

The Noble Qur'aan is one of the greatest fortifiers of eemaan and the most beneficial reasons behind its increase – Shaykh 'Abdur-Razzaak al-'Abbaad

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September 15, 2018



Reciting the Noble Qur'aan and Contemplating on it

This is one of the greatest branches of knowledge that can lead to the increase, stability and strengthening of eemaan.

Allaah has revealed His lucid Book to His servants as a source of guidance; mercy, light and glad tidings and as a remembrance for those who remember.

Allaah says:

وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ مُصَدِّقُ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ

“And this is a blessed Book that We have sent down, confirming that which came before it.” [Soorah al-An'aam (6):92]

Allaah says:

وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

“And this is a blessed Book that We have sent down, so follow it and fear (Allaah), that you may receive mercy.” [Soorah al-An'aam (6):155]

Allaah says:

وَلَقَدْ جِئْنَاهُمْ بِكِتَابٍ فَصَّلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

“Certainly, we have brought to them a Book, which we have explained in detail, upon knowledge, as a guidance and a mercy to a people who believe.” [Soorah al-A'raaf (7):52]

Allaah says

...وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ

“...And We have sent down to you the Book, as a clarification of everything, a guidance, a mercy and as glad tidings for the Muslims” [Soorah an-Nahl (16):89]

Allaah says:

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

“(This is a) Book that We have sent down to you, full of blessings, so that they may ponder over its aayaat, and that those of understanding may remember.” [Soorah Saad (38):29]

Allaah says:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا

“Verily, this Qur’aan guides to that which is most just and right, and gives glad tidings to the believers who work righteous deeds, that they shall have a great reward.” [Soorah al-Israa (17):9]

Allaah says:

وَنُنزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۗ وَلَا يَزِيدُ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا خَسَارًا

“And We send down of the Qur’aan that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe, and it increases the oppressors in nothing but loss.” [Soorah al-Israa (17):82]

Allaah says:

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَذِكْرًا لِّمَن كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

“Verily, therein is indeed a reminder for him who has a heart or gives ear while he is heedful.” [Soorah Qaaf (50):37]

These noble aayaat contain mention of the excellence of the Noble Qur’aan, the Book of the Lord of the Worlds. The fact that Allaah made it blessed and a guidance for the worlds. He placed within it a cure for illnesses, especially, the illnesses and diseases of misconceptions and desires of the heart. He made it a source of glad tidings and mercy for the worlds and as a form of remembrance for those who remember. He made it a guide towards that which is most just and upright, and He mentioned aayaat and threats by which they may fear or would cause them to remember and reflect.

Thus, one who reads the Qur’aan, and ponders and reflects over its aayaat finds within it such knowledge and learning, which strengthen, increase and develop his eemaan. This is because he will come across within the discourse of the Qur’aan, a King, who possesses all dominion, for whom alone, is all praise. The reigns of all affairs are in His hand alone, they emanate from Him and return to Him. He has ascended above His throne and not a single secret in the regions of His dominion escapes Him.

He is aware of what is in the souls of His slaves, fully cognizant of their hidden and public deeds. Solely, He disposes of the affairs of the Kingdom.

He hears and sees, gives and withholds, rewards and punishes, and honors and abases. He creates and sustains, and gives life and causes death. He decrees, executes and disposes.

He invites His servants and directs them towards what constitutes their happiness and success. He entices them towards this, and warns them of what will cause their ruin.

He introduces Himself to them by His names and attributes. He woos them with His favors and blessings and reminds them of His favors upon them. He commands them with what entitles them to the completion of such favors and blessings and warns them of His vengeance. He reminds them of the honor He has prepared for them if they obey Him, and of the punishment He has prepared for them if they disobey Him.

He informs them of how He handles His awliyaa' and His enemies, and of the outcome of both. He praises His awliyaa' for their righteous actions and fine qualities. He censures His enemies for their bad deeds and distasteful characteristics.

He puts forward parables and provides numerous types of proofs and truths. He replies to the misconceptions of His enemies with the finest of answers. He gives credit to the truthful and denies the liar. He speaks the truth and guides towards the path.

