

عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " ثَلَاثٌ مَنْ كُنَّ فِيهِ وَجَدَ  
بِهِنَّ حَلَاوَةَ الْإِيمَانِ مَنْ كَانَ اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا  
سِوَاهُمَا وَأَنْ يُحِبَّ الْمَرْءَ لَا يُحِبُّهُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ وَأَنْ يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَعُودَ  
فِي الْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ أَنْ أَنْقَذَهُ اللهُ مِنْهُ كَمَا يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يُقْذَفَ فِي النَّارِ "

"There are three qualities for which anyone who is characterised by them will relish the sweetness of faith: he to whom Allah and His Messenger are dearer than all else; he who loves a man for Allah's sake alone; and he who has as great an abhorrence of returning to unbelief after Allah has rescued him from it as he has of being cast into Hell." [Sahih Muslim 43]

We all love something or someone. Perhaps our parents, friends, children or pets. Some of us direct our love toward celebrities, our country, our sports team or even our cars. Love can be blind, misguided, tragic, unconditional, steadfast and inconsistent. But imagine if that love could be directed towards Allah(SWT).

Love takes on many different variants, yet, at its best, love is a passionate commitment that we constantly work to develop and nurture. Think about your favourite child, perhaps the youngest. When we love someone we constantly think about them, spend as much time as we can with them and shower them with gifts and our best conduct.

## What is love?

This has been debated throughout the centuries and although there is no unified definition, some things are clear. There is a massive difference between lust and love. Lust is a temporary desire fueled by an increased release of testosterone and oestrogen-it lasts for a little bit, then you normalise and it's gone. But, when you feel true love, it is longer lasting and filled with care. When someone runs away with someone else just because of beauty or attraction, they realise that fades quickly and what's left behind is their personality.

Serious love is devotion to the exclusion of our self. Perhaps your mother, your partner or your child. Unconditional commitment. Loyalty. You would give your life for them, work to spend on them, give them the utmost respect and take pleasure in whatever pleases them. So how do we develop this kind of devotion for Allah(SWT)?

## Who's your best friend?

Why are they your best friend? Common likes, a good personality, you went to school with them? For those old enough, you know that most friends, even those we consider our best, do depart while in this dunya. They get married, get jobs, travel and do their own thing, no longer really remaining our best or truest friend. Your best friend can't carry your burden. They can't feel your sickness. They aren't always there when you need them most. They can't make you better. They can't even feed you daily.

But Who has been with you through every high and low in life? Who has been with you the longest - since you were born? Who has been taking care of you? Giving you better health? Who knows what you are feeling, even when you are confused? Who knows what will soothe your heart? Who is there that can feel your pain and provide ease from places you never expected it?

**Your best and most caring friend is Allah(SWT).**

The word Rahmaan and Raheem are derived from the word rahm in Arabic which means womb. Why? Because a mothers love is unique. If one of us was to be kicked once without reason, we would probably be annoyed and upset. But if it was repeated, all out war would probably break out. Your mother carried you as a child in her womb and you took from her food, drink and vital nutrients. Yet, despite that we all kicked. The amazing thing is that rather than mum getting upset, every kick was treated with love, only increasing her compassion and concern for her child. Allah(SWT) introduces himself in Al Fatiha with Ar-Rahmaan Ar-Raheem and we repeat it whenever we begin something with Bismillahir Rahmaan ar-Raheem. It's a reminder that, despite our disobedience, our missing salaah, ingratitude and many shortcomings, Allah's(SWT) love and compassion for us remains. My mother (rh) like all of our mothers would not partake in our meals. She would cook and prepare for hours and then watch us eat. And when we would ask our mother to join us, she would say "No, you eat and I have eaten". That love is true love.

عَنْ سَلْمَانَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِائَةَ رَحْمَةٍ كُلُّ رَحْمَةٍ طَبَاقٌ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا فِي الْأَرْضِ رَحْمَةً فَبِهَا تَغِطُّ الْوَالِدَةُ عَلَى وَلَدِهَا وَالْوَحْشُ وَالطَّيْرُ بَعْضُهَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَكْمَلَهَا بِهَذِهِ الرَّحْمَةِ

وفي رواية أخرى قال فَمِنْهَا رَحْمَةٌ بِهَا يَتَرَاحَمُ الْخَلْقُ بَيْنَهُمْ وَتَسْعَةُ وَتِسْعُونَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ

صحيح مسلم كتاب التوبة باب في سعة رحمة الله تعالى وأنها سبقت غضبه 2753

However, Salman al-Farsi (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Verily, on the day Allah created the heavens and earth, he created one

hundred parts of mercy. Each part can fill what is between the heaven and the earth. **He made one part of mercy for the earth, from it a mother has compassion for her child, animals and birds have compassion for each other.** On the Day of Resurrection, he will perfect this mercy.”

