

**Alhassanain (p) Network for Islamic Heritage and Thought**

# **The Touch Of Grace**

**Lecture Set of Grand Ayatollah Nasir Makarem Shirazi with ultimate  
Q & A section**

**Compiled & Edited by: Syed Ajaz Mehdi Naqvi**

**[WWW.ALHASSANAIN.ORG/ENGLISH](http://WWW.ALHASSANAIN.ORG/ENGLISH)**

## Table of Contents

<b>Biography of Grand Ayatollah Naser Makarem Shirazi .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SECTION ONE: .....</b>	<b>9</b>
.001: Tawhid in the actions (of Allah) and the benefits of belief in this...	9
Notes .....	15
.002: Offering peace and salutation to Muhammad (s.) and to his blessed progeny(a.s.) (Salawaat) iIn Prophet’s Sunnah .....	17
.003: On the occasion of `Eid-ul-Ghadeer .....	19
Note .....	21
.004: The Quran: A divine light in the (spiritually) dark and gloomy nights.....	22
Notes .....	24
.005: Commentary of Keep us on the straight path .....	25
Notes .....	26
.006: Why does Allah need to test people?.....	27
Notes .....	28
.007: The opinion of Sunnis about Mahdi (a.s.).....	29
Notes .....	30
.008: Conflict between actions and beliefs.....	31
Notes .....	35
.009: Saying two successive prayers together.....	36
.010: The (various) levels of perfection in Iman (True Faith) .....	37
.011: Shall look causes & sources .....	40
Introduction: .....	40
.012: Six things that lead to success.....	43
Notes .....	48
.013: Advice given to Abu Dharr – Sustenance.....	50
.004: Misguidedness .....	55
Note .....	56
.015: Two despised characteristics: Eating too much and looking at others	57
<b>SECTION TWO.....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>SECTION TWO .....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRUE BELIEVER .....</b>	<b>60</b>
.016: Silence .....	60
Notes .....	64
.017: The True Shia of Ameer-al-Mumineen (a.s.) .....	65
Note .....	66
.018: The characteristics of a righteous servant of Allah .....	67
Notes .....	68
.019: The signs of a Muslim .....	70
Notes .....	73
.020: Modesty.....	74
Notes .....	76
.021: Showing thanks for divine blessings .....	77
Note .....	78
.022: Fulfilling the needs of your adversary .....	79
Notes .....	81

.023: Forgiveness and Pardon .....	82
Notes .....	84
<b>NOURISHMENT OF SOUL</b> .....	85
.024: Al-Jihad Al-Akbar .....	85
Note .....	88
.025: Training of Soul .....	89
Notes .....	92
.026: Taqwa [ Concioussness Of Allah ] .....	94
Notes .....	100
.027: Five Good Qualities .....	102
Notes .....	104
<b>THE MATERIALISTIC &amp; THE NEXT WORLD</b> .....	105
.028: The relation between the religion and the material world .....	105
Notes .....	107
.029: The status of man in this life and the next world .....	108
Notes .....	110
.030: The world is a storehouse of treasures .....	112
Notes .....	118
.031: Upheavals around the world.....	119
Notes .....	120
.032 The psychological effects of loving the transient world.....	122
Notes .....	125
.033: How to gain the love of Allah and the love of people .....	126
Notes .....	129
.034: Two opinions in regards to the material world and the next life .	130
Notes .....	132
.035: The Description of the Material Worldand a comparison between it's Past and the time remained.....	133
Notes .....	138
.036: The description of the material world and our responsibility while living in .....	139
Notes .....	144
.037: Being spiritually awake and ready .....	145
Note .....	149
.038: Good of this world and the next life.....	150
Notes .....	152
<b>CERTAINTY &amp; DOUBTS</b> .....	153
.039: The levels of certainty .....	153
Notes .....	158
.040: The way to keep away from doubtful things and the lower desires of the Soul .....	159
Notes .....	161
.041: Five life giving lessons and refraining from doubtful things .....	162
Notes .....	165
<b>DEATH: AN UNACCEPTABLE TRUTH</b> .....	166
.042: Fleeing from death.....	166
Notes .....	170
.043: Paying attention to those who came before us .....	171

Note .....	172
.044: The final journey and the remembrance of death .....	173
Notes .....	175
.045: A Noble End .....	176
Note .....	177
<b>The ultimate Question &amp; Answer section .....</b>	<b>178</b>
QUESTION 01 .....	179
Reply: .....	179
Note .....	179
QUESTION 02 .....	180
Reply: .....	180
QUESTION 03 .....	181
Reply .....	181
Question 04 .....	183
Reply: .....	183
Notes .....	184
QUESTION 05 .....	185
Reply: .....	185
Note .....	185
QUESTION 06 .....	186
Reply: .....	186
QUESTION 07 .....	187
Reply: .....	187
QUESTION 08 .....	190
Reply: .....	190
Notes .....	190
QUESTION 09 .....	191
Reply: .....	191
Note .....	191
QUESTION 10 .....	192
Reply: .....	192
Note .....	192
QUESTION 11 .....	193
Reply: .....	193
QUESTION 12 .....	194
Reply: .....	194
QUESTION 13 .....	195
Reply: .....	195
Note .....	196
QUESTION 14 .....	197
Reply: .....	197
QUESTION 15 .....	198
Reply: .....	198
Notes:.....	199
Question 16 .....	200
Reply: .....	200
Note .....	202
Question 17 .....	203

Reply .....	203
Question 18 .....	205
Reply: .....	205
Notes .....	205
Question 19 .....	206
Reply: .....	206
Question 20 .....	207
Reply: .....	207
Notes .....	207
Question 21 .....	208
Reply: .....	208
Notes .....	209
Question 22 .....	211
Reply: .....	211
Notes .....	211
Question 23 .....	212
Reply: .....	212
Notes .....	213
Question 24 .....	215
Reply: .....	215
Question 25 .....	217
Reply: .....	217
Question 26 .....	218
Reply: .....	218
Notes .....	221
Question 27 .....	223
Reply: .....	223
Notes .....	225
Question 28 .....	226
Reply: .....	226
Question 29 .....	228
Reply: .....	228
Note .....	229
Question 30 .....	230
Reply: .....	230
Note .....	230
Question 31 .....	231
Reply: .....	231
Notes .....	235
Question 32 .....	236
Reply: .....	236
Note .....	237

## **Biography of Grand Ayatollah Naser Makarem Shirazi**

Grand Ayatollah Naser Makarem Shirazi is one of the most influential ayatollahs currently in Iran. He is a spiritual guide for many Twelver Shi'a Muslims.

### **His studies In Iran**

He started his formal Islamic studies at the age of 14 in the Agha Babakhan Shirazi seminary. After completing the introductory studies, he started studying jurisprudence (fiqh) and its principles (usul al-fiqh).

He made rapid progress and finished studying the complete levels of introductory and both the levels of the intermediate Islamic studies in approximately four years. During this time, he also taught at the Islamic seminary in Shiraz.

At the age of 18, he formally entered the theological seminary of Qom, and for the next five years was present in the religious gatherings and classes of some of the leading Islamic teachers of those days, such as Ayatollah Muhammad Hussein Burujerdi, & Ayatollah Seyyed Kazem Shariatmadari.

### **In Najaf (Iraq)**

In 1950 he made his way to the seminary of Najaf, Iraq. Here, he was able to take part in classes of teachers such as Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim, Ayatollah Abul-Qassim Khoei and Ayatollah Abdul Hadi ash-Shirazi.

At the age of 24, he was granted complete ijtehad by two senior scholars in Najaf. Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim also wrote a short, comprehensive letter of commendation for him.

In 1951 he returned to Qom, since he did not have the means to survive and continue his studies in Najaf.

After returning to Iran, Ayatollah Nasir Makarim Shirazi began teaching the intermediate and higher level of studies in usul al-fiqh and fiqh. Also, he was a member of the editorial board of the first Islamic magazine published in Iran named "Maktab'e Eslam", next to Ayatollah Shariatmadari.

He has won the Iranian Royal Academy of Philosophy' award for his essay "Filsuf-Namaha".

### **Political Activities**

Ayatollah Makarim Shirazi was active in the pre-revolution days; hence he was thrown in jail many times. He was even exiled on three separate occasions to three different locations-Chabahar, Mahabad and Anarak. After the Iranian revolution, he was appointed to the first council of Representatives and played a major role in writing the first constitution.

### **Fatwas and viewpoints**

#### **Beating a disobedient wife**

According to Makarem Shirazi, a Muslim man may "under exceptional circumstances" inflict a "light physical punishment" on his wife for not willing to perform her [sexual] marital duties. The physical punishment, he explains, must be very light where no harm or injuries are caused and even "the skin should not turn red". The "exceptional circumstances" are to be considered after [nicely asking and] advising, grumping, and separating beds, "just like when a surgery is the last resort for a patient" [1].

Wrongly translated news articles have referenced Makarem Shirazi, saying Islam allows a man to beat his wife. This leading ayatollah describes on his website, that Islam has ordered men to have good behavior with their spouses and has even forbidden them from yelling and speaking to their wives with temper [1]. On the same topic, Makarem Shirazi says, if a man does not perform his marital duties towards his wife, even after advice and when there is no other solution, the Islamic government can physically punish him [on behalf of the wife] [1].

In the same article, he references psychiatrists (probably Krafft-Ebing's Psychopathia Sexualis) and mentions that "some women" have natural tendency towards sexual masochism and a slight punishment act will help in "easing their mind" [1].

#### Women's attendance in stadiums

In the aftermath of an attempt by President Ahmadinejad to allow women to attend soccer matches in stadiums (something they are not able to do now), Makarem issued a fatwa objecting to this.[2]

#### Alternatives to stoning

Makarem's fatwa concerning stoning to death for adultery reads: "In certain circumstances, death by stoning can be replaced by other methods of punishment".[3]

#### Smoking

Makarem issued a fatwa declaring smoking as religiously illicit (makruh).

#### His Works

His works number more than 130 volumes. Some of these are:

Commentary on the book Kifayatul Usul (at age 18)

The Manifestation of Truth

Commentary on the Quran

The Message of the Quran

Anwar al-Fuqahah

al-Qawaidul Fiqhiyyah

Compiler/Editor's Note

The achievements of Grand Ayatollah Naser Makarem Shirazi in the field of Islamic Theology are innumerable. The basic aim behind the creation of this book was to compile the lectures of this Grand Ayatollah at one place.

For additional information, all of the text used in this book has been taken from the original site of the Ayatollah i.e. makaremshirazi.org, for any further confirmation please visit the site.

As we have already read that the book contains the lectures of the Grand Ayatollah so it is obvious that the original form of most of the text used might not be the written but the 'minutes' i.e. spoken by Ayatollah recorded by others.

At the last part, the book has AN ULTIMATE QUESTION & ANSWER SECTION which contains some very interesting questions which might be very helpful to clear some doubts, to increase knowledge and to present logical reasoning for the questions which you might never heard before.

If Allah wills (Insha Allah) then this book will seem to be very helpful to the readers in many aspects and to increase quite a good part of reader's information from the ocean of knowledge, to nourish his/her both the worlds and to bring the reader from the scorching core of darkness to the shining coarse of light.

**Wa Innahu Wali al Taufeeq**

**Wassalaam**

**Syed Ajaz Mehdi Naqvi**

**[ask\\_knowers@yahoo.com](mailto:ask_knowers@yahoo.com)**



**all praise belongs to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), only the mistakes are mine.**

## **SECTION ONE:**

### **.001: Tawhid in the actions (of Allah) and the benefits of belief in this**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال ابن عباس قال، قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه و آله و سلم): من انقطع إلى الله كفاه كل مؤونة، ومن انقطع إلى الدنيا و كله الله إليها. و من حاول أمرا بمعصية الله كان أبعد له مما رجا و أقرب مما اتقى، و من طلب محامد الناس بمعاصي الله عاد حامده منهم ذاما. و من أرضي الناس بسخط الله و كله الله إليهم، و من أحسن سريره أصلح الله علانيته. و من عمل لآخرته كفي الله أمر دنياه.

#### **English translation:**

It has been narrated from Ibn `Abbas that the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, The one who keeps his hopes only upon Allah, He will be sufficient for him in all affairs of his life, and the one who keeps his hopes on the material world, Allah will leave him to be (with the world). And the person who wishes to reach to his goals through disobeying Allah, surely he will be the furthest away from that which he wishes (to achieve) and will be the closest to difficulties. And the person who seeks to please the people through disobeying Allah, He will convert the pleasure (of the people) to him to his disgrace (amongst the people). And the person who seeks to please the people while gaining the displeasure of Allah, Allah will appoint those people to be above him (to rule him). And the person who seeks to please Allah while making others displeased by him, Allah will be sufficient for him for the evil of the people (Allah will protect him from their evil). And the person who does right with that which is between him and Allah, Allah will make sufficient that which is between him and the people. And that person who makes right that which he performs in secret, Allah will correct that which he performs in the open and the person who works for his next life, Allah will make sufficient the affair of the life of his life in this world.

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

One of the important issues in the discussion concerning Tawhid is in relation to Tawhid-e-Af`ali (belief in the oneness of the Actions (of Allah)) and if a person was to possess correct belief in regards to this issue, then it would surely have a very profound impact on his life.

The issue of Tawhid-e-Af`ali tells us that: everything and everyone that exists in the entire universe - even the leaves of a tree moving due to a breeze - all stem from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). Not a single thing can take place without His command and order the cutting which a sword performs, the burning which a fire produces and - all of these come from His command. In one sentence, just as it has been mentioned in Biharul Anwar, we can state that:

لا مؤثر في الوجود إلا الله

There is no one effector in the creation except Allah.<sup>2</sup>

Even our own choices and freedom also stem from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and if He had not given us such a power of choice, then we would not be able to perform any task and thus, He has given us freedom and has not imposed things upon us.

When a person has such a belief deep within himself and the issue of Tawid-e-Af'ali takes seat deep within him and he understands that the only independent determination and will is the will of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and the determination which we have has merely been given to us by Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) to test and examine us, then he would definitely not humble himself to other people just to seek closeness to them. A person would realize that the source of acquiring the goodness of this material world is not in the hands of other people and a person would not look to covet the goods of others!