He invites to the abode of peace and safety (i.e., Paradise). He mentions its description, its beauty and its bliss. He warns against the abode of destruction (i.e., the Hellfire re). He mentions its torment, its ugliness and its pains.

He reminds His slaves of their necessity towards Him, their dire need of Him, and that they can never be independent of Him ever for the blink of an eyelid. He informs them that He can dispense of them and of all creation, and that He Himself is the Rich and is not dependent on anything, whereas, everything besides Him is inherently in need of Him.

He makes known to them, that no one attains an atom's worth or more of good except by His Favor and Mercy, and that no one attains an atom's worth or more of bad except by His justice and wisdom. One witnesses from His speech, His reproach of His beloved in the most gracious of ways and despite that, He dismisses their mistakes and forgives their slips. He accredits their excuses, rectifies their corruption, defends and protects them. He is their victor, their guardian over their welfare and the one who delivers them from all difficulties. He is the One who will keep His promise to them, He is their only patron and protector. He is their true patron and protector and their victor over their enemies. How fine a patron and victor He is!

Hence, the servant never ceases to benefit from reflecting on the Book of Allaah. His heart bears witness to such types of knowledge that increase his eemaan and strengthen it.

How can this not be so? When he finds within the Qur'aan, a King who is glorious, merciful, generous and beautiful; this is His standing.

So how can he not love Him, compete to attain a nearness to Him or use up his energy in trying to show love for Him?

How can He not be more beloved to him than anything else? How can he not prefer His pleasure to anyone else's pleasure?

How can he not be attached to His remembrance? How can his love for Him, his desire to meet Him and feeling close to Him not be his nourishment, strength and medicine, in that if he were to be bereft of this, he would become corrupt and ruined and would not benefit from his life? [Refer to al-Fawaa'id of Ibn al-Qayyim, pages 58-60]

Al-Aajurree, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said: "Whoever contemplates His words, will know the Lord and he will know of His great power and capability, His immense favor upon the believers, and of the obligation upon himself to worship Him.

Accordingly, the person imposes this duty upon himself thereby being on his guard against that which his Generous Patron and Protector has warned of and coveting that which He has made desirous.

Whoever is of this description when reciting the Qur'aan or when listening to it when recited by another, the Qur'aan will be a cure for him. He becomes rich without money, he attains power and strength without kinsfolk and finds intimacy in that which others feel alienation towards.

His desire when opening a Soorah for recitation will be, 'when will I accede to the admonition contained within what I recite?' and his desire will not be, 'when will I complete this Soorah?'

His aspiration is none other than, 'When will I understand what Allaah is addressing me with? When will I restrain (from committing sins)? When will I take heed?'

This is because reciting the Qur'aan is worship and it is not to be done so in a state of heedlessness, and Allaah is the one who grants the tawfeeq towards that?" [Akhlaaq Hamlah al-Qur'aan, by al-Aajurree, page 10]

For this reason, Allaah, the Generous, orders His servants and encourages them to ponder over the Qur'aan, Allaah says:

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا

"Do they not then contemplate on the Qur'aan? Had it been from other than Allaah, they would surely have found therein much contradiction." [Soorah an-Nisaa' (4):82]

He says:

أَفَلَا يَتَذَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

“Do they not then contemplate on the Qur’aan, or are there locks upon their hearts?” [Soorah Muhammad (47):24]

Allaah proclaims that He only revealed the Qur’aan so that its *aayaat* would be pondered over, He says:

كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

“(This is a) Book that We have sent down to you, full of blessings, so that they may ponder over its *aayaat*, and that those of understanding may remember.” [Soorah Saad (38):29]

Allaah also explains that the reason behind the lack of guidance for the one who deviates from the straight path is his disregard for reflecting on the Qur’aan and being too proud to listen to it, He says:

قَدْ كَانَتْ آيَاتِي تُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى أَعْقَابِكُمْ تَنْكِبُونَ مُسْتَكْبِرِينَ بِهِ سَامِرًا تَهْجُرُونَ أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَاءَهُمْ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِ آبَاءَهُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

