

Love

Love—a noble feeling that is a significant part of our human lives. We have been created with the desire to love and be loved. Over the course of history, I believe, there are fewer words that have been so often discussed, interpreted, misunderstood and misconstrued as the word *love*.

Love is a feeling which is supposed to generate intense happiness and joy for those who experience it. It is not a necessity of life but it enhances it, makes it more meaningful and decorates it with pleasure.

People claim to love different things in their lives; from beauty, body, sect, race, a place, time, even foods, incidents, hobbies, or style of certain things we do in life can be loved. To explain my point, some people claim to love sweets while others are drawn to savory tastes. We label our every day pleasures and preferences as our love using terms such as ‘I love to do’, ‘I love to say’, ‘I love to have’, ‘I love so and so’. The excessive use of the term for mundane things of life has devalued its meaning and snatched its beauty and weight.

Today, many people are confused between need, want and love. My hope of sharing this topic with you is for us, especially our youth, to have an in-depth understanding of the topic so they can understand their feelings and allocate them appropriately.

Growing up in a materialistic environment that lacks spirituality, morals and right understanding, causes people to become selfish, greedy, and lonely inside. They become hollow and superficial—those who are concerned with the outer and neglect the inner, those who are more interested in the body and external beauty and neglect the inner beauty of the soul, manners and character of the person. They choose companions, jobs or even a place using their emotions instead of thinking and trying to understand where this love and emotion could lead them.

In a state like this a lot of principles and understandings of life get lost and are replaced by confusion. Imagine when confusion becomes the norm and the normal beautiful aspects of life become confusing! Even our own feelings! To the point that now we have a lot of tragedy, oppression, aggression, and even criminal acts carried out in the name of love.

So What Exactly Is Love?

Some people say love is to give. It is true!

Some say love is the ultimate loyalty and belonging. I agree!

Some say love is to make the one you love happy or to please the one you love. Agreed!

Some say love is to be able to give everything and do anything for the one you love. OK!

Some say love is to give unconditionally forever. Sure!

Some say love is ultimate sacrifice for the one you love. Agreed!

We can continue explaining the different perspectives and understandings of love from different people but I want you to consider this:

How many people today suffer, end up in jail, and even lose their lives in the name of love? How many people end up with a broken heart and deal with a lot of drama, sadness and horror from a so called love relationship? How many people suffer loss of wealth, time, physical, emotional and mental abilities, all in all a lot of damage over love? So where does all this sadness, tragedy and drama come from?

Let's go step by step and examine a few questions in order to reach a comprehensive understanding.

If love is so beautiful and is supposed to generate happiness and pleasure, how does it end this way?

People are created with two powerful internal forces:

1. Feeling and emotion;
2. Thinking and intellect.

These two forces are driven and ignited or can be channeled according to the person's knowledge, understanding of life, faith, upbringing, and the influence of the most significant companion in the person's life. The bottom line is that people's feelings or thinking are shaped by these elements among many others.

This is what develops strength in the feeling or thinking and influences the purpose and goal that this feeling or thinking generates. This produces the outcome of this feeling or thinking which then reflects in the personality, character, person's motivation in life and what he is trying to achieve; and can eventually lead the person to success or failure, happiness or tragedy.

You add to that the fact that some people are thinking and intellect driven while others are more emotional than intellectual. In simpler words, some people become emotional and then think later while others think too much and their emotion is very minimal.

Love Is Power!

Some say love is blind.

Others call it selfish.

And yet others say love is to take.

I want you to open your heart and eyes and examine love as a feeling that is generated according to the person's understanding of life, his priority in life, his belief, what he is thinking about, what he wants to achieve, and what his goal in life is, among many other factors. For example, those who believe that money is the answer, they love money, love rich people, love jobs that can give them big money, love men or women who are wealthy; by this way everything will be driven from money perspective. Those who love prestige will surround themselves with such people. Those who are into body and looks surround themselves with similar people.

How many people actually consider the person's character, manners and soul while initiating a relationship? How many people check whether they are comfortable with the soul of the other person and his or her presence? Above mentioned are just a few examples but the same goes for everything that people might love such as music, dancing, drugs, alcohol, camping, education and degrees, gaining knowledge etc.

All that I have shared with you so far is to give you a glimpse of our current situation. I believe that over time we as humans have lost many values including basic fundamental understanding of life. If our feeling or thinking is not driven by justice, harmony, peace and happiness then it will be driven by the need of accumulation which causes us to become greedy, selfish, stingy, and oppressive to each other. This causes us to be hollow individuals who are driven by emotions that can lead them to tragedy, hurt, loss and mischief towards others.

We underestimate the consequences of this beautiful, noble value, one of the most powerful elements that we humans possess—our feelings and the term love!