In addition, with such a belief, a person would not seek to approach near the obedience and pleasure of the creations if this meant that he would have to transgress the laws of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). In addition, he would not seek others to help him solve his problems since he knows that the true meaning of There is no one effector in the creation except for Allah goes against all of these issues.

If we were to have true faith in the verse of the Quran which states:

أَنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ

Surely His command when He intends to do something is the saying of Be and it is.<sup>3</sup>

Then these paths which lead to becoming mislead would definitely not have any meaning for us.

The reason why the source of all reformations goes back to reformation of the theological beliefs is due to this same reason. Even when all of the Prophets of Allah (blessings be upon all of them) were appointed, the very first action that they did was to instil the correct set of beliefs within the hearts and minds of the people. once the beliefs and faith is corrected, then all of the roots and branches (of the faith) too will become reformed and corrected.

The hadith which we have quoted in the beginning shows us that all of our actions must return back to the issue of Tawhid-e-Af'ali.

The meaning of **أَنْقَطَعَ إِلَى اللَّهِ** is that we cut off hope from all others and attach ourselves only to Him; we close our eyes to everyone else and focus ourselves only on Him. If a person was to reach to this station, then Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) alone would be sufficient for him during all of his difficulties.

It is then mentioned that **وَمَنْ انْقَطَعَ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهَا** however, if a person were to leave reliance upon Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and were to rely solely on the material world and expected both respect and dishonour only comes from the hands of people, or assumed this his sustenance comes from this physical ground through his cultivation or

through trading and business, then Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) would leave this person to the whims of the material world.

Of course, we are not opposed to the world of cause and effect, however we must pay attention that behind this world, there is a hand of the one who occasions things to happen (the actual Cause). Sometimes, in order to not forget that there is a Causer for everything, people make up and create reasons and rationale (for things happening around them) and it is because of this reason that sometimes people state that, All the doors were closed to me and then all of a sudden, a way out was found or sometimes the opposite of this is also said!<sup>4</sup>

If a person was to lose the Causer for everything that happens and was to rely solely on this frail spiders web (the material world), then Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) too would leave this person alone within this frail web just as it has been mentioned in the Quran:

مثل الذين اتخذوا من الله أولياء كمثل العنكبوت اتخذت بيتا و أن أوهن البيوت لبيت العنكبوت لو كانوا يعلمون

The similitude of those people who take other than Allah as their protectors and guardians is as the example of the spider who takes his web as being his (frail) house. And surely the most weakest of houses is the house of the spider if only these people had knowledge of this (fact).<sup>5</sup>

The intelligent person does not rely upon the frail house of the spider since the person who relies solely upon the chief Causer of all actions (Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him)) will be needless of all other things.

It is mentioned in our hadith that:

اللَّهُمَّ، لا تكلني إلي نفسي طرفة عين أبدا

O Allah! Do not ever leave me to myself for even the period of the blinking of the eye.

And this hadith points to this same fact that, O Allah! I appeal to you to always be my Protector; I appeal to you that Your yourself become my Guardian.

In the line of this hadith which states *من حاول ذمرا بمعصية الله* we see that another aspect of this same issue has been explained.

For example, we see that a person has planned that he is to reach to a specific goal and to reach to this aim of his, he seeks help through the forbidden means. This person must know that he shall never reach to his ultimate aim and it is exactly that thing which he surely fears that will actually come back to him, and thus it must be said to a person like him that: You who well know that the only will which exists is the will of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and that He is the sole Sovereign over all things thus, why do you still resort to making use of the means which are not permitted?

The next line reads *ومن طلب مجامد الناس* and in this part of the hadith, the Messenger (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has alluded to the backing of other people. In relation to the advancement of the scared principles of the faith, society, politics, etc it is important to take into

account the thoughts of the general populous and thus, the people of the society must help out and assist so that all can reach to the desired goals however we must not confuse this and think that these are issues are only of the people since we want people to come forward and assist but for the sake of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) not that we want Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) for the sake of the people and it should not be that one day we see that in order to attract the people, we end up displeasing Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him)!

The Messenger (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has stated here that the outcome of the person who seeks to gain the praise of the people through disobeying and sinning against Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) is that those same people who are now praising him will one day end up censuring and condemning him (and instead of this person having any sort of impact or influence on the society, he will end up being detested by the people). This is the fact since the person who places attaining the pleasure of people over attaining the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) will leave such a person to be at the whims of the people and will remove the hand of His grace from such a person.

A point which is very important here is that the person must know very well that he himself is weak and as long as the assistance of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) is not there, he is not able to perform any deed. It is because of this fact that we must perform all our tasks for Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) even if the people are not pleased at this and become upset with us. If we act in this manner, then surely Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) will remove the evil of the people from reaching us.

The true believer must pay attention to this verse of the Quran which states:

تَوَيُّتِ الْمَلِكُ مِنْ شَاءٍ وَتَنْزَعُ الْمَلِكُ مِنْ شَاءٍ وَتَعَزُّ مِنْ شَاءٍ وَتَذَلُّ مِنْ شَاءٍ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ إِنَّكَ

عَلِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

He bestows the kingdom to whom He so pleases and He withdraws the kingdom from whom He pleases and He grants honour and dignity to whom He pleases and He disgraces whom He pleases. In His hands is all goodness and surely You (Allah) have power over all things.6

And he (the true believer) must state that, O Allah! Everything lies in Your hands. Even if we go towards the world of causes, we do this through Your permission and with complete trust and reliance upon you.

We must never be like the people who say, In the name of Allah and in the name of the heros of humanity as this is a form of worship of two entities and we are not of this sort of people since we are believers who also want for the creations but from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

In the Quran we read that:

إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمْ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ يَخْذَلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ

فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

If Allah were to assist you then there would be none who could overcome you and if He were to leave you alone, then who is there that

could assist you after Him and upon Allah do the true believers solely rely upon. 7

If everyone in the world were to try to gather together but He did not want this to happen, then not a single action could take place. The opposite of this is also true that if the entire world were to gather together to humiliate a person, or to strike a blow to some person but Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) did not want this to happen, then it would not be fulfilled.

Thus, the belief in the oneness of Allah of ours is just as has been mentioned and we must also perform our actions in this same way (as we have belief of it in our hearts).

For the believing person, what is important is that anytime an issue comes in front of him, he first ponders upon it carefully and thinks to himself, What would Allah want from me in this situation?

Once we correct our relationship between ourselves and Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), then everything else will be easy and will fall into place. We should not be such people that in order to please others, we end up earning the wrath and anger of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). For example, in order for us not to put others through difficulties, we put forth truth as falsehood and falsehood as truth as if this is done, then a persons friend ends up becoming his idols (of worship) and this sort of an idol is even worse than those that the polytheists worship since at least when the polytheists worship their idols they do so in order to achieve proximity to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). In the Quran we read that:

ما نعبدهم إلا ليقربونا إلى الله زلفى

We do not serve them save that they may make us nearer to Allah.8

However this issue is not present in relation to the worship and following of our friends!

The line of this hadith which reads, من أحسن ما بينه و بين الله كفاه الله ما بينه

و بين الناس the person who corrects and perfects the relation between himself and Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) too will perfect and correct his relations with the people.

However as the Hadith also tells us من أحسن سريره أصلح الله علانية و من عمل لاخرته كفى الله أمر دنياه meaning that the person who strives to perfect his hidden thoughts and beliefs, Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) will perfect his outer thoughts and beliefs, and the person who seeks to work for his next life, Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) will be sufficient for him for his worldly matters.

As we stated, more than any other thing, the Prophets (blessings be upon all of them) sought to correct the theological beliefs of the people since if the theological beliefs of the people are not correct, then they could not expect proper actions to come forth from them and this is the exact situation which we see in the world today!

The people of the world today have no affinity to religion and the issues of the faith. For example, humanity has made laws which state that people

must not perform such and such deed or action, nor are they permitted to even busy themselves with how that act should be carried out (if they wanted to perform it) however we see that the opposite of this is the case in regards to the invitation of the Prophets where they have called others to the inner aspects and to the outer aspects (of deeds).

From the past, there is a very remarkable expression which was used in relation to the Usul and Furu` of the Din which stated that the complete faith (of Islam) can be compared to a tree which is made up of three parts: the roots, branches and the fruits. The roots of the tree were the theological beliefs; the branches were the actions of the person while the fruits of this tree were the complete and perfect human being!

There are some people who think that actions and beliefs can be separated from one another however this is not the case. By this we mean that a person is not able to from the point of view of his inner belief remain healthy and safe, however have incorrectness in his actions neither can the opposite of this be true. It is not possible that from the point of view of the perfection and traits of humanity, a person reaches to the highest points and pinnacles of greatness, however he does not reach to such levels in his theological beliefs. Keeping in mind this explanation, the meaning of the hadith becomes thus, Anytime a persons inner self is corrected, at this point in time does Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) correct his outer self. Thus does Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) place a cause and effect between the outer self and the inner self of the person.

It is from this belief that in many instances and due to the fact that there exists a relationship between the cause and effect that Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) is placed in between outcomes and Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) is attributed with the performance of certain tasks. For example we state أضله الله or Allah has deluded him and by this we mean that in the performance of a wicked and despicable act, Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) has placed this outcome or effect which has lead to the misguidance of the person not that it was Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) who initiated the misguidance!

Therefore, we are able to draw this conclusion that if our actions are not correct, then this will result in our inner self becoming polluted.

Thus, in the beginning we must correct our own belief in Tawhid and must destroy all the internal idols which we possess. In the Noble Quran we read that:

أرايت من اتخذ إلهه هواه أفانت تكون عليه وكيلا

Have you seen the person who takes his lower desires to be his god? Do you have any authority to guide such a person (or to rise up in defence of him!?)9

There are people who only outwardly worship Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), however in reality they are actually polytheists since their Allah is their own soul and inner desire. Thus, we can deduce that polytheism actually has many different branches to it.

In Biharul Anwar it has been mentioned that:

ألشرك أخفي في العمل، من ديبب النملة السوداء علي الصخرة الصماء، في الليلة الظلماء

Polytheism is more hidden in actions than the footprints of a black ant on a dark rock walking in the dark of the night<sup>10</sup>

In addition, we see that Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) has taken a pledge and promise from mankind that they do not worship Shaitan, and in the Quran we read:

ألم أعهد إليكم يا بني آدم أن لا تعبدوا الشيطان

Did I not take a pledge from you, O children of Adam that you would not worship Shaitan?<sup>11</sup>

However, it does not seem that those who are being spoken to in this verse are the (official) Satan Worshipers, who are very small in number in the world rather, those who are being spoken to in this verse are human beings and thus, it becomes clear that the worship of Shaitan is a tribulation which a great number of people fall into.

It is possible that there are some people who would take the last line of the hadith under discussion which reads, Whoever works for the next life, Allah will make the life of this world easy for him and from this line would understand that if a person does not put forth any toil for the life of this world and focuses all of his attention on performing actions for the next life, that all of his affairs for this life will be put in order however this is definitely not the case! Rather, we must also put forth an effort for the life of this world.

The summary of this entire discussion is this:

If we wish to correct our actions and our etiquette, we must first start with correcting and reforming our theological beliefs. Therefore, if all of the people become true believers in the oneness of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and become true Muslims (in the real sense of the word), then all forms of atrocities and corruption would be removed from the Earth. If we see that in the world, day by day it is becoming more and more corrupt, then it is due to a lack of firm belief or little belief. Thus, in order for our actions to be correct, we must also have correct theological beliefs since every action good or bad is a reflection of the actions which we perform.

And

### Notes

- 1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 178
- 2 Biharul Anwar, Volume 5, Page 151
- 3 Suratul Yasin, Verse 82
- 4 In the words of Mawlana Rumi:

از قضا سر کنگبین صفرا فزود روغن بادام خشکی می نمود

از هلیله قبض شد اطلاق رفت آب آش را مدد شد همچو نفت

- 5 Suratul `Ankabut, Verse 41
- 6 Suratul Aale Imran, Verse 160
- 7 Suratul Aale Imran, Verse 26
- 8 Suratul Zumr, Verse 3
- 9 Suratul Furqan, Verse 43
- 10 Biharul Anwar, Volume 61, Page 244
- 11 Surat Yasin, Verse 60





## **.002: Offering peace and salutation to Muhammad (s.) and to his blessed progeny(a.s.) (Salawaat) iIn Prophet’s Sunnah**

How we should offer peace and salutation to Prophet (s.a.w.) according to his opinion ?

Bokhari and Muslim and all of the Sunnis’ scholars of Hadith have narrated that when this verse was revealed,

“Surely Allah and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who believe! Call for blessings on him and salute him with a (becoming) salutation.” the Companions went to Prophet (s.a.w.) and said: “Teach us how to offer peace and salutation to you. We don’t know how we should do that.” Prophet (s.a.w.) said: “Say: O God! Send peace and salutation upon Muhammad and family of Muhammad as you send peace and salutation upon Abraham and family of Abraham surely You are Laudable and Glorious.” Some people have said that His Highness also said: “Don’t offer peace and salutation to me incompletely.” they said: “O the Messenger of Allah! What is incomplete peace and salutation (salawat)?” he said: “that is to say O God! Send peace and salutation upon Muhammad and to remain silent”. Allah is perfect and don’t accept anything except a perfect one.”

For this Imam Shafi’i says: “Anyone who doesn’t offer peace and salutation to the Household, his prayer is not accepted.”

In Sunnan of Dar Qutni has been quoted from ‘Abu Mas’ud ‘Ansari that: “He said: ‘Prophet (s.a.w.) said: Anybody who says a prayer and in which doesn’t offer peace and salutation to me and my descendants, his prayer is not accepted.’” In al-Sawa’iq al-Muhraqah, ‘ibn Hijr has said that: “Diylami has quoted from Prophet (s.a.w.) that: ‘A prayer will not ascend to heaven unless it has been offered peace and salutation to Muhammad (s.a.w.) and his ascendants.

In al-Mu`jam al-‘Awsat ,Tabrani has quoted from `Ali (a.s.) that: “all the prayers are prevented from ascending to heaven until it is offered peace and salutation to Muhammad and his descendants.

