

TAWAKKUL– TRUST IN ALLAH (RELIANCE ON ALLAH)

QUR'AN - (THE QUR'AN with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal)

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ
إِيمَانًا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

The true believers are only those who, when God is mentioned, their hearts tremble with awe, and when His Revelations are recited to them, it strengthens them in faith, and they put their trust in their Lord. (Surah Al – Anfal, 2) ¹

إِذْ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ غَرَّ هُوَ لَاءِ دِينِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَىٰ
اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

And (remember) when the hypocrites and those in whose hearts there is a sickness (that dries up the source of their spiritual life) were saying (of the believers): “Their religion has deluded those (people).” But whoever puts his trust in God, truly God is All-Glorious with irresistible might, All-Wise.²

قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا وَعَلَىٰ اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

Say: “Nothing befalls us except what God has decreed for us; He is our Guardian and Owner; and in God let the believers put all their trust. (Surah at – Taubah, 51)³

وَقَالَ يَا بَنِيَّ لَا تَدْخُلُوا مِنْ بَابٍ وَاحِدٍ وَادْخُلُوا مِنْ أَبْوَابٍ مُتَفَرِّقَةٍ وَمَا أُغْنِي
عَنْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَلْحَمْتُ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَعَلَيْهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ

He said (by way of advice at the time of their departure): “Omy sons! Do not enter the city by one gate (in a single company), but enter by different gates. Yet I can be of no avail whatever to you against anything God wills. Judgment and authority rest with none but God alone. In Him have I put my trust, and whoever would entrust themselves should put their trust in Him.”(Surah Yusuf, 67)⁴

وَمَا لَنَا إِلَّا نَتَوَكَّلَ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَقَدْ هَدَيْنَا سُبُلَنَا وَلَنَصْبِرَنَّ عَلَىٰ مَا آدَيْتُمُونَا وَعَلَى اللَّهِ

¹ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=8

² http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=8&min=40&show=10

³ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=9&min=50&show=10

⁴ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=12&min=60&show=10

فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُتَوَكِّلُونَ

Ibrahim (Abraham)/ 12: “What reason do we have that we should not put our trust in God, seeing that He has guided us to our ways (that we follow)? So, we will surely endure patiently whatever hurt you may do us; and let all those who entrust themselves put their trust in God.” (Surah Ibrahim, 12)⁵

الَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

Those (they are) who have persevered in patience (through all adversities), and it is in their Lord that they put their trust. (Surah an – Nahl, 42)⁶

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

Surely he has no power over those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. (Surah an – Nahl, 99)⁷

وَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَدَعْ أَذْيَهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا

Al-Ahzab (The Clans)/ 48: And pay no heed to (the offers of) the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and do not mind the sufferings they cause you, and put your trust in God. God suffices as the One to rely on and to Whom affairs should be referred.⁸

HADITH

Muhammad (pbuh) preached to the people to trust in Allah (swt). His whole life was a sublime example of the precept. In the loneliness of Makkah, in the midst of persecution and danger, in adversity and tribulations, and in the thick of enemies in the battles of Uhud and Hunain, complete faith and trust in Allah (swt) appears as the dominant feature in his life. However great the danger that confronted him, he never lost hope and never allowed himself to be unduly agitated. Abu Talib knew the feelings of the Quraish when the Prophet (pbuh) started his mission. He also knew the lengths to which the Quraish could go, and requested the Prophet (pbuh) to abandon his mission, but the latter calmly replied, "Dear uncle, do not go by my loneliness. Truth will not go unsupported

⁵ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=14&min=10&show=10

⁶ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=16&min=40&show=10

⁷ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=16&min=90&show=10

⁸ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=33&min=40&show=10

for long. The whole of Arabia and beyond will one day espouse its cause." (Ibn Hisham, Sirat-ur-Rasul.)⁹

