

FROM THE MINBAR

SEEKING THE SHADE OF ALLAH'S MERCY

Khutbah delivered by Imam Dr. Zijad Delic at SNMC on September 7th, 2012 corresponding to Shawwal 20th, 1433 H.

BACKGROUND

Indeed all praise is for God, Lord of the worlds. Peace and blessings of God be upon Muhammad (S), his family, Khulafair Rashidin, all his Companions, and all those who follow in their footsteps until the Last Day. All praise is for God! We praise Him. We seek His help and ask for His forgiveness. We seek God's refuge from evils of ourselves and from our evil actions. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except God, alone, having no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad (S) is His Messenger.

My dear brothers and sisters in Islam ~ *As Salamu 'Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuhu!*

INTRODUCTION

Abu Huraira (r.a.) narrated that the Prophet(S) said: "There are seven categories of people whom Allah will shade in His Shade on the Day when there is no shade except His Shade:

1. a just leader;
2. a youth who grew up in the worship of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic;
3. a man whose heart is attached to the mosques;
4. two men who love each other for Allah's sake, meeting for that and parting upon that;
5. a man who is called by a woman of beauty and position [for illegal intercourse], but he says: 'I fear Allah';
6. a man who gives in charity and hides it, such that his left hand does not know what his right hand gives in charity (not showing off); and
7. a man who remembered Allah in private and so his eyes shed tears." (Bukhari & Muslim)

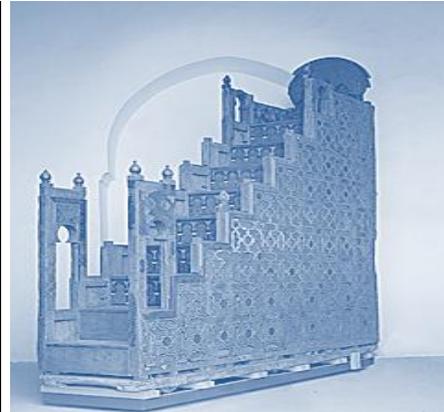
ALLAH'S SHADE: MEANING

Al-Suyuti said that ibn Abd al-Barr said: this is the best hadith narrated regarding virtuous actions, it is the most general and most authentic. He also said: what is meant by shade in this hadith is the mercy (of Allah). And it is said what is meant by shade is Allah's generosity and help and this is the opinion of Isa bin Dinar. And it is said: (the meaning of shade) is the shade of Allah's throne, and the evidence for this is in the hadith of Salman reported by Saeed bin Mansur with a Hasan chain that: 'Seven will be shaded by Allah in the shade of His throne.'

Those in the Shade of Allah are not limited only to seven categories of people. The number should not be taken literally (*la mafhum lil adad*), as it is reported that those with other qualities will also be shaded. Hafidh Ibn Hajr enumerated them up to 28, and Sheikh al-Suyuti mentioned even up to 70.

SMALL ACTS BUT HUGE REWARDS

In this beautiful Hadith, the Prophet (SAW) spoke about small acts of worship which result in such a huge reward: shade on the Day when there will be no shade except His Shade. So who would want more then, on this Day, than to be under the Shade and protection of Allah (SWT).



Let us examine now the characteristics and virtues of these seven categories of people who will be worthy of such an exalted position on the Day of Gathering.

What a hopeful statement!?! We all need Allah's shade. To be under Allah's shade is to be protected by Him and be blessed by Him. We need His shade in this life and in the Hereafter. On that day everyone will be worried and will try to find some protection and shade. There will be no shade on that Day except the special shade of Allah. This shade will be granted to these seven special types of people:

1. A JUST RULER (LEADER)

Al Hafidh said: The best explanation that has been given for just is that he follows the commandments of Allah by placing everything in its correct place without excessiveness or laxity. And what is meant by it is the possessor of supreme authority, and linked to it is everyone who has authority/charge over anything from the affairs of the people and is just.

It could be any person who has some authority and he/she uses this authority with justice and fairness without any favoritism or prejudice.

Justice is the command of God for all people; but the most critical is the doing of justice when one has power and authority. More difficult is, of course, dealing justly with those who show hate and animosity towards you.

A just person, especially a just leader or ruler, is given number one place in this list of seven.