Although it is appeared by Sihah of Sunnis the manner in which we should offer peace and salutation to Muhammad and his descendants and found out that if a servant says a prayer but in which doesn’t offer peace and salutation to Muhammad and his descendants, God will not accept his prayer and also knew that Muslim’s prayer will not reach God unless he offers peace and salutation to Muhammad and his descendants, why some people offers peace and salutation incompletely and when they say Muhammad (s.a.w.) or Prophet (s.a.w.) or the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.) they just say God sent peace and salutation upon him and doesn’t mention Muhammad’s descendants and some people even expressed the very words so fast and put them in such a complete disorder that it can be just heard sent peace and salutation.

In the books of Sunnis it has been narrated that Prophet (s.a.w.) said: “Say: ‘O God! Send peace and salutation upon Muhammad and descendants of Muhammad’ and say it in the present and future tenses and as a prayer and a request of God.” In spite of this, they just say God sent peace and

salutation upon him which is in the past tense and an informative sentence and they don't mention descendants.1

### **.003: On the occasion of `Eid-ul-Ghadeer**

We are on the heels of the commemoration of the glorious event of Eidul Ghadir. May Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) make this day of celebration a great day for all of the Shia and grant us all the ability to follow in this school of thought (that of the Ahl al-Bait) that aims to make us true human beings. The ethical hadith (and verse of the Quran) for today on the occasion of Eidul Ghadir concerns the greatness of Amir al-Mominin Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him).

هو الذي أيدك بنصره و بالمومنين و ألف بين قلوبهم لو أنفقت ما في الارض جميعا ما ألفت

بين قلوبهم ولكن الله ألف بينهم

: English Translation

He (Allah) it is that has strengthened you (Muhammad) with His aid and with (the company of) the believers. And (moreover) He has put affection between their hearts (the believers): now if you had spent all that is in the Earth could you have produced that affection?? But Allah (alone) has done it (Surah al-Anfal, Verse 62, 63)

Commentary of Verse:

In this verse, the Noble Quran is speaking directly to the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) and is telling us that one of the miracles of this great personality was his ability to bring the hearts of the true believers together, and in addition, they (the true believers) have also risen up to assist the Prophet (blessing of Allah be upon him and his family) The word translated as with His aid points to the Hidden help and **بنصره** assistance that was given (to the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family)) in various battles that he fought and even in other non war- time events such as the event know as Laiatul Mabit. If the help of the Divine was not present, then it is very difficult to say if the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) would have been saved (on that night).

Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) assists the true believers actually not all of the believers rather, only those believers whose hearts are united with one another.

In continuation, this verse tells us that the joining of the hearts was not something that the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) did by himself, rather, this was brought about through the power of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

We see that during the time of ignorance amongst the Arabs, there was a great deal of animosity for one another and this hostility was even inherited and passed down from one generation to the next and (even generations that came later on) would exact revenge against another tribe. Such a hatred and animosity that existed in this group of people could never be removed through the normal means at ones disposal and thus, Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) has said that if all that was in the Earth would be

given in charity, then still the hearts of the Arabs would not have become united. Rather, it is through Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) that the hearts of the believers were made into one.

In this noble verse of the Quran, the word **مؤمنين** has appeared in the plural form, however sometimes we know that this is done for two reasons: sometimes it is done to mean the actual, complete definition of the word (thus meaning the actual plural the believers) and sometimes this is done to show respect to one person where the plural form of a word is used (however it indicates on one person) and in this verse, both interpretations can be accepted.

In relation to this verse of the Quran, the late Allamah Amini in his work Al-Ghadir has narrated two hadith one which is related from Khatib Baghdadi who is one of the most well known Scholars of the Ahl as-Sunnah, and another hadith from al-Suyuti (another well known scholar of the Ahl as-Sunnah). Others have also related this hadith.

قال النبي (ص): لما عرج بي رأيت علي ساق العرش مكتوبا: لا اله الا الله، محمد رسول الله  
أيده بعلي نصرته بعلي

The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, When I was taken up (into the heavens on the Meraj), I saw it written on the leg of the Throne (of Allah): There is no creature or entity worthy of worship except for Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and I have strengthened him (Muhammad) with Ali.

عن جابر عن النبي (ص): مكتوب في باب الجنة قبل أن يخلق الله السماوات والارض بألفي  
سنه: لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله أيديه بعلي

Jabir has narrated from the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) that he said, One thousand years before Allah created the heavens and the Earth, it was written on the Door of Paradise: There is no creature or entity worthy of worship except for Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah and I have strengthened him (Muhammad) with Ali.

The Divine Throne is the point where the beginning of creation took place and Jannah (Paradise) is the end of the path meaning that from the beginning to the end (of this universe), the entire trail or pathway is emblazoned with the name of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) and Ali (peace be upon him). This points to the fact that Ali (peace be upon him) was trained and brought up as the helper, brother, assistance, supporter and protector of the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family). In instances where everyone else ran away, it was only Ali (peace be upon him) who stayed to defend the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) and the best example of this is during the battle of Uhud.

What is the difference between assistance (نصرت) and confirming (تأييد)?  
If these two words are used separate from one another (not in one sentence), then they carry the same meaning. However, when they are used together, then the meaning of confirming (تأييد) is to help one in spiritual affairs while

assistance (نصرت) is in the meaning of the physical help one gives to another person.

This hadith quoted above has a message for all of us and it tells us that Ali (peace be upon him) did not reach to the rank that he possessed for nothing. Rather, through his helping the religion of the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family), he reached to that grand rank.

Helping the religion of the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) is not achieved through merely holding gatherings (majalis) to commemorate joyous occasions in the Islamic calendar nor is it achieved through simply reciting poems (in praise of the Ahl al-Bait) nor even going for Ziyarat (to their sacred shrines). Rather, that person who claims to be of the Tashayya (Shia), must traverse upon the path of being a fighter for the religion especially during our resent time where various types of attacks have been leveled against the Shia and those things which the Shia hold to be sacred. Of course, these enmities against the Shia clearly show that the spread of the teachings of the Ahl al-Bait (peace be upon all of them) and the Shia beliefs are on the increase and thus, these enemies have thus risen up against us and the beliefs.

Of the proofs of the truthfulness of the Shia beliefs is that all of the sources and references of the beliefs of the Shia can also be found within the books of the Ahl as-Sunnah. In addition, all of the spiritual greatness that have been recorded about the Ahl al-Bait (peace be upon all of them) have also been mentioned in their books.

When it comes to defending the issue of Wilayah and the teachings of the Ahl al-Bait (peace be upon all of them), we must do so with logic and related proofs and we must continue forth with such discussions with a cool head and with complete control of our entire presence.

It is our hope that Insha-Allah, we too are able to be living examples of **أَيَّدُهُ بِنَصْرِهِ** and that we too are able to assist the school of the Ahl al-Bait (peace be upon all of them).

#### Note

1 Volume 2, Page 50

## **.004: The Quran: A divine light in the (spiritually) dark and gloomy nights**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن ابن سعيد الخدرى: قال: خطبنا رسول الله (ص) قال في خطبته: ايها الناس، انكم في زمان هدنه، وان السير بكم سريع، وقد رايتم الليل والنهار كيف يبليان كل جديد، ويقربان كل بعيد، ويأتیان بكل موعود. فقال له المقداد: يا نبي الله، وما الهدنه؟ فقال (ص): دار بلاء و انقطاع، فاذا التبست عليكم المور كقطع الليل المظلم، فعليكم بالقرآن، فانه شافع مشفع، و صادق مصدق، و من جعله امامه قاده الى الجنة، و من جعله خلفه ساقه الى النار

### **TRANSLATION:**

It has been narrated from Ibn Sa`id al-Khudhri that he said, The Messenger of Allah (s.a.) spoke to us and said in his speech, O People! You are in a period of Hudnah and the journey which you are upon is a fast moving one, and surely you see how night and the day make everything old which is new and how they make everything which is far away, near (to you) and how (these two) bring forth all the promises (which have been kept). Miqdad said to him, O Prophet of Allah, and what is Al-Hudnah? So he (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) replied, It is the abode of tests and migration. So then when the (treacherous) events descend upon you like a segment of the dark night, then I advise you to (hold onto) the Quran since it (the Quran) is an intercession whose intercession is accepted, and it is the one which speaks the truth and also confirms and testifies to others (and the truth which they speak) and whoever places the Quran in front of him, it (the Quran) will lead him towards Paradise and the person who tosses the Quran behind him, it will push him to the Hell.(1)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this hadith, the Noble Prophet (s.a.) has stated, O People! You are in the period of Hudnah (the explanation of this will follow later); you have been left free in this transient world and have been given free reign (to do as you please). This transient world is in a state of quickly passing away. The night and day are making all new things old and long forgotten and is making all things which may be far away, near (to you) and is making every promise which was kept to be fulfilled.

It is amazing to think that we are living in an environment in which there is no peace and tranquility everything is being overturned and changed rapidly. In the words of the late `Allamah Iqbal:

ما زنده به آنیم که آرام نگیریم موجیم که آسودگی ما عدم ماست

The upsurge in the water (a wave) is a thing in constant motion and if it were to be stable and calm, then it would cease to be called a wave. When a person looks at the world stage of humanity, he would see that babies are quickly becoming young adults, the young adults are quickly becoming elders, and the elders are being brought to the graveyard. These announcements that are made (within the community) of people who pass away is actually a warning for all human beings.

In continuation of the hadith, the companion, Miqdad asked, O Prophet of Allah! What is the meaning of Al-Hudnah?

The Prophet replied, (Al-Hudnah means that) the transient world is a place of test and examination and a period (of passing through) in which you have been left alone (to fend for yourself). Allah will not bother with you, and in the face of the sins which you commit and the actions which you perpetrate, He will not immediately punish you.<sup>2</sup>

After this, the Prophet (s.a.) then commands the following, and this next point has been mentioned in various books in the form of an independent hadith in which he says:

فاذا التبت عليكم الامور كقطع الليل المظلم فعليكم بالقرآن

So then if events come upon you which resemble the darkness of the night (events which are full of terror and fear) then hold on fast to the Quran, why? Because the Quran is an intercessor and it is one whose intercession is accepted. It is one who is truthful and it is also the one which has confirmed and acknowledged Allah. The person who places the Quran in front of him (keeps the Quran in mind before performing any act) will be guided to Paradise by the Quran, and the person who throws the Quran behind him will be led into the hell fire.

Placing the Quran in front and leaving it behind can have two meanings:

1. Paying attention to the Quran and neglecting the Quran, or:
2. The Quran becomes the teacher of the person and not an instrument for his use by this we mean that the person brings himself to the Quran not he wants to the Quran to come to him.

There are some people who, when they have made their decision and final conclusion (in regards to a particular act or thing), they then refer to the Quran and seek to find a verse which would conform to their own ideologies. These sorts of people stick to only those verses of the Quran which they find (which suit their purpose) and leave aside all other verses of the Quran and through this, they are the living example of the verse which states:

نومن ببعض و نكفر ببعض

We believe in part of it and disbelieve in part of it.<sup>3</sup>

It is clear that such people have thrown the Quran behind them.

Many of the misled Madhahib (sects) which have come forth within Islam such as the Wahhabis are plagued with this sickness. When a persons theological beliefs become very exact and precise we see that they then seek to gather together all of the verses of the Quran which are clear and obvious and take the verses which have two sides to them (their meaning) and which serve their purpose.

On the opposite side, there are a group of people who are students of the Quran and they say, Our final decision is that which the Quran tells us. These people take the guidance of the Quran when they need to solve any difficulty and are a living example of the verse of the Quran which reads:

فلا و ربك لا يومنون حتي يحكموك فيما شجر بينهم ثم لا يجدوا في انفسهم حرجا مما

قضيت و يسلموا سليما

But no! by your Lord! they do not believe (in reality) until they make you a judge of that which has become a matter of disagreement among them, and then do not find any straitness in their hearts as to what you have decided and submit with entire submission.<sup>4</sup>

You have definitely heard the following short saying from Nahjul Balagha in which it has been stated:

الاسلام هو التسليم

Islam is as-Taslim (complete submission).<sup>5</sup>

Until a person does not submit entirely in the presence of the Quran, he shall not be considered as a true Muslim.

It is not correct for a person to impose his own beliefs upon the Quran and this is a form of egotism since the Quran clearly tells us that, We must submit entirely to it both its outer content and its inner purport.

With all of this emphasis which exists (in regards to the Book of Allah), still the Quran does not hold a essential and deserving status in our Theological Seminaries. If only we paid as much attention to the Quran and the exegesis of it as we do to the study of rhetoric and expression (of the `Arabic language) since just we as all believe and accept that:

ولا رطب ولا يابس الا في كتاب مبين

There is nothing wet or dry except that it is recorded in a manifest book.<sup>6</sup>

There is a group of people, such as the Wahhabis, who only give importance to the letters of the Quran and put forth much efforts to recite it (properly), however they have nothing to do with its contents. When the Qari of the Quran recites many verses of the Quran in one breath, they would shout out, Allah, Allah (as a form of encouragement to the reciter), however when the moving verses regarding the Day of Judgement are recited, since the Qari did not recite then in one breath there is no Allah, Allah!

Truly, amongst us, the Quran is oppressed! The Quran must be our text book and you must have discussions on the exegesis of this book such that we sit and see what it is that the Quran has to say to us not what we have to say about this book.

What is important is that we must have the firm belief that the more work that is done on the Quran (its understanding), the more we will be granted a divine light, purity and a new understanding of this Book. The illumination of the mind of a person comes about when he works with the Quran, and we must know and realize that in relation to the Quran, we have three important responsibilities which must be fulfilled:

1. Recitation of the Quran.
2. Understanding the contents of the Quran
3. And more important than all, acting upon the contents of the Quran.

### Notes

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 177

2- There is a long discussion in relation to the tests of Allah, however we shall allude to some of the points of it here.



## **.005: Commentary of Keep us on the straight path**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

في تفسير قول الله عزوجل إهدنا الصراط المستقيم، يقول الصادق (عليه السلام): أرشدنا إلى الطريق المؤدي إلى محبتك، والمبلغ دينك، والممانع من أن نتبع أهوائنا فنعتب، أو نأخذ بآرائنا فنهلك.

### **TRANSLATION:**

In the exegesis of the words of Allah the Noble and Grand, (Keep us on the Straight Path), as Sadiq (peace be upon him) has said that this means, Guide us to the path whose result is Your love and which reaches to Your Din (complete code and way of life) and which would prevent us from following our lower desires or which we would take views and opinions (over Yours) which would result in our destruction.(1)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In the exegesis of this verse of the Quran which we read ten times within a 24 hour period, Imam as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) has stated the following points:

1. The first sign of the Straight Path is that this is the path which leads to the love of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). If day by day, our love for Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) increases, then this is a sign that we are on the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim).