It was the same trust in Allah (swt) which emboldened the prophet (pbuh) to say his prayers openly in the haram in the teeth of opposition. The Quraish were once collected there and were conspiring to put an end to his life when he next entered the haram. His young daughter Fatima, who happened to overhear their talk rushed weeping to her father and told him of the designs of the Quraish. He consoled her, did his ablutions and went to the Kaaba to say prayers. There was only consternation among the Quraish when they saw him (Ahmed, Musnad, Vol. 1, pg. 368). Then leaving his house for Madinah he asked Ali (ra) to sleep on his bed and told him, "Do not worry, no one will be able to do you any harm" (Tabari, Ibn Hisham)¹⁰

Anas ibn Malik reported: A man said, "O Messenger of Allah, should I tie my camel and trust in Allah, or should I untie her and trust in Allah?" The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "**Tie her and trust in Allah.**"¹¹

Muhammad ibn Ya'qub (al-Kulayni): from a group of our teachers, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Khalid, from more than one transmitter, from 'Ali ibn Asbat, from Ahmad ibn 'Umar al-Hallal, from 'Ali ibn Suwayd, from Abu al-Hasan al-'Awwal (A). 'Ali ibn Suwayd says, 'I asked him concerning the utterance of God Almighty: And whoever puts his trust in God, then God suffices him (65:3).' The Imam (A) said: "There are various degrees of trust in God. Of them one is that you should put your trust in God in all your affairs, being well-pleased with whatever God does to you, knowing for certain that he does not cease in His goodness and grace towards you, and that the command therein rests with Him. So put your trust in God, leaving that to Him and relying upon Him in regard to that and everything other than that."¹²

From Umar ibn Al-Khattab from the Prophet (sas) who said:

"If only you relied on Allah a true reliance, He would provide sustenance for you just as He does the birds: They fly out in the morning empty and return in the afternoon with full stomachs."¹³

It was narrated from Jabir bin 'Abdullah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) took the hand of a leper and made him eat with him, and said:

"Eat, with trust in Allah and reliance upon Allah."¹⁴

⁹ <http://www.infinitelight.org/questions-and-answers/887-what-were-the-personal-characteristics-of-the-prophet-mohammed.html#trust>

¹⁰ <http://www.infinitelight.org/questions-and-answers/887-what-were-the-personal-characteristics-of-the-prophet-mohammed.html#trust>

¹¹ Sunan At-Tirmidhi 2517

¹² <http://www.al-islam.org/forty-hadith-an-exposition-second-edition-imam-khomeini/thirteenth-hadith-trust-god-tawakkul>

¹³ http://www.java-man.com/pages/JamiAlUloom/hadith_49.html

¹⁴ <http://sunnah.com/urn/1275870>

Abu Hurayra reported that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to say when he left his house, "In the Name of Allah. Reliance is on Allah. There is no power nor strength except by Allah." ¹⁵

Anas bin Malik narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Whoever says – that is: when he leaves his house – ‘In the Name of Allah, I place my trust in Allah, there is no might or power except by Allah (Bismillāh, tawakkaltu `alallāh, lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh)’ it will be said to him: ‘You have been sufficed and protected,’ and Shaitan will become distant from him.” ¹⁶

COMMENTARIES

From the Risale-I Nur Collection by Beduizzam Said Nursi – a thematic tafseer

The Words, The Twenty – eighth Word, The Third Point

Belief is both light and strength. Yes, one who acquires true belief may challenge the whole universe and be saved from the pressure of events in accordance with the strength of his belief. Saying, "I place my trust in God," he travels through the mountainous waves of events in the ship of life in complete safety. He entrusts all his burdens to the hand of power of the Absolutely Powerful One, voyages through the world in ease, then takes his rest in the Intermediate Realm. Later he may fly up to Paradise in order to enter eternal happiness. Otherwise, if he does not rely on God, rather than flying, the burdens of the world will drag him down to the lowest of the low. That is to say, belief necessitates affirmation of Divine unity, affirmation of Divine unity necessitates submission to God, submission to God necessitates reliance on God, and reliance on God necessarily leads to happiness in this world and the next. But do not misunderstand this, reliance on God is not to reject causes altogether; it is rather to know that causes are a veil to the hand of power and have recourse to them. Knowing that attempting causes is a sort of active prayer, it is to seek the effects only from Almighty God, recognize that the results are from Him alone, and to be thankful to Him.