“Indeed, My *aayaat* used to be recited to you, but you used to turn back on your heels. With haughtiness, you talked evil about it (i.e., the Qur’aan) throughout the night. Have they not then pondered over the Word (i.e., the Qur’aan) or has there come to them what had not come to their fathers of old?” [Soorah al-Mu’minoos (23):66-68]

He mentions of the Qur’aan that it increases the believers in *eemaan* if they read it and contemplate on its *aayaat*, Allaah says:

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَّتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُهُ زَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ

“The believers are none other than those whose hearts feel fear when Allaah is mentioned. When His *aayaat* are recited to them, they (i.e., the *aayaat*) increase them in their *eemaan* and upon their Lord (alone), they rely.” [Soorah al-Anfaal (8):2]

Allaah relates about the righteous amongst the Ahl al-Kitaab, that when the Qur’aan is recited to them they fall upon their faces in humble prostration and in a state of weeping, and that it increases them in humility, *eemaan* and submission. Allaah says:

قُلْ آمَنُوا بِهِ أَوْ لَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ إِذَا يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ يَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ سُجَّدًا وَيَقُولُونَ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّنَا إِنْ كَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّنَا لَمَفْعُولًا وَيَخِرُّونَ لِلْأَذْقَانِ يَبْكُونَ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ خُشُوعًا

“Say, ‘Believe in it (i.e., the Qur’aan) or do not believe (in it). Verily, those who were given knowledge before it, when it is recited to them, they fall upon their faces in humble prostration, and they say:’ How perfect is our Lord! Truly, the promise of

our Lord will be fulfilled:’ They fall upon their faces weeping and it adds to their humility.” [Soorah al-Israa’ (17): 107- 109]

He also informs that if He were to send down the Glorious Qur’aan upon a mountain, it would humble itself and rupture because of the fear of Allaah. He made this as a parable for the people to demonstrate to them the greatness of the Qur’aan. He says:

لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْنَاهُ خَاشِعًا مُتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“Had We sent down this Qur’aan on a mountain, you would surely have seen it humbling itself and rending asunder out of fear of Allaah. Such are the parables that We put forward to mankind that they may reflect.”[Soorah al-Hashr (59):21]

He described the Qur’aan as being the best of speech, parts of it resembling other parts and He repeated some of it so that it would be understood. He mentioned that the skins of the righteous shiver in fear and hope when they hear the Qur’aan. He says:

اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُّتَشَابِهًا مَّثَانِيَ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَى ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ هُدَى اللَّهِ يَهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُضَلِلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ

“Allaah has sent down the best speech, a Book, its parts resembling each other in goodness and truth, oft repeated. The skins of those who fear their Lord shiver from it. Thereafter, their skin and hearts soften to the remembrance of Allaah. That is the guidance of Allaah. He guides with it whom He pleases and whomever Allaah sends astray, has no guide whatsoever.” [Soorah az-Zumar (39):23]

Allaah censures the believers for their lack of humility when listening to the Qur’aan and He cautions them to not resemble the disbelievers in this regard. He says:

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ

“Has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe to be affected by Allaah’s reminder (i.e., the Qur’aan) and of the truth that has been revealed, and not to be like those who had been given the Book before, whereby the term was lengthened for them and their hearts became hard and many of them are rebellious.“ [Soorah al-Hadeed (57): 16]

These aforementioned aayaat contain the clearest indication of the importance of the Qur’aan, the required attention that has to be paid to it, its powerful effect upon the hearts, and that it is the greatest matter that increases eemaan, especially, if the recitation is performed upon contemplation, reflection and on trying to understand its meaning.

Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy upon him, says: **“In short, there is nothing more beneficial for the heart than reading the Qur’aan with contemplation and reflection. The Qur’aan encompasses all the levels of the travelers, the conditions of the**

workers, and stations of those possessing knowledge. It is the Qur'aan that generates love, desire, fear, hope, repentance, reliance, pleasure, entrustment, gratitude, patience and the rest of the different states that are life to the heart and perfection of it. Likewise, it repels all the rebuked characteristics and actions that cause the corruption and ruin of the heart.