2. The Straight Path is the thing which makes us reach to the Din of Allah and the truth of the teachings of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). If day by day, we see that we are becoming closer to the truths of the faith, then it should be clear for us that we are on the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim).

3. The Straight Path is that road which prevents us from following our lower, base desires and our own personal opinions and our own personal judgments.

If we see that we have all of these within ourselves, then we should know that we are definitely on the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim).

If we see that there is no effect of the love of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) in our essence, or that year after year, our sincerity and presence of heart in the Salat is becoming less and less, then it is clear that we have gone astray from the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim).

In addition, if we see that, in relation to the Din of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) whether this be in the Usul or fundamental beliefs of the Fur` or practical beliefs there is no increase in our knowledge of these two branches, then it is perfectly clear that we have lost out direction from the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim).

We seek refuge in Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) that a person, due to his base and lower desires, destroys the color of the faith and his religious responsibilities as this is something very dangerous!

When we stand for the Salat, we must seek from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), guidance onto the Straight Path with our entire presence and essence and an increase in love for Him.

For those people who are traveling the path of Islamic studies seeking to become a religious scholar, this is something as a show of pride that there is a purpose to their life that they are given more insight into their Din and that their love and affection for Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) is increased.<sup>2</sup>

### Notes

1 Masnad al-Rida, Volume 1, Page 314

2 At this point, the question comes up that first off: what is the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim) and secondly, why is it that we are constantly seeking guidance to the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim) from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) are we currently misguided? Furthermore, supposing that these words of ours are true, then what about the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) and the Aimmah (prayers be upon all of them) who are the examples of the perfect human being what does it mean in relation to them?

Firstly, the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim) is the path of purity and goodness; the path of justice and equality and the path of true faith and righteous actions.

Secondly, in response to the question raised, we must state that: While a person is traversing upon the path of guidance, there is a fear that at any moment, he may slip off of the path and become misguided and it is because of this fact that we must give ourselves up to our Lord and implore Him that he keep us firm and steady on the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim).

In addition, travelling upon the path of guidance is the path towards perfection upon which, stage by stage, a person passes through the stages of difficulties so that he can reach to a higher level.

We also know this fact that the paths towards perfection are limitless and they lead to the Limitless Entity and therefore, there is no room for amazement that even the Prophets and Aimmah used to ask Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) for guidance to the Straight Path (the Siratul Mustaqim) since it is only Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) who is the Purely Perfect Entity and without exception, all others are travelling upon the path to reaching complete perfection and thus, what harm is there in that these personalities too also ask Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) to reach to a higher level of perfection!?! (Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 1, Page 46)

### **.006: Why does Allah need to test people?**

Is the process of examination so that we can recognize and have a better knowledge of those people or things which are unknown and obscure to us and so that we can judge the level of a persons ignorance and lack of knowledge? If this is the case, then Allah, whose Knowledge covers and encompasses all things and who knows all of the inner and outer secrets of every person and every thing in existence is already aware and knows everything so then why test us? Is there something which is hidden from Him that He must test us to bring it forth?

The answer to this important question must be sought out and therefore we must state that the meaning of testing or examination in relation to Allah has a different meaning to the testing and examination which we understand. For us, the testing and examination process is for us to develop a better understanding and to remove any sorts of doubts and ignorance however in relation to the tests of Allah in reality the meaning of this testing is nurturing and upbringing upbringing.

In reality, the test of Allah is similar to the work which a horticulturalist who has a great deal of experience carries out in which he would place the ready to grow seed into the ground which has been made ready for sowing. This seed, by making use of the natural gifts (of water, light, etc) would start to grow and develop and stage by stage, would fight against the difficulties which it comes across and would battle with various things happening around it such as the strong winds, the cold weather and the burning heat of the sun and it would stand strong until a beautiful flower blooms from its branch or until a huge tree full of fruit is brought forth so that it is now able to continue its life on its own and put up with all sorts of difficulties which it may come across.

When soldiers want to look strong and powerful in terms of their military prowess, they go forth in military manoeuvres and simulated wars and are put face to face with the various challenges of thirst, hunger, heat, cold, difficult circumstances and demanding impediments so that they can be conditioned and tempered and this is the meaning of the examinations of Allah.

The Tests of Allah are Universal:

Seeing as how the order in the life of the world of existence is one of evolution (to reach to perfection) and one of the cultivation (of the spirit), and all living creatures which exist are traversing the path towards perfection, and even the trees bring forth their hidden potentiality when they bring forth fruit, we see that all people from the Prophets to all other people, according to the general law of evolution (to reach to perfection), must all face the Divine Tests and must make their talents and abilities blossom and bloom.

The Ways of Testing

The verses of the Quran bring forth many examples of the people who have been tested and mentions their trials, which include: fear, hunger, loss to their wealth, death of their children and even death of the Prophets. In addition, the commandments of Allah, and generally speaking from the point of view of the Quran, even some dreams are all a part of the testing

process of Allah and in general, all of these things can either be good or bad and all of them are classified as tests of Allah:

ونبلوكم بالشر والخير

And We shall surely test you with evil and good (Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 1, Page 526)

#### Notes

- 3 Siratul Nisa (4), Verse 105
- 4 Siratul Nisa (4), Verse 65
- 5 Nahjul Balagha, Short Saying 120
- 6 Siratul An`am (6), Verse 59

### **.007: The opinion of Sunnis about Mahdi (a.s.)**

Both Shi`ah and Sunnis believe that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.) has given good news about his advent and appearance and said to his companions: “Allah will make him appear on last days.” There are many traditions on these lines that we just mention some of them which are well authorized and authentic with Sunnis:

In Sunnan of `Abu Davud it has been narrated that: “The Messenger of `Allah (s.a.w.) said: ‘If there were to remain in the life of the world but one day, God would prolong that day until He sends in it a man from my household. His name will be the same as my name and his father’s name will be the same as my father’s name. He will fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and tyranny.’”<sup>1</sup>

In Sunnan of `ibn Majah it has been said that: “The Messenger of `Allah (s.a.w.) said: ‘We are the household that God preferred for us Last Day to world and truly the household becomes homeless and suffers many hardships after me until a nation who has black flags rises up from the east and desires for charity but they are not given, so they fight and overcome and they are given whatever they want but this time they refuse to accept it until they leave the government to a man of my household that will fill the earth with equity as it was filled with oppression.’”<sup>2</sup>

`Ibn Majah has also said in Sunnan that: “The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.) said: ‘Mahdi is from us, the household, Mahdi is from Fatima’s children.’ and said: “Mahdi will appear among my nation, if his governing period be short will not be less than seven or nine years that my nation during his governing will live in so pleasure and enjoy such divine gifts that such a thing has not occurred at any time. Gifts will be so increased and properties will be so stored up that if anybody says: “O Mahdi! Give me”, he will say: “Take it.””<sup>3</sup>

In Sahih of Tirmizi it has been said that: “A man from my household will govern whose name is the same as my name and truly if there were to remain in the life of the world but one day God would prolong that day until he governs.” And said: “World is not finished until a man from my household governs Arabs whose name is the same as my name.”(4)

In his Sahih, `Imam Bokhari has narrated that: “`Ibn Bakir quoted from Yunis from `ibn Shahab from Nafi` Muwlay Qatadah `Ansari that `Abu Horayrah said: The Messenger of `Allah (s.a.w.) said: ‘How will be you if son of Maryam be appeared among you while your Imam is from yourself.’”(5)

In Fath al-Bari, Hafiz says: “It has been handed down by tradition that Mahdi is from this nation and `Isa `ibn Maryam will appear and say a prayer behind him.”(6)

In Sawa`iq al-Muhraqah `ibn Hajar Hiythami says: “Traditions in relation to the appearance of Mahdi are so many and has frequently been narrated.”(7)

Many of contemporaneous narrators have also narrated traditions regarding `Imam Mahdi, for example in Al-Aqayid Al-Islamiyah, Sayyid Sabaq who is jurisconsult (mufti) of Ikhwan al-Muslimin has said that: “Belief in Mahdi is from Islamic beliefs that should be confirmed.”

Shi`ites have also narrated so many traditions concerning Mahdi (a.s.) that it has been said about it: "it has been quoted so many traditions in relation to His Highness Mahdi (a.s.) from the Messenger of `Allah (s.a.w.) that has not occurred about any other case. (8)

#### **Notes**

- 1- Sunnan of `Abu Davud (2), page 422.)
- 2- Sunnan of `ibn Majah (2), tradition No. 4082 & 4087.
- 3- Sunnan of `ibn Majah (2), tradition No. 4086.
- 4- Sahih of Tirmizi (4), tradition No. 2230 & 2232.
- 5- Sahih of Bokhari (4), page 143.
- 6- Fath al-Bari (5), page 362.
- 7- Sawa`iq al- Mohraqah (2), page 211.
- 8- With truthful persons, page 406.

## **.008: Conflict between actions and beliefs**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن عبد الله بن عمر قال: سمعت رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) يقول: انما هو خير يرجي، أو يت ، أو باطل عرف فاجتنب ، أو حق يتعين فطلب، و آخرة أظل إقبالها فسعي لها، و دنيا عرف نفادها فأعرض عنها...إن العجب كل العجب لمن صدق بدار البقاء، و هو يسعي لدار الفناء، و عرف أن رضي الله في طاعة، و هو يسعي في مخالفة.

### **English translation:**

It has been narrated from `Abdullah ibn `Umar that he said, I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) say, Surely that which is good is anticipated, or that which is bad is kept away from, or that which is vain is known and avoided, or that which is the truth which is clear and apparent is sought after, and the next life is drawing a near so then it should be worked for, and it is known that (this) world shall come to an end, so then it should be turned away from. Surely that which is amazing and is the most amazing is that person who believes and accepts as being true is that there is an eternal abode, however he is striving and struggling for the abode (of this life) which is transitory and (that person) who acknowledges that surely the pleasure of Allah lies in obedience to Him however he struggles in going against Him.(1)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

The sentences in this hadith are somewhat complex, however that which can be noted is that in the beginning of his words, the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) wished to discuss the substance of this material world. Then in the continuation of the hadith, he brings up the inconsistencies between the actions and theological beliefs of a person. By this it is meant that the problem with people is not their inability to recognize (Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him)) rather, it is the shortcomings in their (righteous) actions.

The equities of this world are of two types they are either good or bad. If they are good equities, then they are worthy for a person to seek, and if they are bad, then it is better that a person keeps away from them. In other words, there are a series of truths which are recognized and defined and a person too must recognize these and accept them and must realize that without doubt, there is a next life on the road which he is upon, and each and every person is standing at the threshold of the path, and in order to reach to felicity in the next world, he must put forth an effort and struggle.

Everyone realizes that they cannot trust this material world and they know that this world has never been loyal to anyone and is similar to a bride that has made thousands of suitors fail and has never granted anyone their desires and aspirations. (2) Thus, we must try to keep our distance from this material world.

Many times we see that we commit sins and we place the blame of this sin on the shoulders of being ignorant and not knowing better although we do not say that ignorance is not one of the causes of being misled since

many of the despicable acts and bad deeds stem from being unaware - however if we were to put this in the balance, we would see that most of the issues (of life around us) are clear and it is the person himself who is to blame.

It has been mentioned in Nahjul Balagha(3) in relation to that person who denounces the material world as being one of deception and trickery and as being such a wicked place that the Imam (peace be upon him) has said to him, O you who denounce the material world and have been deceived by its trickery, tell me where has the world deluded you?

The Imam (peace be upon him) then continues and states, Are these bones of your forefathers and ancestors that are under the ground the things which have deluded you? Is it these graves which are now destroyed which belonged to your friends and relatives the things which have deluded you? Is it the ill people who had fallen sick for nights on end and had been bed ridden and called you to their side, and through their cries and screams or yelling and the soul leaving his body the thing which has deluded you?

Imam `Ali (peace be upon him) has stated that the best of warners are these same corpses that are placed in front of a person and with the chanting of لا إله إلا الله are passed in front of our eyes to see

فكني واعظا بموتى عاينتموهم، حملوا إلي قبورهم غير راكبين، أنزلوا غير نازلين

The dead whom you have been watching suffice as warners. They were carried to their graves, not going themselves, and were placed in them (the grave) but not of their own accord. It seems as if they never lived in this world and as if the next world had always been their abode.(4)

In the fall season, we just need to walk through the gardens and look at all of the lessons around us within the dead plants and trees. This is the same garden - which in the spring season - was full of the sound of the nightingales and the sights of all of the other beautiful sights including the budding and blossoming flowers and this scene is similar to the world around us. Sometimes for a period of six months, sometimes for a period of sixty years and sometimes for a period of these beauties last. So then, where are these things that have deluded us? It is the person himself who wished to delude himself and thus, when he sins, he tries to place the blame of this act on the world.

Because of this, we have been told that we should occasionally pay a visit to those who are buried in the graveyard. At least once a week we must make a trip to the cemetery so that we know that our final stage in this world is the graveyard. It has been stated by the scholars that it has been mentioned in the ahadith that through visiting the people in the graveyard, our depression and sorrow is reduced, since our depression and sorrow (in this world) is not related to the spiritual aspect of our lives. We show sorrow and grief because we grieve for the fact of why we were not able to reach to such and such a lofty station (in the material world)? We show grief over not having a nice house! We show grief for many reasons and thus, when we go to the graveyard and see our eventual final resting place, our heart then becomes as the grave at ease and full of tranquility.



In Qum, there is a graveyard in which at the end of it, many Scholars are buried. one day I went to this area of the graveyard and saw many photos of my previous teachers, many of my friends not just one or two either they are all buried there. When you see these photos and the people buried there, then you will realize that death has also been prescribed for us and these things that the common people say in relation to death such as: May Allah protect us from death and, May we seek refuge in Allah (from dying) have absolutely no meaning! Death does not joke around with people - and all nations and religions accept the fact that the eventual outcome of everyone is death and that not a single person knows exactly when he will die!

Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him) spoke some amazing words while on his death bed and has summarized everything in one sentence when he said:

أنا بالأمس صاحبكم و أنا اليوم عبرة لكم و غدا مفارقكم

Yesterday I was your companion and today I am the lesson (which you should learn from) and tomorrow I will depart from you.(5)

Thus, we can summarize our life in this world into these three days my yesterday, my today and my tomorrow.