Two Forces of Feeling:

Human beings are driven by two forces of feeling—positive and negative. Positive is the feeling of love and negative is the feeling of fear. Positive feeling can have a great impact on us as individuals, group or the whole society. Whereas negative feelings leave a damaging impact on us as individuals, collective and a society. For example, you can examine jails, hospitals, and rehab centers to find out how many people end up in these places because of a bad or broken relationship or after failed love to a wrong person.

Thus far, all the explanation is to help you realize the magnitude of this beautiful force called love! If we channel this force with the right person for a right cause, to elevate ourselves with this beautiful gift which the Creator has given us, it can be the most powerful experience of our lives.

Love Is an Action Or Name of An Emotion?

Often love is used as a noun which describes an emotion that we experience. However, I believe in the interpretation of the term love as a verb, not a noun. It is an action because it generates a cycle of successive actions—positive or negative. Look at how someone you love can change your life forever, whether good or bad.

Even if you disagree with me, if you continue to bear with me I promise to help you reach a beautiful understanding of this topic which will not only change your life in this world, but also the hereafter!

Meaning of Love:

Love is a feeling and emotion which generates a desire to achieve what is pleasurable and beneficial to us!

Stop and reflect over this statement!

Read it multiple times! Don't rush!

From now on, the words are weighty.

We as humans normally love those who are beneficial to us. Meaning the more we believe something or someone can benefit us, serve us well, or be good to us, the more it strengthens our feelings for that thing or person.

Normally people are created with a sense which makes them love goodness. We love those who are good and kind, meaning people with good qualities. Apply this to every aspect of our lives. We like fresh fruits and vegetables, fresh bread, fresh air, clean water, we love beauty and goodness, we love good manners and conduct, and we love those who serve us. This is why even in a business the key to success is good service! When you trickle this down to individual level, we love to get closer to those who benefit us or generate pleasure to us.

Love Will Not Last Forever:

All the pleasure and benefit from material life is limited. Everything people love eventually fades and ceases to exist. Everyone that we love will grow older and die. Money comes and goes. Certain foods that we love today might become a health hazard for us tomorrow. By this way, every pleasure is limited and cannot be forever!

The same is applicable to our feelings. When we love someone and this love fades or something breaks it, or our feelings change towards this object of our love, we cannot handle it. We become miserable or we get broken inside. This is because the expectation was very high and we were negligent from the beginning of the fact that nothing can last forever!

Youth doesn't last!

Beauty doesn't last!

Life doesn't last!

People do not last! They die!

The weather constantly changes!

Everything is in motion and we cannot demand things to remain at a certain status. It will never happen—from financial, economical, social or political aspect. Everything goes through a cycle and we have no control over it. Anything can change anytime without prediction or planning, whether we like it or we don't. This is the fact and reality.

Questioning Develops Perspective:

- *If life is unpredictable, how can I have a successful love story in my life?*
- *How do I search for love?*
- *Whom to love?*
- *Why I love so and so?*

Asking the right questions will give us different perspectives in life. These perspectives and understandings will help us to govern our feelings and emotions so that when the time comes, we can use them or share them for the right purpose and right cause. This way, we can achieve the maximum pleasure and benefit for ourselves.

People might argue that this is a selfish approach. Actually it is the opposite! It is the most healthy and positive attitude! One of our elders used to say that if you want to be loved, you have to love; and if you love, you have to give!

This brings us to the most crucial point: *Who is the one?*

- *Who do we love?*
- *Who do we share this feeling with?*
- *Who do we sacrifice for?*
- *And for what purpose?*
- *And since love is supposed to be devotion, who do we devote ourselves to?*
- *Who do we give ourselves to?*

Aren't these questions important for our lives? Or is our love so cheap that we are willing to throw it anywhere? Who deserves our love? Who can really value it?

So what is more important: love or the one we are going to love?

Our Goals Inspire Our Feelings:

Love will happen—whether you are smart or naïve, you understand or you do not, you are intelligent or foolish!

Bear with me and I will try to help you achieve the maximum understanding of this feeling and beautiful force.

As I said earlier, according to our understanding of life, our faith, and our perspective in life, our goals and priorities will change. Our goals and priorities in life are what define us and make us who we are. They are the driving force within us which cause us to love something or help us achieve what we are looking for.

Take the example of a dancer; s/he will end up loving a dancer too or a trainer. The person who loves to drink ends up loving a companion who will spend time with him at a bar or pub. Those who love sweets keep eating them. People who love traveling and nature, they love similar people. People who love to write are the same. A woman, who loves jewels and wealth, has to love someone rich who can provide what she loves. She may not necessarily love the person but will end up marrying him because he can provide what she

loves. There are many other examples that I can share with you but I am sure you got my point.

People love those who can provide for them the things they love or the things they want to achieve!

