to the House and circle it? He said: Yes; did he say to you that you would come to it this year? He said: No. He said: You will come to it and circle it. So he answered with the answer of the Prophet ﷺ letter for letter, without agreement beforehand or awareness of one another, but as the accord of a lover with his beloved. This is how it occurs in *Sahih al-Bukhari*[13] ... And what is intended is only the mention of the agreement between lover and beloved; and this which happened to al-Siddiq is among the finest agreement. And of this kind is Umar ibn al-Khattab's agreement with his Lord in several matters which he spoke, and revelation came down with them just as he spoke them. 399

And this agreement grows strong until the lover knows many of the conditions of his beloved while he is absent from him; and this is according to the attachment of his aspiration to him, the turning of his heart toward him, and the union of his wish with his wish. And at times that

13 Al-Bukhari (1694, 2731), in the hadith of al-Hudaybiyyah.

requires their agreement in illness, health, joy, sadness and character; and if, in addition to that, there is a resemblance between them in outward form, it is the utmost of agreement. Let us limit ourselves of the signs to this extent, and with Allah is success. 402

◆ *One heart for one Beloved* ◆

This is among the requirements of true love and its rulings, for when the powers of love turn in one direction, no room is left in them for any other. And among the proverbs of the people: "There are not two loves in the heart, nor two lords in the heaven." 403

Whenever the power of love is divided among several places, it inevitably weakens. And reflect on His saying سبحانه: ﴿ٱلرَّحِيمِ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّبِيُّ ٱتَّقِ ٱللَّهَ وَلَا تُطِعِ ٱلْكَٰفِرِينَ وَٱلْمُنَٰفِقِينَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا وَٱتَّبِعْ مَا يُوحَىٰٓ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى ٱللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِٱللَّهِ وَكِيلًا﴾ "O Prophet, fear Allāh and do not obey the disbelievers and the hypocrites. Indeed, Allāh is ever Knowing and Wise. And follow that which is revealed to you from your Lord. Indeed Allāh is ever, of what you do, Aware. And rely upon Allāh; and sufficient is Allāh as Disposer of affairs." [al-Ahzab 33:1–3] How He commanded him to fear Him, which includes singling Him out in carrying out His command and prohibition out of love for Him, awe and hope, for fear of Allah is complete only with that; and to follow what was revealed to him, which includes his leaving everything else and following only what was sent down; and to rely upon Him, which includes the heart's depending on Him alone, trusting in Him and being at rest in Him, to the exclusion of any other.

Then He followed that with His saying: ﴿مَّا جَعَلَ ٱللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِّن قَلْبَيْنِ فِى جَوْفِهِۦ﴾ "Allāh has not made for a man two hearts in his interior." [al-Ahzab 33:4] So you find beneath this expression that the heart has only one direction: if it inclines with it toward one side, it does not incline with it toward another. And the servant has not two hearts, so that he obeys Allah, follows His command and relies on Him with one of them, and the other is for someone else. Rather, he has only one heart; so if he does not single out his Lord for reliance, love and fear, that turns to another.

And people have differed over this question. One group said: The heart has only one direction; if it turns to it, it cannot turn to another. They said: And just as two wills cannot be together in it, so there cannot be two loves in it. 406

And a group said: Rather, it can have two directions or more in two respects, so it turns to one of them and that does not occupy it from turning to the other.

They said: ... So the wide heart can combine turning to Allah سبحانه, to His command and to the interests of His servants, and none of that occupies it from another. The heart of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was turned in prayer toward his Lord and toward attending to the conditions of those who prayed behind him, and he would hear a child's crying and shorten the prayer for fear of burdening the mother.[14] Do you not see how his wide, noble heart had room for both matters? ... And our Shaykh inclined to this view, and it is, as you see, strong in its force and its proof.[15]

And the verified position: that the beloved for his own sake cannot be other than one, and it is impossible that two beloveds for their own sake be found in the heart, just as it is impossible that there be outside two selves subsisting by themselves, each of the two being independent of the other in all respects, and as it is impossible that the world have two lords, equal and independent. So none is loved for his own sake except the true God, who is by His essence free of need of everything besides Him, while everything besides Him is by its essence in need of Him. 408

As for what is loved for His sake سبحانه, it can be many, and the servant's love of it does not occupy him from love of his Lord, nor does he associate it with Him in love. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ loved his wives, and the dearest of them to him was Aishah; and he loved her father, and loved Umar, and loved his Companions, and they were in ranks in his love for them; and with this his love was all for Allah, and all the powers of his love were turned to Him سبحانه. 409

14 Al-Bukhari (709, 710) and Muslim (470), from the hadith of Anas.

15 Our Shaykh is Ibn Taymiyyah.

◆ *The three kinds of love* ◆

For love is of three kinds: love of Allah, love for Him and in Him, and love with Him.

