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## **My Job, My Fear, and My Rizq** **(Sustenance)**

*This article is about the uncomfortable truth behind our provision-related fears and the deeper spiritual mistake we make when we forget that our rizq (sustenance) is only in Allah's hands.)*

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It started with something very ordinary.

I had a big presentation the next day. There were important people going to be in the room – VPs, key stakeholders, decision-makers. I went to sleep nervous, my mind racing through possible questions and potential failures. Before the alarm even rang, my eyes were wide open. My body did not need coaching. It just knew there was something to fear. It was primed for action.

And many of us know this feeling well. Which is why I often catch myself wondering: why doesn't the same urgency appear when it is time to wake up for Fajr or other moments with Allah (SWT)

The same body that jumps out of bed for a meeting does not react the same way when it is time to stand before the Lord of the worlds. The same mind that rehearses for the boss struggles to

focus on Allah.

This contrast reveals an uncomfortable truth. On paper, I know Allah is Ar-Razzaq (Surah Adh-Dhariyat, 58) and that my rizq (provision) is guaranteed (Surah Hud, 6). I have recited these verses many times. I have also written about them.

But may Allah forgive me, my nervous system betrays me. It reacts to the company as if it holds my destiny and forgets the One who actually does.

### ***Why Are We Like This?***

I have spent a long time trying to decode this hypocrisy in myself. Part of the reason is simple. The employer is visible. They send emails, book meetings, sign performance reviews. We see their expressions, feel their approval or disappointment, and watch the salary arrive with their company name attached. It feels immediate and concrete.

But with Allah, even though His signs are everywhere, our hearts often pass them by. We do not see the Decree being written or hear a voice saying “promoted” or “not.” We live in a world that keeps telling us success comes from human hands. So our nervous system reacts to the visible human and not as much before the unseen King of Kings.

Our brain fears whatever feels near. Losing a job feels like losing identity, and this dunya has tied our worth to our careers. So when we stand before a manager, it feels like they are judging our value. The heart races because a small voice inside whispers, “If this goes badly, who will I be tomorrow.”

This is the quiet scarcity story. Yet Allah tells us that honor belongs to Him alone, that worth is tied to taqwa, not titles, and

that He provides from places we cannot imagine. But on the tongue we say He is Ar Razzaq, while in practice we treat the employer as the source.

### ***The Tap and The Water***

So, how do we shift this?

I do not think this shift happens by simply shaming ourselves or saying “just trust Allah more.” Most of us have heard that sentence a thousand times. We nod, we say “yes, I know,” but the next time a layoff rumor circulates, the same panic rises in the throat.

One image that has helped me profoundly is this: **The employer is a tap. Allah is the Source of the Water.**

The tap is not the source. It is just one outlet, a mechanism of delivery. If one tap breaks, or gets rusted, or is turned off, the water still exists. The reservoir is full. The Owner and Source of the water can simply turn on a different tap, or create a river, or send rain.

When we confuse the tap with the water, we cling to that piece of metal as if our lives depend on it. We polish the tap, we worship the tap, and we fear the tap. But when we remember the real Source, we can hold the job lightly.

This is exactly how the Quran talks about rizq. It does not just say “Allah provides.” It keeps pulling our attention back to Him as the true Source, again and again, while acknowledging that the “means” (the taps) keep changing.

For instance, in **Surah Al-Ankabut (verse 60)**,

وَكَايِّنَ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ لَا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

Allah asks us to look at the animals that do not carry their provision on their backs, yet Allah feeds them (and us).

In **Surah Al-Mulk (verse 15)**,

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذُلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِهِ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

He points to the earth and tells us to walk through it and eat from His provision. The message is a balance: Use the means, walk, work, prepare the slides, take action - but know that the One actually feeding you is not the company.

Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) described this distinct mindset with a beautiful, natural picture. He mentioned (in a hadith found in Tirmidhi) that if we were to rely upon Allah with true reliance, He would provide for us just as He provides for the birds, which leave their nests hungry in the morning and return with full stomachs in the evening. Birds do not sit still in the nest waiting for worms to drop from the sky. They fly. They search. They struggle. They use effort. But - and this is the key - their hearts do not hold a contract with a corporation. They do not have anxiety about the stock market. They move with a deeper kind of trust that the world is full of sustenance because the Creator is generous.