Those who place their trust in God and those who do not, resemble the two men in this story:

One time two men loaded heavy burdens onto both their backs and heads, and buying tickets, boarded a large ship. As soon as they boarded it, one of them left his load on the deck, and sitting on it guarded it. The other, however, since he was both stupid and arrogant, did not put down his load. When he was told: "Leave that heavy load on the deck and be comfortable," he replied: "No, I won't put it down, it might get lost. I am strong, I'll guard my property by carrying it on my head and back." He was told again: "This reliable royal ship which is carrying you and us is stronger, it can protect it better than you. You may get giddy and fall into the sea together with your load. Anyway you will gradually lose your strength, and by degrees those loads will get heavier and your bent back and brainless head will not have the power to bear them. And if the Captain sees you in this state, he will either say that you are crazy and expel you from the ship, or he will think you are ungrateful, accusing our ship and jeering at us, and he will order you to be put into prison. Also you are making a

¹⁵ <http://sunnah.com/urn/2211530>

¹⁶ <http://sunnah.com/tirmidhi/48/57>

fool of yourself in front of everyone. For the perceptive see that you are displaying weakness through your conceit, impotence through your pride, and abasement and hypocrisy through your pretence, and have thus made yourself a laughing-stock in the eyes of the people. Everyone's laughing at you." Whereupon the unfortunate man came to his senses. He put down his load on the deck and sat on it. He said to the other: "Ah! May God be pleased with you. I've been saved from that difficulty, from prison, and from making a fool of myself."

O man who does not place his trust in God! You too come to your senses like that man and place your trust in Him, so that you may be delivered from begging before all the universe, trembling before every event, from pride, making a fool of yourself, misery in the hereafter, and the prison of the pressures of this world...¹⁷

The Flashes, The Second Flash, Fifth Point, Second Matter

Physical misfortunes grow when they are seen to be large, and shrink when they are seen to be small. For example, a dream enters one's vision at night. If one pays it attention it swells up and grows; if one does not, it disappears. So too if one attempts to ward off an attacking swarm of bees, they will become more aggressive; whereas if one pays them no attention they will disperse. Thus if one regards physical misfortunes as great and grants them importance, they will grow, and because of anxiety pass from the body and strike root in the heart. The result will then be an inward affliction on which the outward misfortune fastens to perpetuate itself. But if the anxiety is removed by contentment with the divine decree and reliance on God, the physical misfortune will gradually decrease, dry up and vanish, just like a tree whose roots have been severed. I once composed the following verses in description of this truth:

Cry not out at misfortune, O wretch, come, trust in God!
For know that crying out compounds the misfortune and is a great error.
Find misfortune's Sender, and know it is a gift within gift, and pleasure.
So leave crying out and offer thanks; like the nightingale, smile through your tears!
If you find Him not, know the world is all pain within pain, transience and loss.
So why lament at a small misfortune while upon you is a worldful of woe? Come, trust in God!
Trust in God! Laugh in misfortune's face; it too will laugh.
As it laughs, it will diminish; it will be changed and transformed.