Even then, this benefit and therefore this love is limited because it is bound by age, means, health, wealth and life which are all perishable.

Believers Possess True Courage:

Did we ever really think about who it is that can truly benefit us in this life, at the moment of death and life after death?

If you have, you have to be a believer of the Creator and of life after death. An atheist wouldn't care about any of this. Death is an inevitable reality of life yet most people treat it as if it was doubtful. People claim to believe in it though nobody wants to talk about it, let alone actively prepare for it. This is the real future of our existence yet farthest from our thoughts.

Everyone prepares for future but how many people factor in sickness, illness or death in this equation? It is not in the agenda; almost like it will not happen! But practically and realistically speaking, none of us will live forever, neither will any of us be healthy forever. Meaning we have to die—whether we like it or we don't! Whether we believe or we don't! When, how, where...we do not know!

This discussion leads us to our next set of questions:

- *If we believe we are going to die, can any of our possessions or all the material life benefit us at the moment of death and after death?*
- *Can any human being, money, or status help us at the moment of death or after death?*
- *Can any of our relationships or love stories last forever?*

If you are still with me, I will take you to the next stage of understanding.

The Ultimate Meaning of Love and the Ultimate Benefit and Pleasure of Love:

Human beings are created with a beautiful sense of quality. It is a built-in characteristic; call it quality, call it nature, or genetic. It is part of us as humans. It is the fact that we love goodness. We love anything that is good or that can be good to us. We love high quality!

All of us carry two aspects: good and bad; things that we like and those that we don't like.

That is why when people at the start of a relationship believe that they will get everything they want; they end up miserable because it will never happen! No status, money, person or pleasure can ever fully satisfy a human soul and cause complete happiness and fulfillment.

This is the reason we find supermodels, multi millionaires and billionaires, famous actors, successful business persons, famous athletes, and pioneer researchers and scientists—those who are materialistically accomplished to be unhappy. Majority of them are found to be depressed, under medications, using heavy drugs and alcohol, involved in crazy actions and abnormal acts, all in the attempts of seeking fulfillment. A lot of them have miserable lives and a lot of them end up committing suicides because of their hollow, unknown, empty and unfulfilled lives.

Why?

Even if human beings achieve everything that they believe will bring them pleasure and joy, or love something that they think will generate happiness and contentment, it ends up as a mirage. Usually it ends up being the complete opposite of their expectations.

Even though we see it and we hear about it, we are still running after the same. At this point we should agree that nothing from the material world can bring real love, happiness, and pleasure as people think it would. This either doesn't happen at all or if it does, it is for a very short time and soon fades away.

What Is the Real 'Happily Ever After'?

Let's look into the love story that will never end. The love that brings the true happily ever after in the form of infinite success, happiness, pleasure, peace, and tranquility. This can only be achieved when the person has fallen in love with the One who Himself is forever—the Almighty Creator!

In order to step on this ladder of divine love, let us first examine a few questions:

- *Who is the Creator?*
- *What is He capable of?*

- *What is His quality?*
- *How and what can He give us or provide to us in:*
 - *This life?*
 - *To our bodies?*
 - *To our souls?*
 - *To our existence?*
 - *At the time of our deaths?*
 - *And in life after death?*

What we need to do is:

- Learn the Creator's names and attributes.
- Study the Qur'an well, especially Makki Qur'an (the part of Qur'an that was revealed in Makkah).

Once we do this we will discover His qualities, how much we need Him in our lives, and we will come to the conclusion that He is the ONLY one who deserves ultimate love. After gaining this knowledge we have to fall in love with the Creator, His message and the Messenger SAW who delivered this message. This love then drives us to live according to the will and pleasure of the Creator, Allah SWT and devote our lives to Him.

What Will We Gain From This Relationship?

We will gain a continuous relationship that will never end. A relationship that is full of support, happiness, pleasure, caring, benefit—call it 100% successful relationship! Most of all this relationship is with the One who will never divorce us or forget us, get sick, or die. It is with the one who will forgive us despite all our mistakes. He will guard us, protect us, care for us, govern us, take care of our body and soul and help us to have a successful end. He is the One who can give us peaceful ending and the ultimate success and pleasure which is to let us enter Paradise.

When we study the topic of 'Love of the Creator' and what kind of love He will offer us and the bounties and benefits of this relationship with Him, we will discover that this relationship actually really starts with our death and its pleasure is for infinity.

He SWT not only promises to love us in return but to please us in this life and the hereafter. Now our lives will be full of peace, tranquility, joy, security, assurance and most all pleasure—regardless of our material status or what we have and do not have.

These feelings of peace and contentment are generated by the belief that the Provider who loves us gives us what is good for us. This brings ease in our lives and makes us content with whatever we have. It also prevents us from running around trying to accumulate material wealth. This understanding eventually diminishes the vicious cycle of greed, selfishness, hoarding, and stinginess from our lives, which are the worms that eat us alive and cause mischief for us, our families and societies.

