

Purification

If you seek purification and ablution (wudu'), then go to water as you would go to the mercy of Allah, for He has made water the key to being near to Him in intimate conversation, and a guide to the domain of His service. Just as the mercy of Allah purifies the wrong actions of His bondsmen, so are outward impurities cleansed only by water. As Allah said,

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً طَهُورًا

It is He Who sends the winds as good news before His mercy; and We send down pure water out of heaven! (25:48) and elsewhere,

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

We have made of water everything living. Will they not then believe? (21:30)

As He gives life to every blessing in this world from water, so by His mercy and overflowing favour He gives life to the heart and to acts of obedience, and to reflection in the purity of water, its fineness, its cleanness, its blessing and the subtleness of how it mixes with everything; through water He also gives life to the heart, when you purify those limbs which you have been commanded by Allah to purify, and which you use to worship in your obligatory and customary prayers.

From each limb come many benefits. When you treat the limbs with respect, then their benefits will soon spring up for you. Deal with Allah's creation like water which mixes with things and gives everything its due, while not changing itself in essence. This is expressed by the words of the Messenger of Allah, 'The

sincere believer is like water.¹ Let your purity with Allah in all your obedience be like the purity of water when He sent it down out of heaven and called it pure. Purify your heart with precaution and certainty when you purify your limbs with water.

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