Therefore, is there any value that a person should commit sins or take the rights of another person? If these things have no value, then let us step forward and try to correct and reform ourselves.

A Conflict Between Actions and Beliefs:

ان العجب

Sometimes we see that a conflict arises between a persons beliefs and actions by this we mean that he may believe one thing however his actions go against this. For this sort of a conflict, we must go straight to the source and root and determine what it is, since a persons beliefs have a direct impact on his actions and similarly, his actions have a relation to his beliefs.

The difference between mankind and animals is that the animals only posses the natural and animalistic instincts to work with, however mankind has the use of their power of intelligence meaning that man can think and rationalize and then determine the good and bad in the act which he wishes to perform. once this is determined, then he would decide how to act. However even though mankind has been given this trait, we see many people still have a conflict between their actions and their beliefs and thus in summary, we must analyze where this comes from.(6)

An example of this are these two sentences which the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has stated in this hadith that, It is amazing that a person accepts the Day of Resurrection however all of his endeavors are for this material world! In addition, it is amazing that a person knows that the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) lies in obeying Him however he leaves this to perform sins!

From the point of view of psychology, such a disparity between actions and beliefs actually stems from various sources, including:

1) We Weak Faith

One's theological beliefs are weak and in this instance, they get mixed with doubt and uncertainty. This weakness and doubt stems from the absence of true acceptance in the heart (of the religion\_ and such things also have an impact on the actions that one performs since the actions are a mirror image of that which is inside a persons heart.

When you see a fire burning, it is impossible to think that you would ever bring your hand close to that fire. If we had this same amount of belief in the words of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) then it is impossible that a conflict could ever occur between our beliefs and the actions that we perform:

أن الذين يأكلون أموال اليتامي ظلما إنما يأكلون في بطونهم نارا و سيصلون سعيرا

Surely those people who oppressively eat (take) the wealth of the orphan, certainly they are eating fire in their stomachs and soon for them shall there be a punishment of (hell) fire.(7)

Thus, in order to be protected from these trials and tribulations and calamities, we must make our beliefs firm.

#### 2) Power of the Lower Desires

On the surface, the person has good, strong faith however his lower desires are so strong that they actually take over his faith. In order to prevent this disease, the person has no other choice but to control his lower desires through the (spiritual) mortification of his soul which cannot be accomplished except by studying the lives of the great Muslims in history, reading about our previous scholars and to read over and study the verses of the Quran and the ahadith.

#### 3) Negligence

Such a person has faith and his lower desires are not powerful and this person can be compared to the negligent person who unintentionally goes towards fire or who, due to his negligence, accidentally pours hot water on his hand. In summary, negligence is one of the factors responsible for this form of conflict between one's faith and his actions.

The material aspects of this world are so beautiful and alluring that a person becomes negligent of all other things and the path to confront this type of negligence is through constant thinking - meaning that within the day, the person must set aside some time for contemplation - especially just before going to sleep. He must stop and think for some time about the actions that he performed during the day and what he did not do. He should think to himself where he is at and why he was brought into this world and what was the purpose of his being created? He should think to himself and ask himself if he has reached close to the purpose for his existence on this Earth? In summary, this continuous thinking would result in the curtains of negligence from being ripped apart.(8)

In any case, when we see that there are people who act contrary to that which they believe in, it is due to the reasons mentioned above.

For example a person knows the dangers that smoking drugs has however he says that, What can I do, I am not able to prevent myself from smoking these drugs and I have lost all control of myself.

Keeping in mind this issue, from one point we see that we must strengthen our pillars of faith and from another point, we see that we must constantly be engaged in thought.

Our faith can be increased and strengthened through more reading and studying and through performing good, righteous deeds and by restraining our lower desires.

Righteous actions make a person unwavering (in his faith) and steadfast and increases the nur (Divine Light) of guidance in the heart of the person.

and all praise belongs to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), only the mistakes are mine

### Notes

1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 182

2 In the words of Hafiz:

مجو درستي عهد از جهان سست نهاد که این عجوز، عروس هزار دامادست

3 Short saying #131

4 Nahjul Balagha, Speech 188

5 Nahjul Balagha, Speech 188

6 It is important to mention this point here that the meaning of this speech is that from one point of view, this world is a delusion and can delude people however from another point of view, it is a place of learning lessons such that if a person was to only pay attention to the material aspects of the world and its glitter and gold, then it would take him off of the path and would make him negligent of the next life and of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). Thus, each and every person must look towards death and those who have died before him and take lessons from them and through this, he can remove the negligence from his heart.

7 Surah al-Nisa, Verse 10

8 The following poem explains that which we just mentioned:

روزها فکر من این است و همه شب سختم که چرا غافل از احوال خودیستم  
از کجا آمده‌ام، آمدنم بهر چه بود؟ به کجا میروم؟ آخر نمایم وطنم  
مانده ام سخت عجب کز چه سبب ساخت مرا  
یا چه بوده ست مراد وی ازین ساختنم  
جان که از عالم علوی است، یقین می دانم رخت خود باز بر آنم که همان جافکنم  
مرغ باغ ملکوتم نیم از عالم خاک دو سه روزی قفسی ساختند از بدنم  
به هوای سر  
ای خوش آن روز که پروازکنم تا بر دوست  
کویش پرو بای بزمن

### **.009: Saying two successive prayers together**

In addition to the sources of Shi`ah, in the well-known sources of Sunnis such as Sahih of Bokhari and Sahih of Muslim, Sonan of Tirmizi, Mowatta` of Malik, Mosnad of `Ahmad, Sonan of Nasa`i, Mosnif of `Abdurrazzaq and so on, it has been narrated about thirty traditions regarding saying Zuhr and `Asr Namaz or Maqrib and `Isha Namaz successively which in them it has been said that while Prophet (s.a.w.) was in city and there was not any fear or necessity said two successive prayers together.

Now, we mention some of the traditions which Sunnis has narrated about saying two obligatory prayers together to become obvious that all the Muslims believe in the authenticity of it and Shi`ah has not innovated it.

1) In Mosnad, `Ahmad `ibn Hanbal quotes from `ibn `Abbas that he said: “The Messenger of `Allah (s.a.w.) was a resident of Medina and was not a traveller, however, he said both Zuhr and `Asr Namaz (8 rak`ats) and Maqrib and `Isha Namaz together (7 rak`ats).<sup>1</sup>

2) In Mowatta` Malik has quoted from `ibn `Abbas that he said: “The Messenger of `Allah (s.a.w.) said both Zuhr and `Asr Namaz and Maqrib and `Isha Namaz together while there was no fear and he was not a traveller.<sup>2</sup>

3) In Sahih, in the chapter of saying two successive prayers together at home, Muslim says: “`Ibn `Abbas said that: ‘The Messenger of `Allah (s.a.w.) said Zuhr and `Asr Namaz together and Maqrib and `Isha Namaz successively while there was no fear and he was not on journey.<sup>3</sup>

4) Muslim also has said that: And also `ibn `Abbas says that: “When the Messenger of `Allah (s.a.w.) was in Medina, he said both Zuhr and `Asr Namaz and Maqrib and `Isha Namaz together while there was no fear and it was not raining.” He says that: “I said to `ibn `Abbas: ‘Why did he do that? He said: he did that so that his nation would not suffer any hardship.’(2)

Many traditions have been narrated in this connection even in Sunnis sources, but being brief, we make it enough to mention.

In almost all the above mentioned traditions which have been narrated in well-known books and first rate sources of Sunnis and their authority handed down to some of the great ones of Companions ,it has been emphasized on two points:

First is that the Messenger of `Allah (s.a.w.) said two successive prayers together while there was not any special problem for example: it was not raining, he was not on journey and there was no fear of an enemy.

Second is that the aim of His Holiness was “to take it easy with nation” and “to remove distress and construction.”(3)

1- Musnad of `Ahmad `ibn Hanbal (1), page 221.

2- Mowatta` of Malik (1), page 144, tradition No.4.

3- Sahih of Muslim (1), page 489, tradition No. 49.

4- Sahih of Muslim (1), page 490, tradition No.51.

5- With truthful persons, page 379.

## **.010: The (various) levels of perfection in Iman (True Faith)**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن نافع عن عمر قال: قال رسول الله (صل الله عليه وآله وسلم): لا يكمل عبد الإيمان بالله، حتى يكون فيه خمس خصال: التوكل على الله، والتفويض إلى الله، والتسليم لأمر الله، والرضا بقضاء الله، والصبر على بلاء الله، إنه من أحب في الله، وأبغض في الله، وأعطى لله، ومنع لله، فقد استكمل الإيمان.

### **Translation of Hadith:**

It has been narrated from Nafi` from Ibn `Umar that he said that the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) said, A servant's faith in Allah will never become complete until he possesses five traits: complete reliance (al-Tawakkul) upon Allah, complete dependence (al-Tafwid) upon Allah (what He has decreed), complete submission (al-Taslim) to all of the commandments of Allah, complete contentment (al-Rida) upon what Allah has decreed and complete patience (al-Sabr) due to the calamities that Allah brings forth since verily that person who loves for the sake of Allah and hates for the sake of Allah and gives (to others) for the (sake of) Allah and holds back (giving to others) for the (sake of) Allah is one whose faith is complete.(1)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this Hadith, the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has elucidated upon the various levels (that one must traverse) in order to achieve perfection in one's faith.

Some of the scholars of the discipline of Akhlaq (ethics and morality) have also mentioned roughly the same points as the stages that one must traverse on the path of Sair wa Suluk (the path that one who is trying to get spiritually close to Allah, Glory and Greatness be to Him).

1. [التوكل على الله]: The first stage is to have complete reliance (upon Allah, Glory and Greatness be to Him). In reality, the true believer must be one who says, Since it is through the knowledge, power and mercy of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) that I have been granted true faith (Iman) and knowledge, I will take Him alone as the one I rely upon.

2. [والتفويض إلى الله]: The second stage is that of complete dependence upon Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). In the previous stage it is said that the true believer is walking on the path towards Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) which he himself has chosen. However at this stage, the true believer in reality says to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), O Allah! You know better than I and thus, I leave everything in Your hands.

The Difference between al-Tawakkul and al-Tafwidh:

At the stage of al-Tawakkul, a person gives precedence to everything that he feels is for his own personal benefit and thus he sees all the limits and restrictions for his own benefit, however in al-Tafwidh, the person knows that he has personal benefits, however he does not see the limits rather - he leaves them all up to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) (to fulfill). Why does he do so? He does this because he has complete reliance upon Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

3. [والتسليم لامر الله]: This stage is even higher than the previously mentioned level. At this stage, personal benefit has no meaning to the person. At the stage of Al-Tawakkul, a persons personal wishes and desires were the topic of discussion, however on the level of al-Taslim, a person does not even consider his own personal desires.

Question: If it is truly as you say (that one who is at the level of al-Taslim does not even make known his personal needs and desires) then there is no meaning to Dua and supplication, right?

Answer: The meaning of al-Taslim is not that we do not ask our needs or desires from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and that we do not call upon Him, rather, it means that if we have asked Him for something and our prayers have not been answered (in this world), then we must (still) submit to Him.

4. [والرضا بقضاء الله]: The stage of al-Rida is greater than the previously mentioned stage. It can be said that at the level of al-Taslim, a person still had personal wants and desires however he has still submitted his presence and essence and gives up his wants (to Allah). However at the stage of al-Rida - even within a persons own soul there is no resistance in relation to his wishes and desires and this is the difference between al-Taslim and al-Rida.

These levels mentioned form the four stages of the spiritual travel towards Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) in the hopes of attaining closeness to Him. It is very easy to explain these levels through words however how far is the distance of travel between each of these!

Sometimes, these levels are also known as [فناء في الله] or complete annihilation in the presence of Allah. Although it should be kept in mind that the word [فناء] has two meanings of which the first is the known and rational interpretation which is reaching to the level of al-Rida. In this stage, a person forgets all of his own personal wishes and desires while in the spiritual presence of the Pure Essence of his Lord and truly this is the correct meaning of the phrase [فناء في الله] which is also the agreed upon meaning in the Islamic legislations and our intelligence.

Of course this in no way contradicts the philosophy of Du`a (supplication) and requesting our needs from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). Thus, the person who has reached to this final stage of perfection of his Iman (true faith) meaning the stage of al-Rida - is still in need of Du`a and supplicating to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

All of these levels and stages can be achieved and reached through patience and perseverance. Principally, patience and standing firm is the root to all forms of happiness and contentment. The fifth piece of advice from Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him) in his testament was to observe patience which in reality acts as the guarantor to being able to perform the first four pieces of advice.

How many times have we seen that in order to reach to these levels of perfection, a person readies himself and practices these acts for a few days

however that which is important is that he must have perseverance while treading on this path.

It has been said many times that any person who has reached to levels of `Ilm (knowledge), action (upon what he has learned) and Taqwa has done so through the patience and perseverance that he displayed while on this path.

In the end of this Hadith there is a statement made that is the same meaning of the previous sentence meaning that: love and hate, giving to others and preventing from others must all be done sincerely for the sake of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) since all of these are signs of a person who has perfect Iman.

**Note**

1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 177

## .011: Shall look causes & sources

### Introduction:

Imam Hadi a.s. is the great Imam who was strictly squeezed and coerced. In a military region (Askari), he was separated from his followers. on this account, not many traditions have been narrated for us from him.

One of the crimes, committed by Umayyids and Abbasides, was avoiding relation of people with the Imams and the Household (a.s.). Otherwise, today there were numerous books from the utterances of those great men. In the interruption of pressure, that is, during the lifetime of Imam Baqir and Imam Sadiq (a.s.), we find valuable works from them. However, later, from the time of Mous Ebne Jafar (a.s.), limitations were exercised. Anyway, Imam Hadi (a.s.) has some aphorisms, and hereunder we will state one of them:

Tradition:

خير من الخير فاعله و اجمل من الجميل قائله و ارجح من العلم حامله و من الشر جالبه و احول من الحول راكبه.