## ***Correcting the Narrative***

There is another narration from the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wasallam), narrated by Ibn Abbas, that acts as a radical correction to our fear. He taught that if the entire nation (that includes CEOs, every manager, every king, etc.) gathered together to benefit you, they could not benefit you with a single thing unless Allah had already written it for you. And if they gathered to harm you, they could not harm you unless Allah had already written it.

He said, “The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.”

This is not just a slogan. It means the boss in that meeting room cannot add one cent to what Allah has written for me, nor can they remove it. They can only be used as a tool to deliver what was already decided.

If we let that sink in, the dynamic in our heart begins to change.

So when I walk into the room believing that my rizq is already written, and that my role there is simply to show excellence as an act of worship rather than a desperate attempt to control the outcome, the fear becomes lighter. I can still feel nervous as that’s human. But it is not the same kind of fear anymore. I am no longer acting as if this job or this meeting is my only door to survival.

**A key point to remember is that our rizq in this life is tied to our lifespan, not our employment status.** Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wasallam) taught us that no soul will die until it has completed its rizq and its fixed term. **So, if my rizq is tied to my pulse, then losing a job cannot cut my rizq.** It can only change the route it takes to reach me.

## ***The Hidden Idol of Approval***

There is also a deeper, stickier craving for validation that slips into our lives unnoticed. Sometimes, we use our employers or our jobs to feed needs that are actually spiritual. We want others (e.g. our managers) to tell us we matter. We want to feel seen. But Allah already sees us. He sees us in every Sajdah, in every quiet effort, in every honest moment where we choose what is right even if no one praises us.

### **In Surah Al-Baqarah (verse 110)**

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

and throughout the Book, Allah keeps repeating that He is All-Seeing, All-Hearing, All-Knowing. The validation we crave is already available, but we are looking for it in the wrong direction. We are asking the creation to give us what only the Creator can truly grant.

So, the shift to recognizing Allah as **Ar-Razzaq** is not only about money. It is about whose approval feeds us, whose gaze we live under, and whose opinion shapes our sense of self. **So when fear of losing a job becomes bigger than the fear of disobeying Allah, it is a sign that we have quietly placed a creation in a place within our hearts that belongs only to the Creator.**

### ***Where Do We Go From Here?***

This reflection is not meant to make us feel guilty. It is meant to wake us up. The next time that sharp fear about work or jobs rises in the chest, we can treat it as a signal. Instead of drowning in anxiety, we should pause and ask: **What story is my heart**

**believing right now? And what would change if I placed Allah back at the center of that story?**

Practically, it begins with small shifts. When we prepare for a high-stakes ‘rizq’ moment, we also prepare for our moment with Allah. We make dua. We stand to pray two rakaah and in sajdah say: ***“My Lord, You see what I cannot see. You know what I cannot know. My rizq and my future are Yours alone. Let me do my best, and let my heart trust You with the rest.”***

And next time, when the salary arrives, we consciously remind ourselves: “This is from Allah, delivered through this company.” When waking up for Fajr or other salat feels heavy, we see it as a sign that the heart needs more time with His Names, more reminders of who truly holds power over our lives.

The goal is not to stop caring about work. Islam calls us to excellence. The goal is to put things back in their rightful place. To fear displeasing Allah more than displeasing a manager. To rely on His promise more than on a contract. To see every employer as just a tap in a world where the water of rizq flows from Him alone.

If we start living with that awareness, even gradually, then when we walk into a stressful meeting, the nerves may still be there, but the heart will be anchored somewhere unshakeable. And when it’s time to pray or when the alarm rings for Fajr, we will remember that the real meeting, the real evaluation, the real appointment is not on any corporate calendar. **It is written in a different place, on a Day that will NOT be rescheduled.**

May Allah, the Al-Aziz, Al-Wahhab, Ar Razzaq, pull our fear away from creation and back to Him, and allow our hearts to finally live

what our tongues have been saying all along.

**“O Allah, none can withhold what You give, and none can give what You withhold, and no power or wealth can benefit anyone against You.” - Sahih Muslim**