On the other hand when we have the journey of love to our Creator, it makes us spread love, peace and tranquility around us because this is what we have inside. He SWT already gave it to us and now we share it with our families, communities, society and mankind.

What a difference between a person with this status of heart and the one running after mundane material things!

I hope by now you understand that there is no one who can give you, provide for you, forgive you, support you, hide your mistakes, and give you chance after chance except Allah SWT. He deals with you according to His great attributes which include qualities like benevolence, mercy and forgiveness.

Once this relationship of love is established between you and Allah SWT, He will give you an internal navigator which will guide you towards things that will be a cause of pleasure to you in this life and the hereafter. He will support you at the moment of death, journey of your soul after death and ease your eternal life after death.

I am sure you agree with me by now that there is no comparison!

This divine love generates a beautiful feeling; the pleasure of which is so intense that it fulfils our lives and benefits us in this life and the hereafter. And what is more...it is in our own hands to choose this path of divine love!

Some might ask, what about the sinner and those who do mischief? We say that we hate their actions but we still love them as human beings. We love to help them to seek guidance in order to share the bounty of love of Allah. Thus, this relationship of love with Allah SWT trickles down to all aspects of our lives and begins to govern all our actions. Now this beautiful force of love that is a natural part of us is not for selfish reasons but for the pleasure of our Creator—and the price of that is very high.

Love Is Action:

Love is:

- devotion,
- sacrifice,
- service,
- obedience, and
- belonging.

Imagine instead of giving these emotions to other humans like us, we direct them to the Creator who deserves them? And share them with each other for the sake of His pleasure and love?

What will happen then?

Allah SWT will be for us and will generate beautiful love and bond between us and others. Even love between us and angels! It is not a talk or word. Love is obedience to the one we love and this demands actions.

Our wise elders used to ask how people can love someone they do not know. They also said that the main element of causing love is to know the person. The more we know someone, the more we get attracted to their quality and the love grows. Who can have higher quality than Almighty Creator Allah SWT? This is why when we look at the religion of Islam, its very essence is the acknowledgment of the Creator and then later on surrender and submission to His Will.

How can it be otherwise? Every creation of the Almighty bears witness to His oneness, His greatness, His beauty, His magnificence, His wisdom, His kindness and gentleness, His power, His ability, His might and perfection!

All the Creation Is a Reminder for Us:

The Creator Allah SWT has surrounded us with messages and advertisements towards Him. His Creations are a reminder of His existence, His greatness and His qualities. This is why as Muslims when we look at the sky, sea, mountain, valley, even a butterfly, it leads us to declare "*Subhan Allah*" (all praise and glory be to Allah)! The more we know about Allah SWT, His qualities and what He is capable of, the more it attracts us to Him, causes us to

love and respect Him, and reminds us that we are in need of Him at every moment of our lives.

The more we travel the road of knowledge of Allah, the more we understand Him. This understanding develops a bond and love which starts us on the journey of obedience to Him SWT. The more we love Him, the more we find pleasure in obeying Him.

Once we truly internalize the magnitude of this relationship, its bounty from Allah to us, the amount of rewarding it brings, and the fruit it bears...it is an overwhelming feeling. What makes it even more exhilarating is the fact that this relationship is not between two limited individuals, but between the Lord and His slave!

Once this relationship of love with the Creator is established, it trickles down to all other aspects and relationships of our lives. And now it will help us channel our love and emotions towards the right goal and right purpose. It will help us to choose the right spouse, the right companions, and the right cause to devote ourselves to, along with all other decisions in our lives. This will allow us to enjoy the love story with others that will not only benefit us in this life but be a legacy for us in the hereafter.

Love In the Light of the Qur'an and Sunnah:

Allah SWT has repeatedly told us in the Qur'an of the characteristics of those He loves and those He does not love. First you need to decide for yourself who deserves your Love...a human being or the Lord of all Creation! After reading these verses and saying s of the Prophet SAW, you will hold the key of the Love of Allah in your hands.

All you have to do in order to earn the love of Allah SWT is develop the qualities that He SWT loves and stay away from the characteristics that He SWT does not love.