The concept of Justice in Islam is very important and it is something which the Muslim - leader and the led - must apply in all matters without exception. Justice means to give each person the right he/she deserves: Muslim or non-Muslim, relative or stranger, friend or enemy. Allah says: "...And do not let hatred cause you to act unjustly, that is nearer to piety" (Al Ma'idah: 8)

Unfortunately, even if we admit this in theory, we often quickly forget it in practice.

So we find that when we speak about our friends and loved ones, we praise them beyond reason and when we speak about those whom we hold difference with, we can find no good in them and we just capitalize on their bad points.

The concept of justice is most important for the leader, since he is in charge of his people (followers, those of whom he/she is charge) and the primary disposer of justice in the land, office, house, etc. For this reason, the leader is given special mention as one of the seven who will be honored with Allah's Shade.

2. YOUNG PERSON IN WORSHIP

Al Hafidh said: The youth is specifically mentioned because he/she is the most likely time for the overpowering of the carnal desires, and due to what it contains of the strength of cause to follow desires, as adhering to worship despite this is the strongest proof of predominance of the fear of Allah.

A young person growing up in the worship of Allah: Worship of Allah is good for all people at any age and time; but the worship of Allah from the tender young age has special blessings.

Many people become devoted to Allah when they grow old. In the old age when the body becomes weak, people start paying attention to the spirit.

However, to be conscious of one's spirit and growing up as a youth in the obedience of Allah bring a special honor and blessings.

Indeed, it is a great blessing from Allah for a youth to be guided towards worship and be befriended by the righteous, since it is in youth that a person is most vulnerable to the temptations of life and liable to drift away from the Islamic Path.

This becomes apparent when we look around us and we see that most of the worldly distractions, such as music, games, clubs, fashion etc. are all specifically targeted at young people.

"You're only young once!" they are told, which is why many Muslims nowadays waste their youth thinking that they will pray and go on Hajj, etc, when they are old; as if they have a guarantee of longevity from Allah!

This Issue 'From The Minbar' presents:

⇒ **SEEKING THE SHADE OF ALLAH'S MERCY**

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Planting the Seed of Action

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How well we would do to heed the Prophet's advice when he said: "Take benefit of five before five: your youth before your old age, your health before your sickness, your wealth before your poverty, your free time before you are preoccupied and your life before your death." (Al Hakim)

3. ATTACHMENT TO THE MASJID

A person whose heart is attached to the mosque when he leaves it until he returns to it.

Al Hafidh said about 'muallaq' that its literal meaning is that it is from hanging, as if he is likened to something hanging in the masjid such as a candle for example, indicating to the length of his attachment with his heart, even though his body may be outside of the masjid, this is indicated to in the al-Jawzai's version: As if his heart is hanging in the masjid.

Al Zarqani said: Ibn Asakir has from the hadith of Abu Hurayrah : 'Attached to the masjid due to his immense love of it' and that is because when he is effected by the obedience to Allah and his love overcomes his heart becomes attached to the masjid and does not love/like to be separated from it due to his finding it the spirit of closeness and sweetness of obedience (to Allah)

Imam Malik explained that it was a person who, when he leaves the Masjid, looks forward to coming back again soon. Normally people's hearts are attached to their jobs, business and home. Masjid is not the priority for many people.

However, those who love the House of Allah and keep it as their priority are the blessed people and they shall receive the special favor of Allah.

Not only does it make the person eligible for Allah's Shade on the day of Judgement, but, "he does not take a step [towards the mosque except that because of it, he is raised by one rank and one sin is removed from him. Then when he prays, the Angels do not cease supplicating for him [for] as long as he remains at his place of Prayer [sayings]: O Allah send blessings upon him, O Allah have mercy upon him..." (Bukhari)

It must be emphasized here, however, that all the Ahadith encouraging the men to be attached to the mosques are not intended to lead one to the conclusion that Islam is a Religion which should be confined to the mosques, as many people imagine.

Nonetheless, the mosque should be at the heart of the Muslim community, and the role of those in authority of the mosques is vital here.

They are the ones mainly responsible for making the mosque a welcome refuge for the Muslims, rather than an arena for politics and power struggles as many seem to have become these days.

4. LOVING/DEPARTING FOR HIS SAKE

Two persons who love each other for Allah, they meet upon this and depart.

Al Hafidh said: Each one of them loves the other in reality not just outwardly for Allah, seeking His pleasure or because of Him continue their relationship or depart from one another. However, the friendship for the sake of Allah, for the reasons of piety and goodness is a very blessed friendship.

