

THE FRUITS OF TAQWA (PART 2 OF 2)

Rating: 4.9

Description: What our righteous predecessors thought about taqwa and some tips for increasing our consciousness of Allah.

Category: [Lessons](#) › [Increasing faith](#) › [Means to increasing faith](#)

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Objective:

- To understand that *taqwa* is an important Islamic concept and one we must strive to remain faithful to.

Arabic Terms:

- Alhamdulillah*– All praise and thanks is for Allah. By saying this we are thankful and we acknowledge that everything is from Allah.
- Hadith* - (plural – *ahadith*) is a piece of information or a story. In Islam it is a narrative record of the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad and his companions.
- Salaf* - This term refers mainly to the early Muslims; namely the Prophet's companions, their successors, and their followers. It also includes everyone that follows in their footsteps until Judgement Day.
- Taqwa*- Awe or fear of Allah, piety, God-consciousness. It describes a state of awareness of Allah in everything one does.

In the previous lesson we examined the fruits of *taqwa* by looking at several verses from the Quran. From this we learned that *taqwa* was a desirable characteristic that believers needed to strive for; that striving would in turn bring the believer innumerable benefits. In this lesson we will look at what the *salaf* had to say about *taqwa*. These men, women and children would analyze their *taqwa*, however they would never claim to be the possessor of *taqwa*. This was something they considered to be between them and Allah, because Allah said the following in the Quran:



“... So do not claim yourselves to be pure; He knows best who has taqwa.” (Quran 53:32)

Prophet Muhammad said, "*Taqwa* is here," and he pointed to his chest.^[1]

Umar ibn Abdul Aziz, the righteous leader of the Muslims, said, "None can reach the station of *taqwa* until he possesses neither action nor words that can be exposed to his embarrassment either in this world or the Hereafter." He was once asked, "When does the worshipper reach the peak of *taqwa*?" He replied, "If he puts all his thoughts and desires in his heart on a plate and then wandered around in the market, he should not feel ashamed of anything there."

Umar ibn Al-Khattab asked Ubay ibn Kaab about *taqwa* (piety). The latter said: Have you walked through a thorny path? Umar answered: "Yes, indeed". Ubay then asked him: "What did you do?" Umar replied: "I tucked up (my garment) and did my best (to avoid thorns)". Thereupon Ubay said, "That is *Taqwa*".

Fudhayl ibn 'Iyad (died 803 CE), a thief who turned his life around for the sake of Allah was asked, "Which country would you like me to live in?" He replied, "There is no connection between you and any nation. The best country for you is the country which helps you to acquire *taqwa*".

Sufyan ath-Thawri ibn Said (716–778 CE) was an Islamic scholar and jurist who also compiled *ahadith*. A great number of narrations are attributed to him. He said in regards to *taqwa*, "We met a people who loved it when it was said to them - Fear Allah the Most High they would heed this submissively, but today you find that people only become annoyed at this!" If we look at the year this great man died we can see that it was less than 100 years after the death of Prophet Muhammad. In that short span of time *taqwa* had already begun to lose its importance. Understanding the meaning of *taqwa* and how to acquire it is a very important Islamic concept.

The Caliphs of Islam advised themselves and those around them to have *taqwa*. They knew that to fear Allah meant to be aware that Allah was watching them all the time, they knew that there was no place to hide a sin, mistake or misdemeanor. Allah, the Most Merciful, sees our transgressions, yet treats us with unending mercy if we have sincere *taqwa*.

Abu Bakr said in a sermon, 'I advise you to have the fear of Allah.^[2] And when he lay dying, he called Umar and advised him to fear Allah.^[3] In the same way, Umar wrote to his son saying, "I advise you to have fear of Allah."^[4] Ali ibn Abi Talib advised the leader of one of his armies saying "I advise you with the fear of Allah Whom you will undeniably meet."^[5]

Remember that *taqwa* encourages a believer to be wary of anything that displeases Allah. *Taqwa* also makes a believer eager to please Allah. Following are a few easy things that we can do in order to increase our *taqwa*:

1. Spend some time every day reciting the Quran.
2. Ponder over the meanings of God's words and try to act accordingly.
3. Remember Allah with words of praise, such as *Alhamdulillah*.
4. Try to keep busy doing good deeds, remember this can be as simple as smiling.
5. Keep good company. Try to be around those you perceive to have *taqwa*.
6. Try to be humble.
7. Acquire religious knowledge.

“... And take provision; but indeed, the best provision is taqwa of Allah. So have taqwa of Me, O men of understanding.” (Quran 2:197)

Footnotes:

[1] *Saheeh Muslim, At-Tirmidhi*

[2] Recorded by al-Hakim in al-Mustadrak

[3] Recorded by Aboo Nuaym in Hilyah al-Awliya'

[4] Ibn Rajab al-Hanbalee mentioned it in Jami' al-Uloom wal-Hikam

[5] Recorded by al-Khilâl in Kitâb As-Sunnah

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