**Translation:**

Better than the good deed, is its doer, and nicer than the nice utterance, is its utterer, and more virtuous than knowledge, is one who has the knowledge, and worse than the evil, is the evil-doer, and uglier than terror, is the terrifier. (Beharol Anva, vol. 75, p. 370)

Explanation

In these five sentences, Imam Hadi (a.s.) refers to the important points. What is the meaning of these five sentences, three of which is concerned with the goodness, and two with the evil. Actually, Imam (a.s.) indicates a basic principle, that is, always look for the sources and origins. If you want to spread goodness, you have better to look for its sources. If you want to prevent evil, you have better to look for the sources of evil.

What is more important than evil and goodness, is its doer. The noteworthy point, existing always in the society, is that when it is decided to fight with the corruption, most people watch the effects, and do not look for the causes, and thereby they do not succeed to overcome the problem. They eliminate one, but the second substitutes it, and so on. Why? Because they have not looked for the sources and causes.

We can explain a simple example. There may be spots and acne on the face of some people, or some sores on their skin. A group of them look for the dressings and ointments to remove these sores and spots. But some others think that there may be some problems in the function of liver, causing occurrence of the sores and spots on their skin. Although, application of ointment is temporarily effective, but if the cause of complication is not removed, it will erupt again. It is good to use a downer for temporary relief of the illness, but one shall simultaneously look for the sources and causes.

At present, there are two main problems in our society, which are worsened more and more: one is the problem of drugs, and the other is



licentiousness. Addiction age has become low, and the young are tainted. According to one of the informative sources, 150 addicted women have been recognized in one of the borderline cities, while it is believed that the women are less addicted to drugs. one of the ways for countering with this problem is arresting the addicts and executing the drug smugglers. It is one way that shall be followed. However, this is not the basic solution. We shall look for the sources and causes of addiction. Is it unemployment, infidelity, lack of cultural training, or the activity of hidden intervention of the aliens, who believe that addiction of the young, eliminates the important hindrance for their penetration into the country.

If we look in the history, we find that when the British were going to dominate the Chinese, they tried to spread opium among them. The Chinese found it, and raised against the British. They imported opium to China by force and military power, which is known as the opium war in the history. They tainted the people through the import of opium to their country, and when the youths of a nation are addicted, they do not resist against the enemy. The British started opium war since then, and now they are using it in another form. When the American dominated Afghanistan, it was supposed that based on their mottoes, they will eradicate drugs, while it is said that opium cultivation has been developed! They are false in their mottoes for human rights and fighting with corruption and addictions. Rather, they are looking for their interests and penetration, even though whole people of the world are destroyed.

We shall look for the sources. The youths shall be trained. Religion is the underlying factor. A religious youth is not addicted. When he is infidel, he becomes addicted.

The other factor is unemployment. When one is idle, and finds good income in this activity (drugs traffic), he turns to it. If we do not find a solution for them, and if we do not find a solution for the enemys plots, how we can fight? Therefore, we shall look for the causes. The effects alone are not adequate. We shall hold congresses, seminars and meetings for recognizing the causes to allow the scientists and researchers to negotiate and find the solutions. Congresses and seminars are hold for the trifling issues, but not for such critical ones.

The second spreading problem is licentiousness and tainting of the young. Do you think that the problem is solved through sending some guards and officers to the streets, as well as far and near parts, and preventing illegitimate contacts of the girls and sons, or it emerges somewhere else? We shall find the causes. one of them is decrease in the marriage. Marriage has become difficult for several reasons:

1- High expectations, 2- High formalities, 3- Heavy dower sums, 4- High costs and expenditures, and besides them, expansion of stimulants.

Some of the young say that it is difficult to control ourselves. We reply that you watch smutty films, leer, watch bad CDs, and read offensive magazines, and then say that it is difficult to control. You shall first block the stimulants. When the stimulants are easily available in the form of a CD, or some internet sites, how it is possible for a youth to control himself?!

In some wedding parties, there are so many illegitimate stimulants, and hundreds of youth are tainted there. In this way, some of the unmarried girls and boys are tainted. Is it wise for a youth to participate in these parties, and then say that I can not control myself? The stimulant factors shall be eliminated. Marriage shall be facilitated. We shall look for the sources, while in all of these cases, we look at the results.

## .012: Six things that lead to success

### Text of the Hadith:

عن أبي الدرداء قال: خطبنا رسول الله (ص) يوم جمعه، فقال: ايها الناس، توبوا الى الله قبل أن تموتوا وبادروا بالأعمال الصالحة قبل أن يستعلوا و أصلحو الذي بينكم و بين ربكم سعدوا و أكثروا من الصدقه ترزقوا و أمروا بالمعروف تحصنوا و انتهوا عن المنكر تنصروا

### TRANSLATION:

It has been narrated from Abil Darda that he said, The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) spoke to us the day of Jumuah and said to us, O, People! Turn back to Allah (in repentance) before you die; and before you get too busy (in your life), perform righteous deeds; correct the relationship between yourselves and your Lord so that you may gain felicity; and give much charity (Sadaqah) so that you are given (by Allah) sustenance; and enjoin goodness upon others so that you may be protected (from the hell of fire) and forbid others from evil so that you may be assisted (by Allah).(1)

### Commentary of Hadith:

In this Hadith, the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has given us six commandments to follow:

1) Tawbah: Turning back to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him)

Tawbah is one of the blessings of Allah the Most High to His servants. How beautifully has Imam Ali ibne al-Husain as-Sajad (peace be upon him) put it in his Munajat of the Taibin (Whispered Prayer of Those who Turn in Repentance to Allah) where he (peace be upon him) calls out:

إلهي، انت الذي فتحت لعبادك بابا إلى عفوك سميته التوبه، فقلت: توبوا إلى الله توبه  
نصوحا فما عذر من أغفل دخول الباب بعد فتحه؟

### Translation:

O, my Lord! You are the one who has opened up for Your servants the door towards Your forgiveness and You named it Tawbah when You said, Turn back in repentance towards Allah a sincere repentance so then what is the excuse for that person who is negligent in entering into the door after it has been opened?

The meaning of the sentence of the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) in the Hadith under discussion where he states, Ask repentance before you die is that immediately after we have committed a sin, we must turn back to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and this is because no one knows when he or she will die. In the Noble Quran, we read the following verse:

وما تدري نفس ماذا تكسب غدا و ما تدري نفس بأى أرض تموت

And no soul know what it shall earn tomorrow and no soul knows in which land it shall die.

It has been narrated that the Prophet of Islam (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) with all of the greatness and nobility of soul that he possessed would ask forgiveness seventy times per day! We claim to be

followers of this great personality, so then how many times a day do we ask forgiveness and turn back to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him)?

At night, before we go to sleep, how many acts that we performed in the day and ask for forgiveness (for his evil deeds), then the spiritual darkness would be lifted from his heart and his soul would become illuminated with the Divine Light.

It is for this reason that the best of acts that one can do is asking for forgiveness the first thing before the break of dawn.<sup>4</sup> Thus, a person should wake up in the middle of the night and in the calm of the night, should pray and ask his needs from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and pour out his heart to Him and in the words of the Quran he should be one of those who is:

مستغفرين بالاسحار

Those who seek forgiveness in the early hours.<sup>4</sup>

Almost all of our major scholar who have written treatise on the topic of Sair wa Suluk have stated that the first stage in this (spiritual) journey is Tawbah just as the Prophet of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said:

توبوا إلى الله قبل أن تموتوا

## 2) Performing Goods Deeds

A person does not always think about his free time, ease and comfort and naturally feels that he will stay young for his entire life. The persons thoughts are not always free and thus many obstacles can be placed on his path.

If you pay close attention to those around you, then you will notice that there are some people who have everything (materialistically) given to them and these people have no shortages and are not lacking anything in their material life, however, they will say, The yearning to learn and study has not been taken away from me. Therefore, if you would like to increase your knowledge, then you must develop Taqwa within yourself and must work towards self building and purification of the soul since whatever we have is through our Taqwa (Allah consciousness) and we must perform good deeds before we get to a stage in our life where we are overcome by difficulties.

## 3) Reconciliation with Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him)

We see that in relation to the events that are happening around them people are of three categories:

There is one group who only look at what the people are saying: there is another group who look partially at what others are saying and also partially at what Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) has commanded them to perform. However, the third group are those who only pay attention to what Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) has commanded them to do and ignore the other people.

Keeping in mind this brief introduction, we see that in any event which takes place, the person must see what it is that Allah ((Glory and Greatness be to Him) has ordered to be performed and to only do that.

By this, we mean that the first haqq or right that is upon us should be recognized (that of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him)) and then we

should see what the people are saying since if a person is to first establish a firm relation with Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), then in return, Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) will correct that persons relations with the people. This fact can be seen in a hadith from Amir al-Momenin Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him) in which he has said:

من أصلح بينه وبين الله، أصلح الله ما بينه وبين الناس

The person who corrects his relationship between himself and Allah, Allah will correct his affairs between himself and the people.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, the only way to the path of true happiness is that we establish a relationship with Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

4) Giving great amounts of Sadaqah

Giving Sadaqah to others brings with it two important benefits:

1- ones sustenance is increased;

2- Maladies and difficulties are removed from the person.

In relation to an increase in sustenance, we see that this goes against the apparent aspect of this world meaning that if a person gives charity in the way of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) then according to his bank account and the apparent outcome of this charity, his pocket should be empty. However, according to the Islamic narrations, this act actually increases a persons sustenance and wealth!

It is good to give Sadaqah in whatever amount possible so much so that the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has told us that we are even permitted to give away our old clothing as charity and in addition, this act of Sadaqah increases a persons life span.

When starting on a journey, these are some people who count the number of days that they will be away and actually put aside an amount of money to give in Sadaqah and this is an act that us those who are active in the propagation of the faith of Islam should be acting upon so that this act of charity acts as a barrier against anything that may come upon us.

5 and 6) Commanding to that which is Right and Forbidden that which is Evil (Amr bil Maruf and Nahi Anil Munkar)

These two programs have great benefit in them and in relation to these two important acts, Amir al-Momenin Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him) has stated that:

وما أعمال البر كلها و الجهاد في سبيل الله، عند الأمر بالمعروف و النهي عن المنكر، إلا

كففته في بحر لحي

All of the righteous actions including Jihad in the way of Allah in relation to the act of Amr bil Maruf and Nahi Anil Munkar can be comparable to the water in the mouth and the water that is contained within the deep oceans.<sup>7</sup>

Not paying attention to the act that another person is doing and leaving him to do as he wished that we usually say What does it matter to me or due to some other reason as not wanting to trouble our friends and acquaintances or so as not to be a nuisance, we refrain from this act and just as the famous saying goes, What is the need to time a handkerchief around the head when it does not hurt. Acting in this way slowly gets us to the point that wicked

acts take rule over a society and the righteous doers are then lesser in number and good acts in general and then forgotten within the society.

This is definitely an empty belief and a great mistake that people think that honor and dignity lies in the hands of other people and not in the hands of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) whereas it clearly says in the Quran that:

تعز من يشاء وتذل من يشاء

He gives honor to whomsoever He pleases and He debases whomsoever He pleases. 8

And in another place in the Quran we read that:

من كان يريد العزه فلله العزه جميعا

So then whosoever desires honor, so then with Allah alone is all the honor.9

and all praise belongs to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), only the mistakes are mine

Question: Why is it that of all the time that exists in the night and day, only the time of late night (or the early hours of the morning before sunrise) has been mentioned (in this verse), whereas we know that it is permitted to ask for forgiveness and return back to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) at all times?

Answer: Our reply to this question is that due to the stoppage of work of the material world and tranquility and pleasure that has been achieved through the rest and sleep of that evening, the person has a better opportunity to pay closer attention to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and this explanation can easily be seen through trial and experimentation.

In addition, we see that when it comes to solving difficult issues, many of the scholars would make use of the late night/early morning period since at this time, the light of thought and the soul of the person is brighter and clearer than at all other times. Since the essence of worship and asking forgiveness is paying attention and having presence of heart (at the time of asking forgiveness), thus, the worship and asking forgiveness at such a time of the night is much more worthy than at all other times. (Tafsir-e-Namuna, volume 2, page 344)

A few points must be mentioned here:

1- The word "معروف" comes from the root word "عرف" meaning something which is known as the word "منكر" comes from "انكار" or something which is unknown.

Good deeds and actions are things which are well known to everyone whereas the bad deeds and things that are not liked are the things that are unknown and thus, the pure natural disposition (Fitrah) of a person is well aware of the first category, however not acquainted with the second type of act.

2- Is the act of Amr bil Maruf and Nahi Anil Munkar a responsibility that can be deduced through our intellect or is it something that is simply a commandment from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) to follows?

Some of the Islamic scholars are of the belief that the nature of these two acts (Amr bil Maruf and Nahi Anil Munkar) is that they are obligatory (and legislated by Allah) but can only be proven from the narrated sources (the Quran and ahadith) and the intelligence has no part to play in legislating this act that our intelligence can not tell us that if we see another person doing a bad or despicable act, then we are to stop him from doing it.

However, by keeping in mind the interrelation of the society to one another and that there is no bad act that takes place within the human society that is only limited to one particular part of that society rather, whatever happens can be compared to a fire and as such, it is possible that it will also spread to and affect other areas thus, our intelligence has commanded us to act according to these two commandments. In other words, within the society there is no issue referred to as individual dangers and as such, any loss or danger that reaches one person in the society has the possibility of turning into a societal danger and it is because of this reason that the mind and intelligence commands a person who is living within the society to keep his spiritual environment pure and clean and must not stop at any means to achieve this.

In a Hadith from the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) he has told us that, The sinning person who lives amongst other people is just as the person who has boarded a boat with other people. When they have reached to the middle of the ocean, the person takes an axe and begins to make a hole in the boat where he is sitting. The people around him begin to protest his act to which he replies that, I am doing what I want to do in my part of the boat! If the other people who are with him do not prevent him from this dangerous act of his, then it will not take long that water will fill their boat and they will all end up drowning in the ocean.

With this very thought provoking example, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has shown us that the act of Amr bil Marul and Nahi Anil Munkar is something that is logical and rational and the permission of a person to look after and maintain the society is a natural right which goes back to and related to the eventual outcome of the entire society.