How Love is Mentioned in the Qur'an—

A Bounty When It is for Allah and a Warning When It is Otherwise:

وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ
الْكَفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الرَّاشِدُونَ ﴿٧﴾

But Allah has endeared to you the faith and has made it pleasing in your hearts and has made hateful to you disbelief, defiance and disobedience. Those are the [rightly] guided. (Al-Hujurat 49:7)

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي
مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

Indeed, [O Muhammad], you do not guide whom you like, but Allah guides whom He wills. And He is most knowing of the [rightly] guided.(Al-Qasas 28:56)

وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٢١٦﴾

But perhaps you hate a thing and it is good for you; and perhaps you love a thing and it is bad for you. And Allah Knows, while you know not.(Al-Baqara 2:216)

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٢﴾

Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah] from that which you love. And whatever you spend - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it. (Al-Imran 3:92)

وَلَا يَأْتَلِ أُولُو الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا أُولَى الْقُرْبَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ
وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ
اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٢٢﴾

And let not those of virtue among you and wealth swear not to give [aid] to their relatives and the needy and the emigrants for the cause of Allah , and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful. (Nur 24:22)

No! But you love the immediate. (Al-Qiyamah 75:20)

كَلَّا بَلْ تُحِبُّونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ ﴿٢٠﴾

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَن يَرْتَدَّ مِنكُمْ عَن دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ
يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ ۖ

O you who have believed, whoever of you should revert from his religion - Allah will bring forth [in place of them] a people He will love and who will love Him... (Al Maidah 5:54)

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَتَّخِذُ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ ءَآدَآءًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ
ءَامَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ

And [yet], among the people are those who take other than Allah as equals [to Him]. They love them as they [should] love Allah . But those who believe are stronger in love for Allah. (Al Baqara 2:165)

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَآ تَتَّخِذُوا ءَآبَآءَكُمْ وَإِخْوَانَكُمْ ءَوَلِيَّآءَ إِنِ اسْتَحَبُّوْا
الْكُفْرَ عَلَى الْإِيْمَنِ ۗ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِّنكُمْ فَاُوْلَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

O you who have believed, do not take your fathers or your brothers as allies if they have preferred disbelief over belief. And whoever does so among you - then it is those who are the wrongdoers. (At Tauba 9:23)

Meaning obedience to parents is not recommended if it is against the teachings of Allah SWT and His Prophet SAW.

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ اسْتَحَبُّوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ

الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

That is because they preferred the worldly life over the Hereafter and that Allah does not guide the disbelieving people. (An Nahl 16:107)

الَّذِينَ يَسْتَحِبُّونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن
سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَيَبْغُونَهَا عِوَجًا أُولَئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ

بَعِيدٍ ﴿٣﴾

The ones who prefer the worldly life over the Hereafter and avert [people] from the way of Allah, seeking to make it (seem) deviant. Those are in extreme error. (Ibrahim 14:3)

Qualities that Allah SWT Loves:

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ

يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٩٥﴾

And spend in the way of Allah and do not throw [yourselves] with your [own] hands into destruction [by refraining]. And do good; indeed, Allah loves the doers of good. (Al-Baqara 2:195)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ﴿٢٢٢﴾

Indeed, Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and loves those who purify themselves." (Al-Baqara 2:222)

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ وَاتَّقَىٰ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

But yes, whoever fulfills his commitment and fears Allah - then indeed, Allah loves those who fear Him. (Al-Imran 3:76)

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾

Who spend [in the cause of Allah] during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good. (Al-Imran 3:134)

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ

And Allah loves the steadfast. (Al-Imran 3:146)

وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

And Allah loves the doers of good. (Al-Imran 3:148)

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا مِنْ
 حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ
 فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

So by mercy from Allah , [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah . Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him]. (Al-Imran 3:159)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾

Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. (Al-Maidah 5:42)

ثُمَّ اتَّقَوا وَاٰمَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوا وَاَحْسَنُوا وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٩٣﴾

...and then fear Allah and believe, and then fear Allah and do good; and Allah loves the doers of good. (Al Maidah 5:93)

وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَهِّرِينَ

And Allah loves those who purify themselves. (At Tauba 9:108)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴿٩﴾

Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. (Al Hujurat 49:9)

When we read these verses, we should try to be vigilant and do the maximum to develop these qualities in us until we gain the love and pleasure of Allah.

Characteristics That Allah SWT Does Not Love:

When we read about the characteristics that Allah SWT does not love, we should be very alert and get away from them. We should avoid them and in fact do the opposite of these

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿١٩٠﴾

hated characteristics until this opposite becomes part of our personalities.

Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors. (Al Baqara 2:190)

يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُرْبِي الصَّدَقَاتِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ

﴿٢٧٦﴾

Allah destroys interest and gives increase for charities. And Allah does not like every sinning disbeliever. (Al Baqara 2:276)

قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكٰفِرِينَ

﴿٣٢﴾

Say, "Obey Allah and the Messenger." But if they turn away - then indeed, Allah does not like the disbelievers. (Al Imran 3:32)

وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

Allah does not like the wrongdoers. (Al Imran 3:57)

وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ
وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٤٠﴾

Allah does not like the wrongdoers. (Al Imran 3:140)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا ﴿٣٦﴾

Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful. (An Nisa 4:36)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ خَوَانًا أَثِيمًا ﴿١٠٧﴾