In another narration, the Prophet said, “From one part of mercy the creation is merciful between themselves, and ninety-nine parts are for the Day of Resurrection.” (Sahih Muslim 2753)

الله عليه وسلم : متى الساعة؟ قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ما أعددت لها؟ قال: حب الله ورسوله قال: "أنت مع من أحببت" ((متفق عليه)) وهذا لفظ مسلم.

## The importance of loving Allah(SWT) and His Messenger

Anas bin Malik (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: A bedouin came to Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and said to him, “When will be the Hour (i.e., the Day of Resurrection)?”

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, “What preparation have you made for it?”

The narration in Muslim is: The man replied: “I have made no significant preparation with regard to Salat (prayer), Saum (fasting) and Sadaqah (charity) but I love Allah and His Messenger”. In the narration of Imam Bukhari he said, “Only the love of Allah and His Messenger.” Then Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, ***Innaka ma’a man ahabta.*** “You will be with those whom you love.” [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

Anas(RA) said so we said ***wa nahnu kadhaalik?*** And does this apply to us as well? The Prophet(SAW) replied ***Na’am hadha lil jamee’.*** Yes, this is for all. ***Famaa farihna bihadhil kalima ba’dal Islam mimma farihna bihadhihil kalima.*** We have not been more overjoyed since we entered Islam than on hearing these words.

Take care in these times that you don't get involved in hate. Hating another because of their ethnicity, football club, mosque, group or cast. Shaytaan wants us to indulge in hate, rather than love for others.

It was Imam Abu Hanifa(rh), the great scholar and pious leader of this Ummah, who used to say ***uhibbu saaliheen wa lastu minhum*** I love the pious though I am not from them. Look at his humility.

He would say I love the pious though I am not from them, but I have a hope. I have this hope in Allah(SWT) that perhaps, because of my love for them, I will be included with them on the Day of Judgement. So don't talk bad about anyone. Hate has caused a lot of problems in this world, but has not solved one yet.

Haters don't really hate you. In fact, they hate themselves because you're a reflection of what they wish to be. Shaytaan was an example of this - his hatred for Adam (AS) and all of us stemmed from his jealousy of his position before Allah(SWT). That hatred burned him and led him down a path of destruction. Don't be enslaved to others through hatred for them. Free yourself through forgiveness and focus on the One who loves us all - Allah(SWT).

Narrated Anas bin Malik: The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "None will have the sweetness (delight) of Faith (a) till he loves a person and loves him only for Allah's sake, (b) and till it becomes dearer to him to be thrown in the fire than to revert to disbelief (Heathenism) after Allah has brought him out of it, (c) and till Allah and His Apostle become dearer to him than anything else." Sahih al-Bukhari 6041

حَدَّثَنَا آدَمُ، حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ - رَضِيَ  
الله عنه - قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " لَا يَجِدُ أَحَدٌ  
حَلَاوَةَ الْإِيمَانِ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ الْمَرْءَ، لَا يُحِبُّهُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ، وَحَتَّى أَنْ  
يُقَذَفَ فِي النَّارِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ أَنْ يَرْجَعَ إِلَى الْكُفْرِ، بَعْدَ إِذْ  
أَنْقَذَهُ اللهُ، وَحَتَّى يَكُونَ اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ مِمَّا سِوَاهُمَا " .

## How do you earn Allah's Love?

### 1. Obey Allah and His Messenger(SAW)

Thawban was a freed slave of Allah's Messenger, Allah bless him and give him peace, who passed away in the blessed land of Palestine. **Thawban loved the Prophet dearly such that he could not bear not seeing him for long periods.** One day Thawban showed up with his complexion changed, he had lost weight and the signs of sadness were evident on his face.

The Messenger of Allah, Allah bless him and give him peace, said to him: 'O Thawban, what has made your complexion change?' He said: 'O Messenger of Allah, I am not suffering from any harm or pain, except that when I do not see you, I miss you and feel intense longing for you which does not cease until I meet you. Then I remember the Afterlife and I fear that I will not see you there. I know that you will be raised high up with the Prophets whereas if I enter the Garden, I will be in a rank much lower than yours, and if I do not enter the Garden, it will be certain that I will never see you'. And so Allah, exalted is He, revealed this verse".

وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ  
النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا

And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favour of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions. [And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions. [Surah An-Nisaa Verse 69]

Hadhrat Al-Hassan Al-Basri (rh) "Oh Son of Adam, Love Allah! Allah will love you, and know that you will not love Allah until you love obeying Him".

## 2. Say salaam

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "You will not enter Paradise until you have faith and you will not have faith until you love each other. Shall I show you something that, if you did, you would love each other? Spread peace between yourselves." [Muslim, 54]

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لَا تَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنُوا وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا حَتَّى  
تَحَابُّوا أَوْ لَا أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ إِذَا فَعَلْتُمُوهُ تَحَابَبْتُمْ أَفْشُوا السَّلَامَ بَيْنَكُمْ

I used to run regularly in parks across the region and it's amazing what a "Mornin' " said with a smile does to break barriers. Imagine repeating the statement of Adam(AS) when he addressed the angels - As-Salaamu alaikum. Not just *peace out* or *may you be blessed with peace* but in fact, As-Salaam is one of the names of Allah(SWT) and so we are wishing that Allah(SWT), by His All-Comprehensive Peace is with our companion - there can be no better greeting and message of love for others.

## 3. Don't fight over their treasure

On the authority of Abu al-'Abbas Sahl bin Sa'ad as-Sa'idee (may Allah be pleased with him)

who said:

عَنْ أَبِي الْعَبَّاسِ سَهْلِ بْنِ سَعْدِ السَّاعِدِيِّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ:  
جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ  
اللَّهِ! دُلَّنِي عَلَى عَمَلٍ إِذَا عَمَلْتُهُ أَحَبَّنِي اللَّهُ وَأَحَبَّنِي النَّاسُ؛  
فَقَالَ: "ازْهَدْ فِي الدُّنْيَا يُحِبَّكَ اللَّهُ، وَازْهَدْ فِيمَا عِنْدَ النَّاسِ يُحِبَّكَ  
النَّاسُ".

حديث حسن، رواه ابن ماجه [رقم:4102]، وَغَيْرُهُ بِأَسَانِيدَ  
حَسَنَةٍ.

A man came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said, "O Messenger of Allah, direct me to an act which, if I do it, [will cause] Allah to love me and the people to love me." So he (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "Renounce the world and Allah will love you, and renounce what the people possess and the people will love you." [Sunan Ibn Mājah 4102]

Aisha reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "**Whoever loves to meet Allah, Allah loves to meet him. Whoever hates to meet Allah, Allah hates to meet him.**" [Sahih Muslim 157]

He loves those who obey Allah and detest those who disbelieve in Him and disobey Him. Allah the Almighty Says (what means):

لَا تَجِدُ قَوْمًا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ يُوَادُّونَ مَنْ حَادَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ، وَلَوْ كَانُوا  
 آبَاءَهُمْ أَوْ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ أَوْ إِخْوَانَهُمْ أَوْ عَشِيرَتَهُمْ أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ  
 وَأَيَّدَهُمْ بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا رَضِيَ  
 اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللَّهِ أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

“You will not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having affection for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even if they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred. Those - He has decreed within their hearts faith and supported them with spirit from Him. And We will admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide eternally. Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him - those are the party of Allah. Unquestionably, the party of Allah is the successful.” [Quran 18:22]

الله عليه وسلم - { كُلُّ بَنِي آدَمَ خَطَّاءٌ، وَخَيْرُ الْخَطَّائِينَ  
 التَّوَّابُونَ } أَخْرَجَهُ التِّرْمِذِيُّ، وَابْنُ مَاجَةَ، وَسَنَدُهُ قَوِيٌّ.

Anas (RAA) narrated that Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “All the sons of Adam are sinners, but the best of sinners are those who repent often.” Related by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah with a strong chain of narrators.

#### 4. He who knows Allah, loves Him

In the 7th century there was an Arab Bedouin poet by the name of Qays ibn al-Mullawah and his love Layla bint Mahdi, which we know as the stories of Layla and Majnoon because he was infatuated to the point of madness by his love from her. It is narrated that once he spotted Layla’s dog in the streets of the city and immediately began following it as it reminded him of his beloved.

He followed the dog through windy streets and tight alleys even passing by a congregation

who had begun their prayers. He continued past them following the dog until it arrived at the house of Layla and slipped through the gates inside. He pined at the gates for a while and then eventually, returned following his footsteps the way he had come. When he returned past the congregation who had long-finished their prayers, they called out to him and lamented the fact he had not joined them for prayers. “How could you miss your prayers when you passed right by us?” they asked.

