

Tazkiyat Al-Nafs

The term tazkiyah in the Arabic language means purification of something from impurities, and its growth.

tazkiyat al-nafs can be defined as the purification of the self from all evil inclinations and its beautification with good values and virtues.

Tazkiyatul-Nafs can be categorized into two different categories, both of which are essential:

- Emptying one's soul from any existing evil characters.
- Re-filling it (the soul) with good and desired characters.

There are three levels to the self. There is the:

- 1- The Inciting Self (al-nafs al-ammarah): the part of our self that impels us towards doing wrong things. It overlaps with our passions, desires, ego, and instincts.
- 2- The Reproaching Self (al-nafs al-lawwamah): the part of our self that reproaches us and takes us to task for committing wrong things. It overlaps with the function of reasoning and judgment.
- 3- The Tranquil Self (al-nafs al-mutma'innah): the part of our self wherein the self has attained to a state of peace and serenity due to its purification and perfection.

Three adjectives have been used in the Noble Qur'an to describe three different types of nafs: nafs al-ammārah, nafs al-lawwāmah, and nafs al-muṭma'innah.

The Three Types of Nafs

1. The inciting soul (al-nafs al-ammārah bil-sū'):

This is when the nafs commands the person and tells it what to do, and the person willingly obeys. This person is controlled by their nafs, and sins unashamedly.

2. The self-reproaching soul (al-nafs al-lawwāmah):

This type of person sins, but then feels shame and blames himself for sinning. This leads him to repent. This type of person is in a constant battle with their nafs.

3. The tranquil soul (al-nafs al-muṭma'innah):

This person is content with what Allah has ordained, and finds tranquillity in that which pleases Allah. He desires only good and hates evil.



Life With Allah

1. Al-Nafs al-ammārah.

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ

"Indeed the nafs that overwhelmingly commands a person to do sin." (12:53)

So, this refers to that nafs which is ruling over the self. This means that the nafs commands us and tells us what to do. So, when the nafs has any desire, any wish, any appetite, it simply commands us and dominates us. [Nafs al-ammārah] is that nafs which is sovereign over a human being; it has sovereignty over us. [What does

it mean] that the nafs is sovereign over us if it is al-ammārah? [It means that] we are subjugated by it, we are subordinate to it, we listen and follow all of its dictates and commands. This is the first type of nafs, and the sign that a person has this type of nafs is that they sin willingly, blatantly, remorselessly, in any way that they want. And if we think about it, in many places in the west, this concept is actually glorified because people say, “...you should do whatever makes you happy, do whatever pleases you, do whatever your heart desires.” They may glamorize that by saying that it is the heart, [whereas it is not the heart]. In actuality, there are many people whether in the east or the west – even Muslims now – that are doing what our passion desires. So that means that we have a nafs al-ammārah.

2. Al-Nafs al-lawwāmah.

وَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ

“And I swear by the reproaching soul.” (75:2)

Lawwām here means to self incriminate, to self reproach, [to blame oneself]. This is that nafs that sometimes brings a person to do sin, but then that nafs self incriminates itself, it reproaches itself, it feels bad, it feels guilty. Then this guilt [increases] so much so that the person leaves those sins because he feels guilty about them. So the sign [that people have such a nafs] is precisely that when they commit a sin, they feel remorse and regret, they feel guilt, they feel shame, they feel embarrassment, they wish they could take it back, they wish they never did it. They may even intend at that moment to never do that again. So they are fighting a battle with their nafs. Sometimes they commit sin and sometimes they are able to stay away from sin.

3. Al-Nafs al-muṭma'innah.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً

To the righteous it will be said, “Oh reassured soul, return to your Lord well pleased, and pleasing to Him.” (89:27-28)

Allah Almighty addresses the nafs al-muṭma'innah. And muṭma'in here means two things:

- A. They are muṭma'in, [meaning] they are content with the ḥukm of Allah Almighty, there is nothing else that makes them happy. [But such people are] also doing what makes them happy [because] this person has been molded, trained, and disciplined in such a way that the only thing that makes their nafs happy, that gives it solace, the only thing that it is muṭma'in on, that it is content with, is what Allah Almighty is pleased with and what Allah Almighty is content with. So its contentment lies in that which Allah Almighty is happy and pleased with.
- B. Muṭma'in [means that the nafs] has reached a state of serenity. The serene, contented, tranquil, at-peace nafs. Obviously the peace here means that it has aman (safety) and iṭmi'nān (contentment) from doing sin [as well as] from desiring sin. It has no unlawful desires. It has desires – that is what the nafs does – but it only desires good things. The sign of this is exactly what we just mentioned: this person not only [abstains from] sin, he no longer desires sin. That faculty and part of their humanity that desires (i.e. the nafs) only and only desires things which Allah Almighty views as desirable, and it has stopped desiring those things which Allah Almighty has labeled as undesirable.

Factors that help purify oneself: -

- perform Obligations.
- increase nawafil.
- Tadabur (understand)AlQuran.
- Repentance .
- Ask forgiveness(istighfar).
- Going against oneself in its desires.
- Accountability (muhasaba)through blame and reprimand.
- Mention of death and the hereafter .
- Be away from Showing off in all deeds .
- Patience and certainty.
- supplication(duaa) ,The believer's weapon.

Al-Jibt and At-Taghut explanations :-

- Al-Jibt and at-Taghut are two (interchangeable) names for every glorified, worshipped or obeyed entity besides Allaah, whether that may be a stone, tree or devil.
- That the idols worshipped besides Allaah (by the people of jaahiliyyah) are also al-Jibt and at-Taghut.
- That the devils obeyed by the disbelievers are also are al-Jibt and at-Taghut.
- That the magicians and the soothsayers are also al-Jibt and at-Taghut .