If people were to possess a realization of what recitation of the Qur'aan with contemplation contains, they would devote themselves to it at the expense of anything else. When the person reads it with reflection and he comes across an aayah that he is in need of, for the cure of his heart, he repeats it, even if he does so a hundred times or the whole night. Hence, to recite a single aayah of the Qur'aan with contemplation and reflection is better than reciting the Qur'aan to completion without any contemplation or reflection. It is also more beneficial for the heart and more conducive to attaining eemaan and tasting the sweetness of the Qur'aan ..." [Miftaah Daar as-Sa'aaadah, page 204]

Muhammad Rasheed Ridaa states: "Know that strength of religion and culmination of eemaan and certainty does not come about except by reading the Qur'aan very often and listening to it upon contemplation with the intention of being guided by it and to act on its commands and prohibitions. The correct and submissive eemaan increases, strengthens, develops and its effects such as righteous actions and abandonment of disobedience and corruption, all arise in pro-portion to the contemplation of the Qur'aan. It also decreases and weakens in proportion to not contemplating on the Qur'aan.

Most of the Arabs only believed when they heard the Qur'aan and understood it. They did not conquer the lands, inhabit cities, nor did their population grow and their power become greater except because of the Qur'aan's effective guidance.

Furthermore, the nobles of Makkah who opposed and stood in enmity, strove against the Prophet and tried to prevent him from conveying the message of his Lord by stopping him from reciting the Qur'aan to the people:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَا تَسْمَعُوا لِهَذَا الْقُرْآنِ وَالْغَوْا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَغْلِبُونَ

"And those who disbelieve say, 'Do not listen to this Qur'aan and make noise in the midst of it (being recited) so that you may overcome ...'" [Soorah Fussilat (41):26]

The weakness of Islaam since the Middle ages up to the point where most of its empire disappeared is only so because of the abandonment of the contemplation of the Qur'aan, of reciting it and acting by it." [Mukhtasar Tafseer al-Manaar, 3/170]

Thus, the Noble Qur'aan is one of the greatest fortifiers of eemaan and the most beneficial reasons behind its increase.

It increases the eemaan of the slave in many diverse ways. Ibn as-Sa'dee says: "It increases it in many ways. Indeed, as for the believer, by simply reciting the aayaat of Allaah and becoming acquainted with the truthful information and fine rulings present

within it, he attains an abundant goodness from the affairs of eemaan. How will it then be if he contemplates on it proficiently and understands its aims and secrets?" [At-Tawdeeh wa al-Bayaan li Shajarah al-Eemaan, Page 27]

However, one must know that the increase of eemaan that arises from the recitation of the Qur'aan does not happen unless one concentrates on understanding the Qur'aan, applying it and acting by it. The case is not that he simply reads it without understanding or contemplation, as many people who read the Qur'aan will find it to be their adversary and opponent on the Day of Judgment.

It has been affirmed on the Prophet – sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam – that he said: "*Verily, Allaah raises up a people with this Book and He abases others.*" [Related by Muslim, 1/559] It has also been affirmed that he (- sallallahu alaihe wa-sallam -) said: "... *and the Qur'aan is either a proof for you or against you.*" [Related by Muslim, 1/203]

So it is a proof for you and it increases your eemaan if you act by it or it is a proof against you and it decreases your eemaan if you neglect it and do not observe its boundaries.

Qatadah stated: "**Not a single person sits down with this Qur'aan except that he then rises with either some increase or decrease.**" [Related by Ibn al-Mubaarak in az-Zuhd, page 272, al-Aajurree in Akhlaaq Hamlah al-Qur'aan, page 73, al-Marwazee in Qiyaam al-Layl, Page 77 of the concise version. Al-Baghawee mentioned it in his Tafseer, 3/133]

Al-Hasan al-Basree says in clarifying the meaning of contemplating the Qur'aan: "... **However, by Allaah, it is not by memorizing its letters and neglecting its boundaries. To the extent that one of them says, 'I recited the whole Qur'aan and did not miss out a single letter!' and by Allaah, he missed out the whole of the Qur'aan: no Qur'aan is seen in his character or deeds! To the point that one of them says, 'Verily I can recite a Soorah with a single breath!' By Allaah, these are not recites or scholars, they are not wise or pious. Whenever the recites are of this type, may Allaah not increase their like amongst the people!**" [Related by 'Abdur Razzaaq in his Musannaf 3/363, Ibn al-Mubaarak in az-Zuhd, page 274, al-Aajurree in Akhlaaq Hamlah al-Qur'aan, page 41, and al-Marwazee in Qiyaam al-Layl, Page 76 of the concise version]

May Allaah have mercy upon al-Hasan. I wonder as to what he would say if he witnessed the recites of our present time? Recites, who have been infatuated with being melodious, with correctly pronouncing the letters and flowering them, whilst they squander and neglect the limits.