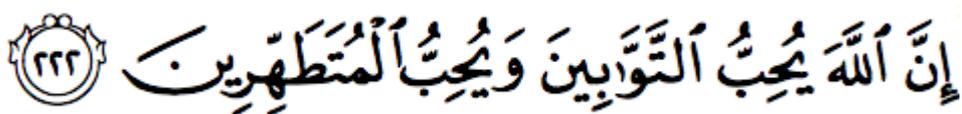
He replied “Apologies, my friends. I was so focused and obsessed with the thoughts of Layla, I didnt even see you. But how is it that you were in conversation with Allah(SWT) himself and you saw me?”

One of the lessons from the story is that our love increases the more we think about something or talk about it. So, it goes without saying that the more we read of Allahs word – the Qur’an – and think and discuss it, the more our love of Allah(SWT) will increase. Similarly, remembering Allah more through our dhikr will inevitably increase our consciousness and love of Him(SWT).

Samurah ibn Jundab reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, **“The most beloved words to Allah are four: glory be to Allah, praise be to Allah, there is no god but Allah, and Allah is the greatest. There is no harm in starting with any of them.”** [Sahih Muslim 2137]

Study the names and attributes of Allah(SWT) and your love for Him(SWT) will certainly increase.

## 5. Turn back to Allah(SWT)



“Indeed Allah loves those who are constantly repentant and those who keep themselves clean.” (Al-Baqarah 2:222)

Allah loves the repentant slave, who constantly turns back to Him, knowing He is the All-Forgiving, Most-Forgiving, the Acceptor of Repentance, the Pardoner. No matter how often one repeats a sin, and no matter how grave the sin is, one should constantly turn back to Allah. And Allah loves when a slave purifies himself from impurities, both major and minor.

Abu Hurayrah narrated that he heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) saying, “If somebody commits a sin and then says, ‘O my Lord! I have sinned, please forgive me!’ and his Lord

says, 'My slave has known that he has a Lord who forgives sins and punishes for it, I therefore have forgiven my slave (his sins).' Then he remains without committing any sin for a while and then again commits another sin and says, 'O my Lord, I have committed another sin, please forgive me,' and Allah says, 'My slave has known that he has a Lord who forgives sins and punishes for it, I therefore have forgiven my slave (his sin).' Then he remains without committing any another sin for a while and then commits another sin (for the third time) and says, 'O my Lord, I have committed another sin, please forgive me,' and Allah says, 'My slave has known that he has a Lord Who forgives sins and punishes for it, I therefore have forgiven My slave (his sin), he can do whatever he likes.'" (Bukhari)

آخَرَ فَاعْفِرْهُ لِي. فَقَالَ أَعْلِمَ عَبْدِي أَنَّ لَهُ رَبًّا يَغْفِرُ الذَّنْبَ  
وَيَأْخُذُ بِهِ غَفْرَتُ لِعَبْدِي - ثَلَاثًا - فَلْيَعْمَلْ مَا شَاءَ .

One should follow up a bad deed with seeking forgiveness and doing good deeds, so that the bad deed is wiped out. One should not tire of repenting to Allah.

كُلُّ بَنِي آدَمَ خَطَّاءٌ وَخَيْرُ الْخَطَّائِينَ التَّوَّابُونَ

It was narrated by Anas that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "Every son of Adam commits sin, and the best of those who commit sin are those who repent." (Ibn Majah)

Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - rahimahullâh - says: "There cannot be clearer recognition of mahabbah than this, and this recognition in itself increases love for Allâh. And people have discussed (at lengths) about mahabbah - its causes, its signs, its fruits, its supports and its rulings. The most comprehensive of what has been said about this is what Abû Bakr al-Katânî relates from al-Junayd (d.297H) as follows.

Abû Bakr al-Katânî said: A discussion about mahabbah took place in Makkah, during pilgrimage season. The Shaykhs who were present spoke about this topic, and al-Junayd being the youngest of them. They said to him: What do you say, O 'Irâqî? So al-Junayd lowered his head and tears were gushing from his eyes, then he said:

"A servant should overcome his soul,

And be continuous in the remembrance of his Lord,  
Establishing the rights of his Lord,  
Focusing upon Him with his heart,  
The light of fear setting ablaze his heart,  
Whilst drinking from the vessel of pure love,  
And certain hidden realities being unveiled for him.  
So when he talks, it is due to Allâh,  
When he speaks, it is from Allâh,  
When he moves, it is by the Command of Allâh,  
And when he is serene, then it is from Allâh,  
He belongs to Allâh, is for Allâh and is with Allâh.”

Upon hearing, the Shaykhs all started weeping, and they said: There is nothing left to add to that, may Allâh reward you O Crown of the Knowledgeable Ones.”