Indeed, Allah loves not one who is a habitually sinful deceiver. (An Nisa 4:107)

❖ لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظُلِمَ وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا ﴿١٤٨﴾

Allah does not like the public mention of evil except by one who has been wronged. And ever is Allah Hearing and Knowing. (An Nisa 4:148)

وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿١٤﴾

Allah does not like corrupters. (Al Maida 5:64)

وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٨٧﴾

Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors. (Al Maida 5:87)

وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ ﴿١٤١﴾

Indeed, He does not like those who commit excess. (Al An'am 6:141)

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

Call upon your Lord in humility and privately; indeed, He does not like transgressors. (Al A'raf 7:55)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْخَائِنِينَ ﴿٥٨﴾

Indeed, Allah does not like traitors. (Al Anfal 8:58)

إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾

Indeed, He does not like the arrogant. (An Nahl 16:23)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَرِحِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾

Indeed, Allah does not like the exultant. (Al Qasas 28:76)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ﴿٧٧﴾

Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters. (Al Qasas 28:77)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾

Indeed, Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful. (Luqman 31:18)

Love In the Words of the Prophet SAW:

- وعن أنس رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "ثلاث من كن فيه وجد بهن حلاوة الإيمان: أن يكون الله ورسوله أحب إليه مما سواهما، وأن يحب المرء لا يحبه إلا لله، وأن يكره أن يعود في الكفر بعد أن أنقذه الله منه، كما يكره أن يقذف في النار" ((متفق عليه)).

Anas bin Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (PBUH) said, "There are three qualities whoever has them, will taste the sweetness of Iman: To love Allah and His Messenger (PBUH) more than anyone else; to love a slave (of Allah) only for (the sake of) Allah; and to abhor returning to infidelity after Allah has saved him from it as he would abhor to be thrown into the fire (of Hell)". [Al-Bukhari and Muslim] [Riyad us Saliheen # 375]

- وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "سبعة يظلهم الله في ظله يوم لا ظل إلا ظله: إمام عادل، وشاب نشأ في عبادة الله تعالى، ورجل قلبه معلق بالمساجد، ورجلان تحابا في الله اجتمعا عليه وتفرقا عليه، ورجل دعته امرأة ذات منصب وجمال، فقال: إني أخاف الله، ورجل تصدق بصدقة فأخفاها حتى لا تعلم شماله ما تنفق يمينه، ورجل ذكر الله خالياً ففاضت عيناه" ((متفق عليه))

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (PBUH) said, "Seven are (the persons) whom Allah will give protection with His Shade* on the Day when there will be no shade except His Shade (i.e., on the Day of Resurrection), and they are: A just ruler; a youth who grew up with the worship of Allah; a person whose heart is attached to the mosque; two persons who love and meet each other and depart from each other for the sake of Allah; a man whom a beautiful and high ranking woman seduces (for illicit relation), but he (rejects this offer by saying): 'I fear Allah'; a person who gives a charity and conceals it (to such an extent) that the left hand might not know what the right has given; and a person who remembers Allah in solitude and his eyes well up." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim] [Riyad us Saliheen # 376]

- وعنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم " إن الله تعالى يقول يوم القيامة أين المتحابون بجلالي؟ اليوم أظلهم في ظلي يوم لا ظل إلا ظلي" ((رواه مسلم)) .

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "On the Day of Resurrection, Allah, the Exalted, will say: 'Where are those who have mutual love for the sake of My Glory? Today I shall shelter them in My Shade when there will be no shade except Mine.'" [Muslim] [Riyad us Saliheen # 377]

- وعنه قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : والذي نفسي بيده لا تدخلوا الجنة حتى تؤمنوا ولا تؤمنوا حتى تحابوا أولا أدلكم على شيء إذا فعلتموه تحاببتم: أفشوا السلام بينكم ((رواه مسلم)) .

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "By Him in Whose Hand my soul is! You will not enter Jannah until you believe, and you shall not believe until you love one another. May I inform you of something, if you do, you

love each other. Promote greeting amongst you (by saying As-salamu 'alaikum to one another)." [Muslim] [Riyad us Saliheen # 378]

- وعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم : أن رجلا زار أخاه في قرية أخرى، فأرصد الله تعالى على مدرجته ملكًا، فلما أتى عليه قال: أين تريد؟ قال: أريد أخًا لي في هذه القرية. قال: هل لك عليه من نعمة تربها عليه؟ قال: لا غير أني أحببت في الله تعالى، قال: فإني رسول الله إليك بأن الله قد أحبك كما أحبته فيه" ((رواه مسلم)).

