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**The Correlation Between
the Hearts' Deeds & the Limbs' Deeds
the Bond Between the Outer & the Inner**

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In his introduction to the book *Riyâḍ aṣ-Ṣâlihîn* by Imam an-Nawawî ṣ (pgs. 1-n), our shaikh pointed out the mistake of his citation of the marfû¹ ḥadîth of Abî Hurairah with the wording, «Surely Allah does not look to your bodies, nor to your images. He looks, however, to your hearts.» Our shaikh ṣ said,

Muslim and others added «and your deeds» in [another] narration; it is extracted in *Takhrîj al-Ḥalâl wal-Ḥarâm* (410). This addition is very important, because many of the people misunderstand the ḥadîth without it. So when you command them with what the Wise Law commands them, from the likes of exempting the beard [from cutting or shaving] and leaving the resembling the disbelievers, and similar to that from the legal constraints, they answer you with that the main issue is according to what is in the heart and they prove their claim with this ḥadîth(!) without knowing this authentic addition that signifies that Allah, blessed and exalted is He, also looks to their deeds; so if they were righteous, He will accept them, otherwise He will throw them back upon them, just as many of the texts indicate, such as his ṣ statement, «Whoever introduces into this affair of ours what is not from it, then it is rejected.»

The reality is that the concept of rectification of the hearts is not possible except with rectification of the deeds and there is no rectification of the deeds except by rectification of the hearts. Allah's messenger clarified that with the most beautiful clarification in the ḥadîth of an-Nu'mân bin Bashîr, «Indeed, surely in the body is a morsel. If it is rectified, all of the body is rectified and if it is corrupted, all of the body is corrupted; Indeed, it is the heart;» [in] his other ḥadîth, «Indeed, straighten

¹ [t] Ar. marfû' – raised. In Ḥadîth terminology it refers to a narration related by a Companion where he or she informs of something that Prophet Muḥammad ṣ said or did. See Shaikh Aḥmad Shâkir's *al-Bâ'ith al-Ḥathîth Sharḥ Ikhtisâr 'Ulûm al-Ḥadîth*, pg. 46 (Dâr al-Âthâr).

your ranks or Allah will surely cause differing between your faces» i.e., your hearts; and his ﺭ statement, «Surely Allah is beautiful, He loves beauty.» It is mentioned regarding the legislated material beauty, contrary to the assumption of many.

Then our shaikh ﺯ commented on Ibn 'Allân when in explaining the ḥadīth in his *Sharḥ* (4/406), he said, “Meaning: surely He, exalted is He, does not derive the reward from the greatness of the body, the beauty of the image, and the abundance of the deed.” He refuted him ﺯ with his statement,

This explanation is from what’s falsity is not hidden, because along with his inconsistency with the ḥadīth in its authentic text, he opposed many texts from the Book and the Sunnah that signify that the servants contend for precedence in degrees in Paradise. Certainly it is with respect to the righteous deeds, in abundance and in scarcity. From that is His statement, exalted is He, «And everyone will have degrees from what they did,» and His statement in the holy ḥadīth, « ... O My servants! Certainly it is your deeds which I count for you. Then I will give you [your full share] for them. So whoever found good, then let him praise Allah ... »

How does one reason that Allah will not look to the deed, like the bodies and the images, while it is the basis in entrance into Paradise after faith, just as He, exalted is He, said, (Enter Paradise because of what you used to do)?!

So consider how much [blindly] imitating² distances its people away from the correct and casts them into a bottomless valley of error; and that is only due to their turning away from studying the Sunnah in the reliable sources of its books, and Allah is the One asked for help!

I say then this is the foundation of the People of the Sunnah’s foundations by which they part with and separate from the Murji’ah—in reality and in wording—in the issue of faith, from which they went astray, and from which they deviated i.e., the reality of the correlation between the outer—of statement and deed—and the inner—of attestation and compliance.