Love for Him and in Him is part of the completion of love of Him and among its requirements, not among its cutters; for love of the Beloved requires love of what He loves, and love of what helps toward loving Him and brings one to His pleasure and nearness. And how should the believer not love what he uses to seek help toward the pleasure of his Lord and by which he attains to His love and nearness?! As for love with Allah, it is the polytheistic love, and it is like the love of the people of rivals for their rivals, as He تعالى said: ﴿وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ ٱللَّهِ أَندَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ ٱللَّهِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوٓاْ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلَّهِ﴾ "And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allāh as equals [to Him]. They love them as they [should] love Allāh. But those who believe are stronger in love for Allāh." [al-Baqarah 2:165]

And the root of the shirk that Allah does not forgive is shirk in this love, for the polytheists did not claim that their gods and idols shared with the Lord سبحانه in the creation of the heavens and the earth; their shirk with them was only from the side of loving them along with Allah, so they allied themselves for them and made enemies for them, and deified them, and said: These are little gods who bring us near to the greatest God. So distinguish between love of Allah as the root, love for Him as a following, and love with Him as shirk. And hold fast to verifying this point, for it is the parting of the ways between the people of tawhid and the people of shirk.

It is related that al-Fudayl went in to his daughter in her illness, and she said to him: O my father! Do you love me? He said: Yes. She said: There is no god but Allah! By Allah, I did not think this of you, and I did not think you loved anyone along with Allah; rather, single out Allah for love, and give me mercy from you; if your love for me is a love of mercy that Allah placed in the heart of a father for his child, it is not a love with Allah. For Allah has a right of love in which none else shares with Him, and the most wrongful wrong is to put that love in other than its place, and the association of Allah and other than Him in it. 410

So let the person of understanding reflect on this chapter, for it is

among the most beneficial chapters of the book, if Allah تعالى wills.

◆ *The kinds of jealousy, and the jealousy of Allah* ◆

Since this chapter is connected with the chapter on singling out the beloved for love, and is one of its requirements, for jealousy is according to the strength of love, and its strength is according to the singling out of the beloved, it is fitting to mention it after it. 411

The root of jealousy is zeal and pride. And jealousy is of two kinds: jealousy for the beloved and jealousy over him. Jealousy for him is zeal for him and anger for him when his right is made light of, his sanctity is diminished and something hateful reaches him from his enemy; so the lover is angry for him and is zealous, and jealousy for him takes hold of him to hasten to change it and to fight whoever harmed him. This is the jealousy of lovers in truth, and it is the jealousy of the messengers and their followers for Allah against whoever associated others with Him, treated His prohibitions as lawful and disobeyed His command.

And jealousy is among the attributes of the Lord جل جلاله, and the root of it is His saying تعالى: ﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ ٱلْفَوَٰحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ﴾ "Say, "My Lord has only forbidden immoralities - what is apparent of them and what is concealed" [al-A'raf 7:33] 412

And in the two *Sahih*s, from the hadith of Abd Allah ibn Mas'ud, who said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "There is nothing more jealous than Allah; for that reason He forbade immoralities, what is apparent of them and what is concealed. And there is none to whom praise is dearer than Allah; for that reason He praised Himself. And there is none to whom the excuse is dearer than Allah; for that reason He sent the messengers."[16] 413

And the servant's jealousy over his beloved is of two kinds: a praised jealousy, which Allah loves, and a blameworthy jealousy, which Allah hates. The one Allah loves is that he feel jealousy when suspicion arises; and the one He hates is that he feel jealousy without suspicion, merely from ill thought, and this jealousy ruins love and brings enmity between the lover and his beloved. 414

And in the *Musnad* and elsewhere, from him ﷺ

16 Al-Bukhari (4634, 4637, 5220, 7403) and Muslim (2760).

[17], who said: "Jealousy is of two kinds: a jealousy that Allah loves, and another that Allah hates." We said: O Messenger of Allah! What is the jealousy that Allah loves? He said: "That His acts of disobedience be committed and His prohibitions be violated." We said: And what is the jealousy that Allah hates? He said: "The jealousy of one of you where it is not in its reality."

And Aishah said: I was never jealous over a woman as I was jealous over Khadijah, because of the Prophet's ﷺ frequent mention of her. And he mentioned her one day, and I said: What do you do with an old woman with red cheeks, when Allah has given you better than her in exchange? He said: "By Allah, Allah has not given me better than her in exchange!"[18] 417

So look at this intense jealousy over a woman after she had died, and that was from the excess of her love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ; she was jealous over him that anyone else be mentioned.

And Allah سبحانه feels jealousy over the heart of His servant, that it be left empty of love of Him, fear of Him and hope in Him, and that anything else be in it; for He سبحانه created it for Himself and chose it from among His creation ... And He feels jealousy over his tongue, that it be left empty of His mention and be occupied with mention of another, and jealousy over his limbs, that they be left empty of obedience to Him and be occupied with disobedience to Him. So it is shameful for the servant that his true Master feel jealousy over his heart, his tongue and his limbs while he feels no jealousy over them. 423

17 Ahmad (4/154); also Ibn Khuzaymah (2478) and al-Hakim, *al-Mustadrak* (1/418), from the hadith of Uqbah ibn Amir. The wording the author gives is in al-Khara'iti (p. 310), from the hadith of Ka'b ibn Malik.