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (PBUH) said, "A man set out to visit a brother (in Faith) in another town and Allah sent an angel on his way. When the man met the angel, the latter asked him, "Where do you intend to go?" He said, "I intend to visit my brother in this town." The angel said, "Have you done any favor to him?" He said, "No, I have no desire except to visit him because I love him for the sake of Allah, the Exalted, and Glorious." Thereupon the angel said, "I am a messenger to you from Allah (to inform you) that Allah loves you as you love him (for His sake)"[Muslim] [Riyad us Saliheen # 379]

- وعن البراء بن عازب رضي الله عنهما عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أنه قال في الأنصار: "لا يحبهم إلا مؤمن، ولا يبغضهم إلا منافق، من أحبهم أحبه الله، ومن أبغضهم أبغضه الله" ((متفق عليه)).

Al-Bara' bin 'Azib (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: The Prophet (PBUH) said about the Ansar: "Only a believer loves them, and only a hypocrite hates them. Allah loves him who loves them and Allah hates him who hates them." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim] [Riyad us Saliheen # 380]

- وعن معاذ رضي الله عنه قال: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: "قال الله عز وجل: المتحابون في جلالي، لهم منابر من نور يغطهم النبيون والشهداء". ((رواه الترمذي وقال: حديث حسن صحيح)).

Mu'adh (bin Jabal) (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "Allah, the Exalted, has said: 'For those who love one another for the sake of My Glory,

there will be seats of light (on the Day of Resurrection), and they will be envied by the Prophets and martyrs." [At- Tirmidhi *Hasan Sahih*] [Riyad us Saliheen # 381]

- وعن أبي إدريس الخولاني رحمه الله قال: دخلت مسجد دمشق، فإذا فتى براق الثنايا وإذا الناس معه، فإذا اختلفوا بشيء، أسندوه إليه، وصدروا عن رأيه، فسألت عنه، فقيل: هذا معاذ بن جبل رضي الله عنه، فلما كان من الغد، هجرت، فوجدته قد سبقني بالتهجير، ووجدته يصلي، فانتظرتة حتى قضى صلاته، ثم جئته من قبل وجهه، فسلمت عليه، ثم قلت: والله إني لأحبك، فقال: آله؟ فقال: الله، فقال: آله؟ فقالت: الله، فأخذني بحبوة ردائي، فجبذني إليه، فقال: أبشر، فإني سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول: "قال الله تعالى وجبت محبتي للمتحابين في، والمتجالسين في، والمتزاورين في، والمتبازلين في" حديث صحيح ((رواه مالك في الموطأ بإسناده الصحيح)).

Abu Idris Al-Khaulani (May Allah had mercy upon him) reported: I once entered the mosque in Damascus. I happened to catch sight of a young man who had bright teeth (i.e., he was always seen smiling). A number of people had gathered around him. When they differed over anything they would refer it to him and act upon his advice. I asked who he was and I was told that he was Mu'adh bin Jabal (May Allah be pleased with him) The next day I hastened to the mosque, but found that he had arrived before me and was busy in performing Salah. I waited until he finished, and then went to him from the front, greeted him with Salam and said to him, "By Allah I love you." He asked, "For the sake of Allah?" I replied, "Yes, for the sake of Allah". He again asked me, "Is it for Allah's sake?" I replied, "Yes, it is for Allah's sake." Then he took hold of my cloak, drew me to himself and said, "Rejoice! I heard Messenger of Allah (PBUH) saying, 'Allah, the Exalted, says: My love is due to those who love one another for My sake, meet one another for My sake, visit one another for My sake and spend in charity for My sake.'" [Malik *Sahih*] [Riyad us Saliheen # 382]

- عن أبي كريمة المقداد بن معد يكرب رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "إذا أحب الرجل أخاه، فليخبره أنه يحبه" ((رواه أبو داود، والترمذي وقال: حديث حسن)).

Abu Karimah Al-Miqdad bin Ma'dikarib (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (PBUH) said, "When a man loves his brother (for Allah sake) let him tell him that he loves him." [At- Tirmidhi and Abu Dawud *Hasan*] [Riyad us Saliheen # 383]

- وعن معاذ رضي الله عنه، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، أخذ بيده وقال: "يا معاذ، والله إنني لأحبك، ثم أوصيك يا معاذ لا تدعن في دبر كل صلاة تقول: اللهم أعني على ذكرك وشكرك، وحسن عبادتك". حديث صحيح، ((رواه أبو داود والنسائي بإسناد صحيح)).