This is a sincere friendship and when two or more people become attached to each other for Allah's

sake they bring a lot of good to themselves and to those around them. This is a kind of friendship that generates goodness in the world is blessed by Allah.

Having mutual love for the sake of Allah is one of the great doors leading to the good of the Hereafter and a cause of tasting the sweetness of Iman in this world. So it does not matter what the person looks like, what he wears, how rich or poor he is, where he comes from, or what the colour of his skin is - perhaps you dislike everything about him, but you love him for his Iman: this is loving for Allah's sake.

Allah, the Mighty and Magnificent says: "Those who have mutual love for the sake of My Glory will have pillars of light and will be envied the Prophets and martyrs." (Tirmidhi & Musnad Ahmad) Subhana Allah! Imagine being envied by Allah's chosen Messengers and those who were slain in His Path! Such is the reward of those who love one another for Allah's sake.

5. SOLID MORAL CHARACTER

A Person who is invited to do immorality and refuses by saying "I am afraid of Allah." This is a person of solid moral character.

Al Qurtubi said: This emanated from him due to his intense fear of Allah, and the strength of his taqwa and haya. He said a man tempted for illicit relationship by a woman who is beautiful and rich, influential or of a prestigious family (the word "mansab" means all these things in Arabic) and he refuses.

Imam Ibn Hajar says that this is not limited to a man only who is tempted by a woman; it equally applies to a woman who may be tempted by a man who is very handsome, powerful and rich and she refuses and says "I fear Allah." It requires a lot of moral strength to refuse temptation when the other partner is attractive, rich, and not only consenting but persuasive. Those who have such a strong character they are indeed under the protection of Allah.

6. NO SHOW OFF

A person of charity who does not show off his/her charity: A person gives charity in such a way that even his left hand does not know what his right hand has done. This is a very powerful and beautiful way to say that a person gives quietly, discreetly and with sincerity. His/her purpose is not to show off, seek publicity, name or fame; but only to please Allah.

This is the highest kind of charity and it has a special reward and blessing from Allah. This describes the type of person who goes to great lengths to protect himself from Ar Riya. Ar Riya means to do deeds in order to earn the praise and recognition of people.

This sin destroys all the benefits that lie in righteous deeds and brings on a serious punishment for the one who commits it. It is particularly dangerous because it is in man's nature to desire and enjoy the praise of others. Thus, great care has to be taken to ensure that one's intentions begin and remain pure whenever good actions (such as charity) are being done.

7. REMEMBERIN ALLAH WHEN ALONE

Al Baji said: the Prophet (S) specifically mentioned the khali (alone) because he is the furthest from showing off and fame, as that which is in the state of solitude is purely for the sake of Allah and is not blemished by anything

A person who remembers Allah privately with eyes filled with tears: Thinking of Allah, repeating His Beautiful Names, thanking Him and praising Him, these are the ways to remember (dhikr) Allah. Doing the "dhikr" alone in one's privacy, when no one is watching, with moving heart and tearful eyes is a sign of sincere faith and deep love of Allah. Those who have the love of Allah, they are indeed under His shade and protection. Crying is not a sign of weakness. The Prophet(SAW), who was the best of all creation, would weep as would all of his Companions. Tears are a genuine expression of awareness of Allah's Punishment and of our sincere love and awe of Him. But how often do we remember Allah in seclusion and are then moved to tears? How much do we laugh and how little do we weep?

CONCLUSION

What is important to know is that his Hadith talks about both genders: men and women equally. It is also important to note that all these seven characters are deeply moral and spiritual characters. They indicate a person's faith and sincere commitment. They are related to feeling, thinking, speaking and action. These are true characters of sincere believers. Alhamdulillah, through these seven types of people mentioned in the Hadith, we have been given clear signposts of the way to attain Allah's pleasure and satisfaction.

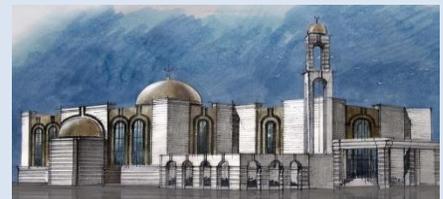
So dear brothers and sisters in Iman: Devote yourself to being one amongst these seven, for indeed fortunate will be those who are granted Allah's Shade on the Day when there will be no shade but His. We pray to Allah to bless us with these characters and with His shade in this world and also in the Hereafter. Allahumma Ameen!

AN ACTION ITEM

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