If in single-handed combat one smiles at an awesome enemy, his enmity will be changed to conciliatoriness; his hostility will become a mere joke, will shrink and disappear. If one confronts misfortune with reliance on God, the result will be similar.¹⁸

Al – Mathnawi al – Nur, The Sixth Treatise

KNOW, O FRIEND, how foolish the human ego or selfhood is. It sees in itself the imprints, traces, and signs of an absolutely Free, All-Wise Lord's making, sustaining, and administering, and discerns

¹⁷ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.201.322>

¹⁸ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.203.27>

that this is true of all other individual beings, species, and kinds as a universal, all-encompassing rule. It therefore must be convinced of this as an undeniable reality confirmed by creation. Yet the foolish ego deceives itself by seeing such an overall and universal manifestation of the Divine Beautiful Names, which also are manifested on it, as a sign of (Divine) neglect of it and a veil under which it can hide from [the Lord's] watching and inspection. These manifestations' universality and intensity lead it to suppose that no one is watching it. Even Satan is ashamed of such a sophistry.¹⁹

Fethullah Gulen – Sufism 1 - a thematic tafseer

Tawakkul, Taslim, Tafwiz, and Thiqa (Reliance, Surrender, Commitment, and Confidence)

Reliance, surrender, commitment, and confidence are the four steps or stations of a spiritual journey beginning with reliance on (or trust in) God, continuing in full awareness of one's helplessness and destitution before God, and ending in entrusting all of one's affairs to God Almighty in order to attain absolute peace and tranquillity of heart. Reliance (tawakkul) means total confidence in God, and feeling troubled or uneasy when it occurs to one that there may be other sources of power (that one can resort to). Without such a degree of confidence, it is wrong to talk about reliance. Moreover, one cannot attain reliance so long as the doors of the heart remain open to others.

Reliance means doing all that is necessary to obtain a desired or intended result, and then waiting in expectation for the Eternally-Powerful One to bring about His Will. After this comes surrender (taslim), which many friends of God have described as one's being before God's Power and Will like a dead body in the hands of a mortician. Then comes commitment (tafwiz), leaving or committing all things and affairs to God and expecting everything from Him.

Reliance is the start of a journey, surrender is its end, and commitment is its result. Therefore, commitment has a wider meaning and relates to those who have almost completed the journey, rather than to beginners. Commitment comes after surrender, which requires the conviction of one's helplessness and destitution before God's Power and Wealth, and the ability to feel in one's heart the meaning of: There is no power and strength save with God. It also requires the utmost dependence on and the expectation of help from the heavenly treasure of: There is no power and strength save with God. In other words, commitment means that a traveler on the path to God feels warned by the point of reliance and the point of seeking help in his conscience and, in exact awareness of his or her helplessness and destitution, turns to the Unique Source of Power and Will and says: Hold me by the hand, hold me, for I cannot do without You.

If reliance means that one entrusts all worldly and otherworldly affairs to the Lord, commitment means that one is fully aware that it is actually God Who does everything, Who produces every result, and Who creates all things and deeds that many consider to be done by themselves. Reliance means that one relies on God and closes the doors of one's heart to whatever or whoever is other than Him. It can be regarded as the outer fulfillment all duties of worship and the inner attachment to God, the Lord Who is the sole Sustainer and Administrator of all that exists. This is what Shihab expresses in the following couplets:

¹⁹ https://www.dur.ac.uk/resources/sgia/imeis/masnavinuriye_ingilizce_23_02_07.pdf

**Rely on the All-Merciful in all your affairs;
One who relies on Him is never in loss.
Confide in God and be patient with His disposal of you,
For you can obtain only as His favors what you expect from Him.**

I think 'Umar, the second Caliph, may God be pleased with him, drew attention to the same point in a letter he wrote to Abu Musa al-'Ash'ari: If you are able to submit to whatever or however God decrees for you [i.e. by not objecting to whatever befalls you], this is wholly good. If you are unable to do so, then endure it with patience.

From another perspective, reliance signifies reliance on and confidence in God. Surrender is the state of those who have been awakened to spiritual life. Commitment, meaning that travelers are not detained by considerations of means and causes, is a station special to those of high spiritual achievement.