Mu'adh (bin Jabal) (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (PBUH) held my hand and said, "O Mu'adh, By Allah, I love you and advise you not to miss supplicating after every Salah (prayer) saying: '*Allahumma a'inni 'ala dhikrika wa shukrika, wa husni 'ibadatika,*' (O Allah, help me remember You, expressing gratitude to You and worship You in the best manner)."[Abu Dawud and An- Nasa'i *Sahih*] [Riyad us Saliheen # 384]

- وعن أنس، رضي الله عنه ، أن رجلاً كان عند النبي، صلى الله عليه وسلم، فمر رجل به، فقال: يا رسول الله إنني لأحب هذا، فقال له النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: "أأعلمته؟" قال: لا : قال: "أعلمه" فلحقه، فقال : إنني أحبك في الله، فقال: أحبك الله الذي أحببتي له. ((رواه أبو داود بإسناد صحيح)).

Anas bin Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: A man was with the Prophet (PBUH) when another man passed by and the former said: "O Messenger of Allah! I love this man (for Allah's sake)". Messenger of Allah (PBUH) asked, "Have you informed him?" He said, "No". Messenger of Allah (PBUH) then said, "Tell him (that you love him)". So he went up to the man and said to him, "I love you for the sake of Allah;" and the other replied, "May Allah, for Whose sake you love me, love you." [Abu Dawud *Sahih*] [Riyad us Saliheen # 385]

- فالأول: عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "إن الله تعالى قال: من عادى لي ولياً فقد آذنته بالحرب. وما تقرب إلي عبدي بشيء أحب إلي مما افترضت عليه، وما يزال عبدي يتقرب إلي بالنوافل حتى أحبه، فإذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذي يسمع به، وبصره الذي يبصر به، ويده التي يبطش بها، ورجله التي يمشي بها، وإن سألني أعطيته؛ ولنن استعاذني لأعينه" ((رواه البخاري)).

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "Allah the Exalted has said: 'I will declare war against him who shows hostility to a pious worshipper of Mine. And the most beloved thing with which My slave comes nearer to Me is what I have enjoined upon him; and My slave keeps on coming closer to Me through performing *Nawafil* (prayer or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him.

When I love him I become his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his leg with which he walks; and if he asks (something) from Me, I give him, and if he asks My Protection (refuge), I protect him." [Al- Bukhari] [Riyad us Saliheen # 386]

- وعنه عن النبي، صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: "إذا أحب الله العبد نادى جبريل: إن الله تعالى يحب فلاناً، فأحبه، فيحبه جبريل، فينادي في أهل السماء: إن الله يحب فلاناً، فأحبه، فيحبه أهل السماء، ثم يوضع له القبول في الأرض" ((متفق عليه))

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet (PBUH) said, "When Allah loves a slave, calls out Jibreel and says: 'I love so-and-so; so love him'. Then Jibreel loves him. After that he (Jibreel) announces to the inhabitants of heavens that Allah loves so- and-so; so love him; and the inhabitants of the heavens (the angels) also love him and then make people on earth love him." [Al- Bukhari and Muslim] [Riyad us Saliheen # 387]

- وعن عائشة رضي الله عنها، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، بعث رجلاً على سرية، فكان يقرأ لأصحابه في صلاتهم، فيختم بـ{قل هو الله أحد} فلما رجعوا، ذكروا ذلك لرسول الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: "سلوه لأي شيء كان يصنع ذلك؟" فسألوه، فقال: "لأنها صفة الرحمن، فأنا أحب أن أقرأ بها، فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "أخبروه أن الله تعالى يحبه" ((متفق عليه)).

'Aisha (May Allah be pleased with her) reported: Messenger of Allah, (PBUH) appointed a man in charge of an army unit who led them in Salah (prayer); he always concluded his recitation with Surat Al-Ikhlās: "Say (O Muhammad (PBUH)): 'He is Allah, (the) One. Allah-us-Samad (Allah - the Self-Sufficient). He begets not, nor was He begotten. And there is none equal or comparable to Him.'" (112:1-4) Upon their return to Al-Madinah, they mentioned this to Messenger of Allah (PBUH), who said, "Ask him why he does so?" He was asked and he said, "This Surah contains the Attributes of Allah, the Gracious, and I love to recite it. Messenger of Allah (PBUH) then told them, "Tell him that Allah loves him." [Al-Bukhari and Muslim] [Riyad us Saliheen # 388]

This relationship of ultimate love is culminated in this world with the following promise by Allah SWT to His slaves at the time of their departure:

أَرْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً ﴿٢٨﴾

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ﴿٢٩﴾

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي ﴿٣٠﴾

[To the righteous it will be said], "O reassured soul, Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him], And enter among My [righteous] servants And enter My Paradise." (Al-Fajr 89:27—30)

This love with the Almighty Creator will be a source of honor, dignity, happiness, and elevation in this life and the hereafter. It will not only satisfy the person's deep desire to love and be loved, it will allow him to leave a legacy of love that will never end.

The choice is in our hands!

May Allah SWT make this reading a source of guidance, wisdom, light, happiness, inspiration and elevation for us in this life and the hereafter. *Ameen Ya Rabbal 'Alameen.*