### 3- The importance of Amr bil Maruf and Nahi Anil Munkar

In addition to the numerous verses of the Noble Quran, there are also countless ahadith in the reliable Islamic sources that speak about the importance of these two great societal responsibilities in which the eventual outcome and punishment for leaving these two important acts within the society have been mentioned of which we mention the following:

It has been narrated that Imam Muhammad ibn Ali al-Baqir (peace be upon him) that he has said:

ان الامر بالمعروف والنهي عن المنكر، فريضه عظيمه. بها تقام الفرائض وتأمين المذاهب و  
تحل المكاسب وترد المظالم وتعمر الأرض وينتصف من الأعداء ويستقيم الأمر

Surely Amr bil Maruf and Nahi Anil Munkar are two great obligatory acts and through these are (the other) obligatory acts protected and through these are the teachings protected and through these are trading and transactions made permissible and through these are oppression kept away

and it is through these acts that the Earth is kept habitable and through which revenge is taken from the enemies and all other acts related back to these two duties.

The Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has stated:

من أمر بالمعروف ونهى عن المنكر فهو خليفة الله في أرضه وخليفه رسول الله وخليفه كتابه

The person who commands to that which is good and forbids others to that which is wrong is deemed as the Khalifah of Allah upon His Earth the Khalifah of the Messenger of Allah and the Khalifah of His book.

From these ahadith we can clearly deduce that this great obligatory act before all other things is a part of the overall plan of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and the appointment of the Prophets and the sending of the various Divine Books are also a part of this plan Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

A person once came into the presence of the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) while he was sitting on the Mimbar and asked him:

من خير الناس

Who is the best person?

The Prophet (prayers of Allah be upon him and his family) replied to him:

أمرهم بالمعروف وأنهاهم عن المنكر وأتقاهم لله وأرضاهم

That person who enjoins goodness to others and prevents them from the evil and the one who is the most conscious of Allah and who tries to please Allah more than others.

In another Hadith from the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) it has been related that he said, You must command others to perform righteous deeds and must prevent them from the forbidden acts and if you do not do this then Allah will appoint oppressors to rule over you who will neither show respect to the elders nor will they show mercy to the young ones. The righteous and pious from amongst you will supplicate however their prayers will go unanswered. They will request help from Allah however Allah will not assist them and these people will even ask for repentance for their sins. However, Allah will not even forgive them their sins.

All of the emphasis that has been place on these two acts so that we can realize the importance of these two great obligatory acts which in reality are guarantors for the continuation of all of the other individual and societal responsibilities which rule over the soul and life of the other people and if these acts are not put into practice, then all of the practical laws and principles of ethical and morality would lose all of their worth and value. (Tafsir-e-Namuna, volume 3, page 37-40)

### Notes

1 Bihar al-Anwar, volume 74, page 186



2 The word used in this verse "نصح" comes from the root word "نصح" which means sincere advice which one gives to another person. Thus, in this verse, it refers to sincere repentance. The Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said that, Sincere repentance means that a person does not return back to committing the sin (that he has asked forgiveness for) just as the milk of the mother can not return back into her breast.

Of course, sincere repentance can only be accomplished when a person has complete understanding and awareness of the sins and their punishments meaning that if we feel and know that committing sins will result in the punishment and the burning in the fire, then we will never even come close to sins.

3 Surah Luqman, verse 34

4 At the time when peace and tranquility have covered over everything and when all of the negligent people and those who are unaware (of the realities of life) are deep in sleep and the business and transactions of the material world have quieted down, those spiritual personalities and those whose hearts are spiritually alive rise up to remember Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). While in His grand presence, they seek forgiveness and ask for His pardon and drown themselves in the glory of the nur (divine light) and greatness of their Lord. With their entire presence, they cry out with the call of true monotheism and are of those people who have been mentioned in the Noble Quran:

مستغفرين بالاسحار

Those who seek forgiveness in the early hours.

5 Surah Aale Imran, verse 17

6 Nahjul Balagha, Short saying 89

7 Nahjul Balagha, Short saying 366. 8 Surah Aale Imran (3), verse 26

9 Sura Al-Fatir, verse 10

### **.013: Advice given to Abu Dharr – Sustenance**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن أبي ذر (رضي الله عنه) قال: قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) لرجل و هو يوصيه: أقلل من الشهوات يسهل عليك الفقر، وأقلل من الذنوب يسهل عليك الموت، و قدم ما لك أمامك يسرك اللحاق به، واقنع بما أوتيته يخف عليك الحساب، و لا تتشاغل عما فرض عليك بما قد ضمن لك؛ فإنه ليس بفائتك ما قد قسم لك، و لست بلاحق ما قد زوي عنك. فلأتك جاهدا فيما أنصح نافدا، واسع لملك لا زوال له، في منزل لا انتقال عنه.

#### **TRANSLATION:**

It has been narrated from Abi Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said, The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) said to a person whom he was advising, Reduce the base desires (the desires of your soul) and poverty shall become easy upon you (to bear); and lessen the sins so that death shall become easy for you to endure; and send things from your own wealth ahead for yourself, so that by seeing this (on the Day of Judgment), you shall become happy; and be content with that which is given to you so that your accountability and reckoning is reduced; and do not busy yourself with the sustenance which is guaranteed to reach you (and do not develop greed to this part of the provision which is guaranteed to reach you) so that you do not disregard the obligatory acts which are upon you (to perform), since surely that which has been set aside for you will not leave your hand (it shall surely reach you), and that which has left your hand (that which you have lost from sustenance) will never come back again. So then do not struggle to attain those things which are not pure and which will be destroyed, and do not put forth struggle for those things which are temporal. Rather, struggle for those things which are perpetual and which will last forever (in the next life).(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this hadith, the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has given us various pieces of advice, and at the end of his speech, has spoken about the issue of sustenance.

First Commandment: Reducing our Base Desires

If we are able to reduce our lower desires, then surely poverty will be something easy to bear!

All of the wealth which exists within the world can be spent in three areas: 1) the necessities of life; 2) the things for ones own personal welfare; and 3) our lower desires.

The amount which is spent on the necessities of life is the smallest portion spent (out of all three areas), where as we see that the amount spent on satisfying our lower desires and passions is where the most amount of wealth goes to. It is because of this reason that the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has told us that if we reduce our base and lower desires, then poverty would be easy upon us, since the majority of people who are poor are not deprived in relation to their primary needs and necessities (of life). The issue of being in a state of poverty is in relation to

either our welfare (other necessities or needs we have) and well-being, or in areas of our base and lower desires (our greed).

For example, a person may believe that the house in which he is living in is too small for him and thus, he goes out to find a bigger house. There are also other issues such as this which are termed as unnecessary expenditures which are, many times, placed ahead (on our list of priorities) as being necessary and essential requirements for us. However, in reality we see that it is truly not like this!

There are many people who, in order to gain the material things of life which they truly do not need, who will go through great lengths and pains to gain those things. They have a house which is acceptable according to their status and needs and their loans are all paid up, however they stop and ponder for a while and think to themselves:

من سعادة الرجل سعة داره

Of the means of felicity for a person is to have a large house.

In addition to this they also think that, Tomorrow, my young children shall grow up, my relatives will come over to my house and In summary, slowly, slowly, he will make up excuses for himself and thus, in the end, he will end up selling his old house and through taking loans and mortgages, will purchase a new house!

Of the troubles with people is that they are not able to put up with the challenges of life there must be challenges and difficulties within your life! In summary, their apparent troubles are actually no troubles at all!

In reality, we see that this issue (which has just been mentioned) is a very dangerous issue for those people who are involved in the spreading of the religion (of Islam) [the Scholars] since actions which require thought such as `Ibadat (worship) also require presence of the heart, and if there is no presence of the heart, then a person is not able to study, teach, nor would he be able to even write anything!

We do not say that if Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) gives a person something (materialistically speaking), that he must throw that thing away! Rather, our discussion is focusing on this issue which is that it is not correct to take these things as being the necessities of one' life which one should spend his entire life running after. When a person does not have the base desires, then he is definitely not poor.

Of course, we must accept that even within the basic necessities of life, there are some people who are definitely poor and needy (their basic needs).

Second Commandment: Reducing our Sins

There is a relationship between reducing the number of sins which we perform and the ease at the time of our death which we will experience, and it is for this reason that the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has spoken these lofty words.

At this point, we must ask ourselves: Why does humanity fear death?

We see that people fear death since they feel it is complete annihilation and non-existence and since death brings about with it the end of all things, and because of the fact that these people do not see death as being a journey through the valley towards perpetual existence and a much more spacious world (compared to this world).

It is natural that a person fears darkness and annihilation - however, if that person was a true believer (Momin), then he would definitely not fear death, and this is one of the greatest services which the Prophets have assisted mankind with that they have taken away the fear and terror of death from them.

Of course, it is very well possible that a person is a true believer (Momin) and would have firm conviction in the next life, however since his book of deeds is dark and blackened over, he would be fearing death and for such a person, there is no other avenue open, except for repentance for his sins.

Death is as a coarse, but colorful woolen garment for the believer which he seeks to take off of his body, and from which he steps out of this cramped and dark world, into the presence of the close, intimate friends of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him):

الدنيا سجن المؤمن وجنة الكافر

The world is the prison for a believer and a paradise for the disbeliever.

And thus, if the door of the prison was to open, and it was said to the prisoner,

Go ahead, come out, you are free, would he be upset at this?

Thus, to be freed from this world has no grief or hurt associated with it!

Of course, this sentence also has another interpretation which is that it is through the continuous sins which result in the fact that which the time of death approaches, death becomes very difficult for the person to bear. By this we mean that since the person has such a close and strong affinity with this material world and the relationship is so intense, we see that at the time of his death and when the soul is coming out of him, death is extremely painful for him to bear. However, if he were not to commit sins, then it would be very easy for his soul to leave his body.

Third Commandment: Refraining from the Worship of this Material World

At this junction, we see that the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) pays special attention to the next life and the fact that one must not strive for the affairs of this material world and in more correct terms, he has invited us to refrain from the worship of this material world.

In yet other terms, we see that this hadith tells us that, Allah will make your sustenance reach to you and He has guaranteed this to you and this amount will never slip from you, thus, you should not be busying yourself with showing greed in the seeking of wealth such that through this you end up not performing the obligatory acts which are incumbent upon you.

And just as is commonly said, Whatever is in your destiny will reach you.

In continuation, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has then stated that, Do not think that by working with your hands and feet that that which has been specified for you to reach will not reach to you or that that which should not reach to you, will reach to you. Therefore, in the affairs of those things which are not permanent, do not put forth a great struggle. Rather, in order to secure the next life which is perpetual and ever lasting, struggle hard!

At this point, it is incumbent to mention the following issues:

1. In relation to ones sustenance, there are some very intricate and complex expressions and interpretations given in the verses of the Noble Quran and the ahadith and at first glance, it may seem that they go against one another.

From one point of view, we see that in the verses of the Quran and the ahadith, it has been frequently mentioned that the sustenance (which shall reach us) has already been apportioned (by Allah, Glory and Greatness be to Him).

For example, in one verse of the Quran we read that:

ما من دابة في الارض الا على الله رزقها

There is not a single creature upon the Earth, except that upon Allah is its sustenance.

Or for example, as it has been mentioned in the ahadith that so long as a person is alive, his sustenance will continue to reach him.

It was one asked from the Prophet of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family), If a person is locked inside a room and all of the ways to get out of that room are closed to him, then how would his sustenance reach to him? The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) replied, His sustenance would reach to him from that same channel that death would reach to him and thus, his sustenance would reach to him.

Thus, according to these verses and the ahadith, the sustenance which we shall gain is something promised and guaranteed for us.

Opposite to this point of view, we see that we have ahadith which invite us to strive and struggle and tell us to wake up early in the morning from our sleep and to go after our earnings since the person who is idle and unemployed is cursed. Thus, through things such as farming, animal husbandry, etc we must seek to gain our livelihood.

In the beginning, it seems as if there is an dissimilarity between these two views, however, it may be possible to rationalize the contrasting views by stating that the sustenance which has been guaranteed to reach the person has - just as there are conditions for our prayers to be accepted also has conditions related to it.

Therefore, we see that one of the conditions for this sustenance is that we must put forth effort and struggle, and with this summary, the dissimilarity is removed.

2. Throughout the world, there are millions of people who die due to hunger, and if the sustenance was divided (by Allah, Glory and Greatness be to Him), then why is it that all of these people are dying?

If we see that people are dying of hunger, then this is a sign of the oppression and tyranny of humanity. For example, if we have an oppressor who is placing oppressed and subjugated people in prison and is not giving them food so that they die of hunger, we are not able to think that this is the fault of the Creator of the Universe!

The continent of Africa has the largest number of people who are sacrificed due to hunger and starvation, however at the same time, it is full of diamonds and other important, valuable minerals! There is a group of oppressors who are taking this wealth, and then on the other hand we see

that excess food is thrown away in the garbage and thus because of this, we see that others die of hunger!

For example, in order for the price of wheat and other goods to not drop in the world markets, we see that some countries dump truckloads of grain into the oceans or they end up hoarding and storing it - even if this means paying the price through the sacrifice and deaths of millions of people! Thus, if there were no oppressive people on the Earth, then such trials and tribulations would definitely not occur.

Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) has given us all intelligence so that humanity would travel on the path using their human nature (Fitrah) which they were created with, and so that for the needs of their material life, they would strive and struggle and would work for more output and production, however all of this does not go against the fact that there are a group of people who seek to control and limit this production.

In the ahadith, there is also another division seen in which sustenance and provisions have been divided into the following two categories:

1. The sustenance which you want or desire.
2. The sustenance which desires or wants you

The sustenance too is just like other issues which are related to Qada and Qadr (fate and destiny).

The guaranteed and definite sustenance which will reach to a person is that which will whether we like it or not will come to us, while the other one is that which we must go and seek.

From this division of the sustenance which Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him) has mentioned in Nahjul Balagha, it is clear that those ahadith which tell us that, The sustenance of a person will definitely reach him, even if he is in a prison is in reference to that sustenance which has been guaranteed and promised for that person.