18 Al-Bukhari (3821, 3824) and Muslim (2437).

◆ *Two sayings of the Sufis, and the pillar of jealousy* ◆

Al-Qushayri said:[19] And one of them was asked: Do you wish to see Him? He said: No! It was said: Why? He said: I exalt that beauty above the gaze of one like me. 427

I say: And this is a corrupt jealousy, and the utmost for its owner is that he be pardoned and that this be counted among his blameworthy ecstatic utterances. But that it be counted among his merits and virtues that it be said to him: Would you like to see Allah? and he says: No - when seeing Him is the highest bliss of the people of Paradise, and He سبحانه loves that His servant ask Him for looking at Him; and it is established from the Prophet ﷺ that among his supplications was: "O Allah, I ask You for the delight of looking at Your face and the yearning to meet You."

And of this is what al-Qushayri mentioned. He said: Al-Shibli[20] was asked: When will you rest? He said: When I see no one remembering Him. 428

And is there anything harder on the heart of the believer, and more bitter to him, than that he not see anyone remembering his Lord? And is there anything more pleasing to his eye than to see people remembering Allah in every place? And the excuse of this speaker is that he does not see anyone remembering Allah with the due of remembrance; rather, he sees no one remembering but with heedlessness and forgetfulness having mastered his heart, so he mentions his Lord with a tongue empty of the heart and its presence in the remembrance, and that is a remembrance not fitting for Him, so his lover feels jealousy that He be mentioned with this remembrance, and so he would like not to hear anyone mention Him with this remembrance. And since people are common in this remembrance, he informed that his rest is that he not see anyone remembering Him. This is the best that his words can be taken to mean, and otherwise its outward sense is nearer to enmity than to love; and this was not the state of al-Shibli, for love used to overcome him; and with that, this is among his ecstatic utterances which it is hoped will be forgiven him by his sincerity, his love and his tawhid, not that it is among what he is to be

19 Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri (d. 465 AH), in his *Risalah* (p. 256).

20 Abu Bakr al-Shibli (d. 334 AH), the Sufi of Baghdad.

praised for and followed in. 429

And Allah سبحانه commanded His servants to remember Him in all their conditions, even if their remembrance of Him has ranks. The highest is the remembrance of the heart and the tongue with the heart's witnessing of the One mentioned and its being gathered wholly upon Him, with the most beloved remembrances to Him; then below it the remembrance of the heart and the tongue even if it does not witness the One mentioned; then the remembrance of the heart alone; then the remembrance of the tongue alone. These are the ranks of remembrance, and some of them are dearer to Allah than others. 430

And the pillar of jealousy and its highest are three kinds: the servant's jealousy for his Lord that His prohibitions be violated and His limits neglected; his jealousy over his heart that it settle with other than Him and that it find companionship in other than Him; and his jealousy over his sanctity that another look upon it. So the jealousy that Allah and His Messenger love revolves around these three kinds; and what is besides them is either from the deceptions of Satan or a trial from Allah, like a woman's jealousy over her husband that he marry another over her. 437

If it is said: Under which of the kinds do you count the jealousy of Fatimah, daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, over Ali ibn Abi Talib when he resolved to marry the daughter of Abu Jahl, and the Messenger of Allah's ﷺ jealousy for her? 438

It is said: Among the jealousy that Allah and His Messenger love; and the Prophet ﷺ pointed to it by saying that she is a part of him, and that what harms her harms him, and what disturbs her disturbs him; and that union would not at all have been good, for the daughter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is not fittingly joined with the daughter of his enemy under one man, for this is the utmost of aversion. ... For this the Prophet ﷺ said: "Unless the son of Abu Talib wishes to divorce my daughter and marry the daughter of Abu Jahl."[21]

Moreover, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ feared for her trial in her religion through her being joined with the daughter of the enemy of Allah in his house. So his jealousy ﷺ was not merely the natural dislike of sharing,

21 Al-Bukhari (926, 3110, and other places) and Muslim (2449), from the hadith of al-Miswar ibn Makhramah.

but what moved it was the sanctity of religion, and he pointed to this by his saying: “I fear that she will be tried in her religion.” 439

Glossary

jihad: striving in the cause of Allah.

shirk: associating others with Allah.

tawhid: the oneness of Allah; singling Him out alone.

sahih: authentic (of a hadith); **hasan**: good, a grade just below sahih.

Sahih: one of the two hadith collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim; "the two *Sahih*s" are both of them.

Musnad: the hadith collection of Imam Ahmad.

al-Siddiq: "the Truthful", the title of Abu Bakr.

ecstatic utterances (shatahat): sayings of the Sufis in a state of rapture that sound improper on their face.



This booklet is a selection, in Ibn al-Qayyim's own words, from the complete English translation of *Rawdat al-Muhibbin wa-Nuzhat al-Mushtaqin*. Omissions within a passage are shown by "…". The small numbers after the paragraphs give the page of the complete translation, where the full text, its sources and its notes may be found.

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