Even if travelers possessing commitment seem to attach a certain importance to means and causes, this is due to the fact that they live in the material world, the sphere of means and causes, in which God has made any accomplishment dependent on certain preliminary conditions. If they give priority to means and causes, thereby disregarding the fact that God disposes of everything as He wishes, then they will become like vermin crawling on earth, despite their previous resemblance to birds flying in the highest parts of the heavens. It is related in books on the lives of saints that those saintly people who try to advance but become caught in the over-consideration of means and causes hear these words:

**Give up taking precautions, for involvement in precautions causes perishing;
Commit your affairs to Us, for We are more thoughtful of you than yourself.**

Such a commitment is a heroism that can be achieved only by those who persevere in their relations with God while living among people.

Doing what is necessary to obtain a certain result without attributing any creative effect to them may mean different things to different travelers: reliance for everybody, submission for those awakened to realities beyond the visible dimension, and commitment and confidence for those who have attained true peace or tranquillity of heart. How fine is the following saying of God's Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings, which combines exerting effort and reliance and commitment: If you were able to rely on God as true reliance on Him requires, He would provide you as He provides birds that leave their nests hungry in the morning and return full in the evening.

This Prophetic Tradition contains different truths for people of different spiritual ranks. What it means for the typical individual is what Rumi says:

**Even if reliance on God is a guide,
Fulfilling preliminaries is a practice of the Prophet.
He told (a Bedouin) loudly (in response to his question):
First fasten your camel and then rely on God.**

This meaning is what is pointed out in: On God let the reliant rely (14:12).

Those who lead their lives at the level of pure spirituality understand, in perfect awareness of their helplessness and weakness before God, that they should trust wholly in God's Power and Strength, and become like a corpse in the hands of a mortician: In God put your trust, if you are true believers (5:23). As for those who fly around the summits of "self-annihilation in God" and "subsistence with God," they say, like Prophet Abraham, upon him be peace, even while being thrown into fire: God is sufficient for me (39:38) and commit their affairs wholly to Him. It is enough for them that God Almighty knows their condition.

We can also see this greatest degree of commitment in God's Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings. When the feet of those pursuing him during his emigration to Madina were seen from the cave where he was hiding with his nearest friend Abu Bakr, may God be pleased with him, and their pursuers' voices echoed from the cave's walls, he relied wholly upon God and told Abu Bakr: Grieve not! Assuredly, God is with us (9:40). This is also alluded to in the verse: Whoever puts his trust in God, He will suffice him (65:3).

Commitment and confidence are the highest degrees of reliance on God. Those who have attained these degrees have entirely submitted their reason, logic, and belief, as well as their outer and inner feelings, to God's commandments. As a result, they have become "polished mirrors" in which His Names, Attributes, and acts are reflected. Signs of these degrees are understanding that taking precautions is included in God's preordainment, and thereby finding peace; seeing their willpower as a dim shadow of the Divine Will, and turning to that Divine Will; and being pleased with God's treatment, whether it be favorable or not, and agreeing with whatever happens to them.

The author of Minhaj describes this degree of commitment as follows:

**I committed all my affairs to the Dear One,
Whether He keeps me alive or makes me die.**

The following words of Wasif of Andarun are also most appropriate: Whatever was destined will certainly happen, so Commit your affairs to God; neither be grieved nor suffer pains. One of the most beautiful descriptions of commitment belongs to Ibrahim Haqqi, the initial verses of whose Tafwiznama (Description of Tafwiz) are as follows:

**God changes evils into good;
Never think that He does otherwise.
One with knowledge of Him watches
In admiration what He does.
Let us see what our Master does;
He does well whatever He does.
Put your trust in God, the Truth;
And commit to Him your affairs
So that you may find peace.
Be patient and agree (with whatever He does).
Let us see what our Master does;
He does well whatever He does.**²⁰

²⁰ <http://fgulen.com/en/fethullah-gulens-works/sufism/key-concepts-in-the-practice-of-sufism-1/24740-tawakkul-taslim-tafwiz-and-thiqa-reliance-surrender-commitment-and-confidence>