However, *some* [people’s] ignorance of the reality of the principle of the *correlation* between faith’s branches, with its types—of strength and of weakness, of existence and of absence, and of the lack of its uprooting—plunged them into confusion and uproar regarding this intricate issue, lack of precision in it or recognition of what is built upon it!!

Shaikh of Islam Ibn Taimiyyah ﺯ has tremendous words in laying the foundations of this principle in *Majmū' al-Fatâwâ* (7/642-644), he ﺯ mentioned them after his declaration that *there is nothing more virtuous than ‘there is no god [worthy of worship] except Allah’* and that *the best of good deeds is monotheism*. He ﺯ laid down,

Thus, faith’s root is in the heart i.e., the heart’s statement and its deed i.e., confirmation by attestation, love, and yielding. And whatever is in the heart, its

² [t] Ar. taqlīd – imitation, copying; blind unquestioning adoption. It refers to blindly following and adopting opinions or positions without knowing the evidences and proofs that support them.

consequence and its requisite appears on the limbs. If he did not do its consequence and its requisite, it indicates its non-existence or its weakness. Due to this, the outer deeds are from the faith of the heart's consequence and its requisite, and they are an attestation for what is in the heart, an evidence and witness for it; they are a branch from the total of absolute faith³ and part of it. What is in the heart, however, is the root for what is on the limbs.

I say these are the decisive words to which every derivative and partition is returned, thus the obligation is its consideration, its understanding, and its precision

On account of this, in *Madârij as-Sâlikîn* (1/101), Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah described *the heart's deed, such as love for Him, reliance upon Him, and turning [repentantly] towards Him ... and ... and ... and other than that from the deeds of the hearts*, as “more of a [religious] duty than the deeds of the limbs, and their desirable [acts] are more beloved to Allah than their⁴ desirable [acts]”

These words, as well as those, are built upon a deeply rooted, solid foundation, i.e., “that faith's branches may correlate with strength and not correlate with weakness ... ,” just as Shaikh of Islam said in *al-Majmū'* (7/522). In another place (7/234), he ? explained,

... for surely the strength of the effect is an evidence for the strength of the cause, and these matters spring from knowledge. So knowledge of the beloved necessitates its seeking, while knowledge of the feared necessitates escape from it. Thus, if the inevitable did not occur, [it] indicates weakness of [what is] necessitated

He ? said (7/198),

And that is because faith's root is what is in the heart and the outer deeds are inevitable due to that. The existence of the heart's obligatory faith cannot be conceived along with the lack of all the limbs' deeds. Rather, when the outer deeds diminish it is due to the diminishing of the faith which is in the heart. So faith becomes a receiver for the necessitated and the inevitable, even if its root is what is in the heart. Since the deeds are attached to it, then surely it is desired that he is not contented by the heart's faith, rather, the righteous deeds are definitely with it”

Therefore, “The deeds of the hearts are the root, and the heart's faith is the root.”

I say from this principle it is possible to conceive and understand the authentic ḥadīths mentioned regarding the salvation of whoever said, “there is no god [worthy of worship] except Allah,” while there is nothing in his heart except the weight of an atom of faith; to conceive the reality of the correlation between the outer and the inner regarding this framework. That is in addition of Shaikh of Islam's words in *Majmū' al-Fatâwâ* (7/616), “If the servant would do some

³ [t] Ar. al-îmân al-muṭlaq – absolute faith. On pg. 25 of his book *at-Tanbîhât al-Mutawâ'imah*, Shaikh 'Alî bin Ḥasan al-Ḥalabî states, “Absolute faith is that which is perfect faith, i.e., complete”

⁴ [t] I.e., the deeds of the limbs’.

of the commissioned [acts] while leaving some of them, he would have faith with him in accordance with what he did. And faith increases and diminishes.” And this is an extraordinarily important foundation; whoever understood it and grasped its reality, the obscurity of this issue would dissolve for him, in starting and in ending.