In fact, the ears of the people when listening to the Qur'aan, also turn to the pronunciation of the words and the melody whilst neglecting to hearken or to contemplate on the word of Allaah.

In any case, there is no objection whatsoever to the tajweed of the Qur'aan, to recite it slowly and melodiously, and to render it in a fine way. The objection however, is in overburdening oneself and being obstinate in pronouncing the letters without paying any regard or attention to establishing the commands that were the reason for the revelation of the Qur'aan. To the extent that you do not see in many of them the fear brought about by the limits of Allaah, indeed, nor do you see within them application of the Qur'aan in character or deed.

You find a reciter amongst them, who has memorized the Qur'aan and who correctly pronounces the letters, shaving his beard or lengthening his lower garment. In fact, he may neglect performing prayer in its totality or in congregation, and other such sinful acts, to the extent that one of them – and Allaah's help is sought – opened a music party for an immoral woman with aayaat of the Noble Qur'aan. He recited as an introduction to her singing, aayaat from the Noble Qur'aan!

The speech of our Lord is too great to be dishonored by the likes of such. It suffices me to repeat what al-Hasan, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said, 'Whenever the reciters are of this type, may Allaah not increase their like amongst the people!'

Ibn al-'Arabee mentioned, when describing the reciters of his time being preoccupied with reciting the words of the Qur'aan accurately while neglecting its rulings, and taking it up as a profession when the Qur'aan was only revealed to be acted by: **"... but when this recitation became a profession, they beautified it and vied with it, spent their life – without any need for them – on it. One of them dies and he was able to raise the Qur'aan in speech as a pot is raised but he broke its meanings as a vessel is broken. Thus, he was not consistent with any of its meanings."** [Al-'Awaasim min al-Qawaasim 2/486, within the book Aaraa' Abee Bakr Ibn al-'Arabee al-Kalaamiyyah by 'Ammaar at-Taalibee]

Hence, the Muslim must learn how to derive benefit from the Qur'aan before he begins to recite it in order for its benefit to be achieved. Ibn al-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy on him, mentioned in this respect a principle that is of great standing and enormous benefit. It is, **"if you want to attain benefit from the Qur'aan, bring your heart together upon reciting or listening to it, and divert your hearing to it, and be present in front of it, in the manner of one who is present and spoken to by the One who spoke it, How perfect He is"** [Al-Fawaa'id, page 5. Also, refer to al-Fataawa of Ibn Taymiyyah, I 6/48-51 and 7/236-237]

Whoever applies this principle and traverses upon this methodology when reciting the Qur'aan or when listening to it, will succeed with both knowledge and action. His eemaan will increase and it will establish itself like towering mountains, and Allaah is the One who is asked to give us the tawfeeq towards that and every good.

Furthermore, contemplation and reflection over the aayaat of Allaah are of two types: "Contemplation over it to arrive at the intended meaning of the Lord and contemplation over the meanings of what Allaah called His servants to reflect on. The first

is contemplation over the Qur'aanic evidence and the second is contemplation over the witnessed evidence. The first is contemplation over His aayaat that are heard (i.e., the Qur'aan) and the second is contemplation over His aayaat that are witnessed (i.e., the universe and what it contains)." [Miftaah Daar as-Sa'aadah, page 204] This was stated by Ibn al-Qayyim.

The discussion mentioned here centers on the contemplation of Allaah's aayaat that are heard. As for reflection on His aayaat that are seen and witnessed, discussion on this will follow shortly by the will of Allaah.

Posted from the Book: Causes Behind the Increase and Decrease of Eemaan, by Shaykh 'Abdur-Razzaak al-'Abbaad. Al-Hidaayah Publications

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