## .004: Misguidedness

### Text of Hadith:

وقيل له (امام سجاد (ع) يوما: إن الحسن البصري قال: ليس العجب ممن هلك كيف هلك؟  
وانما العجب ممن نجا كيف نجا. فقال (ع): انا اقول: ليس العجب ممن نجا كيف نجا واما العجب  
ممن هلك كيف هلك مع سعة رحمة الله

### Translation:

It was said to Imam As-Sajjad (a.s.) one day: Surely al-Hasan al-Basri has said, It is not amazing (to me) how the person who is destroyed (by Allah) is destroyed rather what is truly amazing to me is that person who is saved (by Allah) and how he is saved! [I am not surprised how a person deviates from the straight path (as this is quite easy); rather, I am surprised how a person attains true guidance]. The Imam (a.s.) said to him, Rather, I say it is not amazing how the person who is saved (by Allah) is saved, rather that which is amazing for me is the person who is destroyed (by Allah) and how he is destroyed with the vast mercy of Allah!(1)

### Explanation of the Hadith:

This hadith points to a very important topic there are some people who have developed the habit of pessimism and negativity in their lives and in today's terminology, they see everything as being dark and gloomy. They state that, by keeping in mind the ever presence of Shaitan - the one who is seeking to misguide everyone and in addition, the lower desires and passions and the corruption of the time and place in which we are living in, it is amazing for humanity to be saved from all of these meaning that our original state is that of corruption and pollution by sins and that true guidance is that which goes against the natural state of life and it is something amazing if it is to develop!

In our opinion, those people who think in this form actually possess Satanic thoughts and thus, this person, Al-Hasan Al-Basri, is also one of those people who possesses Satanic thoughts in his mind!

The story of him and his encounters with Imam Ali (a s) are well know. on one occasion, Imam Ali (a s) had said to him: Why did you not take part in the Battle of Jamal? He replied, I went forth to take part in the Battle of the Camel however I saw a person yelling that both the killer and the one who is killed are both going to be in the hell fire. In reply, the Imam (a.s.) told him, Definitely it is your brother, Shaitan, who made this claim so as to misguide you.

One of those things which led to corruption during the time period of Imam `Ali (a s) was this person al-Hasan al-Basri who is considered as one of the Fuqaha and Commentators of the Quran in the view of the Ahlus Sunnah!

The intimate friends of Allah Q do not think in this way and the Islamic Scholars too must not think in this way rather, they must state that the truth of the matter is that all people must be the people of salvation since the grand and expansive Mercy of Allah is that which led to 124,000 Prophets being sent and all of this Divine Heavenly Books coming to us especially

the Qur`an. In addition to this, Allah has granted humanity an intellect and aptitude and if they were to make use of this asset, then mankind would definitely take control over their soul. In addition, mankind has also been granted the pure nature (Fitrah) which is another thing which leads to guidance. He has also been granted a conscience which is a very good authority and judge over himself. Allah has also granted mankind lessons to learn through in his life which all people are able to see with their own eyes. The signs of Monotheism and the greatness of the Heavens and the Earth are full of His Signs after all of this, what else is needed for guidance?

If we were to put a single hair under the lens of a microscope and analyze it in this way, we would definitely see that this one strand of hair is enough to recognize Allah thus, what can be stated about the eye, heart and brain and the great way in which they have been designed; in addition, what about the plants and over 15,000 different types of animals which live in the water all of these things point to Allah and are a way for us to gain guidance.

Imam al-Kadhim (a s) has stated to Harun al-Rashid:

كل ما تراه فهو لك عظة

The Mercy of Allah Q dictates that in the world around us, the signs of guidance of all of humanity must be present. Therefore, it should not be a surprise that the person attains salvation, and thus we must state that our original state is that of salvation and not destruction.

One of the forms of the evil whispering of the Shaitan which affects both the elders and young people of the society and even affects some of the Religious Scholars is when a person says that this present time (which he is living in) has become corrupt and thus we have given up all hope and now we have no responsibility left. In reality, this is the act of removing one's responsibility from his own shoulders and looking at the world in the eyes of Al-Hasan al-Basri by stating that it is not possible for mankind to attain salvation.

The true believer must be just like Imam al-Sajjad (a.s.) and must say that it should be of no surprise who are saved (from destruction) rather, that person who is misled is the one whom we should show surprise towards meaning that we should always be looking forward to salvation and work in these regards.

We should just think about the period of the Bani Umayyah the period of the Bani Umayyah was actually better than the period in which we are living today it was a time which was full of spiritual darkness however at the same time, the Imam (a.s.) has still stated that it should not be surprising if one attains salvation.

It is our prayer and desire that we are able to understand this lesson which we have learnt from the presence of Imam as-Sajjad (a.s.) and that we do not seek to remove ourselves from our the responsibility which Allah Q has placed over us.

#### Note

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 75, Page 153



## **.015: Two despised characteristics: Eating too much and looking at others**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم): إياكم و فضول المطعم فإنه يسم القلب بالقسوة، و يبطيء بالجوارح عن الطاعة، و يصم الهمم عن سماع الموعدة، و إياكم و فضول النظر، فإن يبدر الهوي، و يولد الغفلة

### **Translation of Hadith:**

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, I warn you in relation to eating too much since surely this act poisons the heart by making it hard (no emotional feelings) and makes your body parts lazy and lethargic in relation to obedience (of Allah through worship) and deafens the ears from hearing advice and good counsel. And I also warn you in relation to looking around with inquisitiveness since surely this act excites your desires and passions and gives birth to negligence.(1)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In the above Hadith, we have been prohibited from eating too much (filling our stomach) and looking at others and other things with inquisitiveness.

#### **1. Eating too much**

The issue of observing moderation in our food is something whose importance we do not know or realize as we do not know what important benefits both from the point of view of our physical body and health, and also in relation to our spirit and ruh - this action has upon us. Thus, eating too much can be looked at from two different angles: the physical aspect and the spiritual aspect.

A) The Physical Aspect: It has been confirmed that a majority of the diseases that people are afflicted with are due to eating too much food. There are some doctors that have even brought proof to back up this claim and state that, Microbes can and do enter the body from four different ways: from the air, food, water and sometimes even through our skin and there is no way to prevent these from coming into our system.

When this skin of ours which is a thick barrier that should prevent the microbes from entering into us has a scratch or wound on it, it is possible that through this injury, microbes enter into the body and thus break through the barrier of protection. Therefore, we always try to defend ourselves from various types of attacks from microbes and various types of illnesses. In addition, our body develops the means of protection and the defense mechanism needed so that it does not become a source of infections.

Also, it has been said that the extra fat that is covering over the tissues in the body is a place where various types of microbes can form and grow just like a garbage can which is full and which if kept in a place for a long time could lead to sicknesses and the spreading of various diseases.

Some of the things which can protect us from such diseases is to burn off all of this excess body fat - and one of the ways that the fat can be burnt off is through fasting. This is proof that all people can understand since everyone can discern that when there is excess food in his or her body which

is not absorbed into itself, then the body stores this excess, and in the end, the job of the heart then increases.

In summary, we state that when a person becomes heavier, it has a negative affect on all parts of his body and thus the heart and other organs also get sick faster, and naturally the life of the person is then cut short. Therefore, if a person is sincerely trying to attain goodness for his self, he must abstain from eating too much food and must habituate himself to eating less especially those people who do not exercise much.

One of the doctors once said, It is now twenty years that I have been trying to cure sick people and my answer to all of the experiences (over these years) that I have seen can be summed up in two phrases:

moderation in food and exercise.

B) The Spiritual Aspect: The Hadith we started with points to three very important spiritual aspects that a person who eats too much will face:

1) The first is that a person who eats too much will develop spiritual hardness in his heart.

2) The second point is that eating too much will lead the person to become lazy and lethargic in his worship. This second point has been witnessed such that when a person eats very heavy food, he is not able to for example - easily perform his Salat al-Fajr and if he is able to wake up for the Salat, he would resemble a person who is giddy or drunk. However, when a person eats light and simple food, then when the time of the Adhan comes or even before the time of the prayer, he wakes up and is full of joy. He would be in a mental condition to study or to perform worship of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

3) The third point is that a person who eats too much will have his ears sealed to listening to and taking heed of advice and good council. When a person is fasting, we see that his heart has pity and sympathy for others in it and his level of spirituality increases. However when the person's stomach is full, his mind does not work properly and thus, he sees himself as being far away from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

Maybe you yourselves have noticed that during the Month of Ramadhan, the peoples hearts are more apt and ready to hear advice and exhortation since through staying hungry and fasting in the day time, their hearts have developed a sense of purity.

## 2. Looking at Others

What is the meaning of the word **نظر** in this Hadith? First off, we can say that it is in the meaning of looking at a non-Mahram which would lead a person to take his lower desires as his Lord, however it is not improbable that this word has a much wider and deeper meaning than just this. By this we mean that any sort of look with the eyes which would lead a person's lower desires to get excited. For example: a person passes by a store or shop and staring with astonishment at the things he sees in the window, he wishes and longs and says to himself, Oh! If only I had those things! Or a person sees the newest model of car that has come out and has the desire that he had that car. This sort of looking at something and having that longing and desire and wish (that he had such a thing) would lead to negligence and

forgetfulness (of Allah, Glory and Greatness be to Him) since these sorts of wishes would make a person attracted and attached to the temporal world.

However the look which is done to take lessons and learn and which is a purely religious look or that look which is for example done to help and reach out to a poor, destitute person and the person who is sick so as to help and cure him is a look that is very highly recommend and has been emphatically emphasized (in our religion).

Point: Many types of wealth and levels of status in this material world just as it has been mentioned in the ahadith and Nahj al-Balagha can be described as such:

كل شيء من الدنيا سماعه اعظم من عيانه

Everything that is in the world which is heard about (that people speak about) is greater than what can be seen of it.<sup>2</sup>

As it is commonly stated, The sound of the kettledrum is pleasing to hear from afar. From a great distance, the sound of such a drum is nice and pleasing however when a person gets closer and closer to it, he would then realize that it is a flimsy, empty thing that hurts his ears to listen to!

The late Hadhrat Aytullah al-`Uzma Burujerdi (may Allah be pleased with him) once gave the following piece of advice to us in one of his lessons, If a student (of the Hawza) studies Islam with the intention that he wants to reach to the level or status that I (Aytullah al-`Uzma Brujerdi) have reached to, then do not have any doubt about his foolishness and simplicity. You are inking from afar (not in this position that I am in) and you see that I am at this position of Marja`iyyat (of course we must keep in mind that he was the Highest Marja` ever and there has never been anyone at his level) however I see myself at a station where I am not the master of my own life and how it passes by. I do not have the ability to even control when I take a rest and relax.

Almost all gifts of this world are just like this.

1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 73, Page 182

2 Khutbah 114

## SECTION TWO

\* CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRUE BELIEVER

\* NOURISHMENT OF SOUL

\* THE MATERIALISTIC & THE NEXT WORLD

\* CERTAINTY & DOUBTS

\* DEATH: AN UNACCEPTABLE TRUTH

## SECTION TWO

### CHARACTERISTICS OF A TRUE BELIEVER

#### .016: Silence

In our weekly ethical discussions, we have been narrating Hadith from the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) that he spoke to Amir al-Mominin Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him) in which a total of one hundred and three characteristics of the true, complete believer were explained. In our previous gatherings, we discussed forty-five characteristics and today, we cover two more.

**Text of the Hadith:**

قليل الكلام، صدوق اللسان

**Translation:**

The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, (The true believer) speaks less and is truthful in his speech (1)

**Commentary of Hadith:**

قليلThe forty-sixth characteristic of the true believer is that of "

"or that the true believer speaks less. In relation to the true الكلام believer speaking less, we have numerous ahadith which show the importance of this trait since it is through the tongue that numerous sins are committed and through which everyone is made know of these acts (of transgression). This instrument of sinning is available everywhere, at all times and is very easy to make use of. However as for other sins, there are (other) ways through which they are done and they have a specific time and place in which they can be performed, however the sins of the tongue are the most dangerous of sins.

In addition, the tongue is that instrument through which (at least) thirty of the major sins can be committed and thus, we are able to commit many sins through this medium. However for sins such as drinking alcohol or gambling, there is only one instrument of the body at use when performing that sin and therefore in order to counter the dangers of the tongue, we have been commanded to speak very less -rather-we must observe silence.

In relation to the importance of maintaining silence and speaking less, we have many ahadith of which, we narrate five short Hadith from the book Mizan al-Hikmah. Contained within each of these ahadith is one point in relation to the benefit of not speaking much.

1- Silence: The First Step in the Worship of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him)

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, Silence is the first form of worship (of Allah)(2)

The first thing that the scholars of Sair wa Suluk (attaining spiritual proximity to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) have advised their students to observe is silence and to speak less.

From the point of view of the general(Muslim) population, the person who drinks as much as one drop of alcohol while inside the Masjid is a very despicable person -however these same people (who think that this is act is despicable) will spend the whole day, from morning to night-in that same sacred place indulging in backbiting, lying, and leveling false accusations against other people and they will not even tire out in the least! This is because the detestability of the sins of the tongue are very less in the eyes of the people and they do not see such things as being bad to perform and this is one of the most dangerous things since as a sin gets more and more despicable, the more and more people will try to stay away from that sin.

2- Silence Keeps Shaitan Far Away

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, I advise you to prolong keeping quiet since this act repels Shaitan(3)

At the time when a person is speaking a lot, Shaitan is around him, busy listening to what he is saying and at any moment, it is possible that the person's tongue may begin to swerve this and that way and he may start to speak bad things. Sometimes, the bad feelings, feuds and enmities that take place within the family are due to the useless talk which Shaitan enters into.

3- Silence: The Best Protector

Ali (peace be upon him) has said, There is no protector better at protecting (a person), than silence.(4)

We see that sometimes the tongue is the reason why a person is even killed. In the face of jealousy, enmity and the Shaitan, remaining quiet is the best protector for a person.

4- Silence: The Source of Dignity

Ali (peace be upon him) has said, Silence clothes a person with the robes of dignity and reduces the need to always ask for forgiveness(5)

Those people who always speak too much in gatherings are much more undignified than others. Thus, it is through maintaining silence that the dignity of a person is increased.

In addition to this, the person does not need to always ask for forgiveness since when a person speaks too much, he will fall into the trap of saying things which may necessitate him to ask for forgiveness and apologize which would take away from his spiritual worth, and if he does not ask for forgiveness, then his worth would be lessened. Thus, if he always has to ask others for forgiveness, then the worth of his dignity is lowered and

similarly, his worth is also lowered in the eyes of the people since he is always forced to ask others for forgiveness for his errors.

#### 5- Silence: The Garden of Contemplation and Reflection

Ali (peace be upon him) has said, Silence is the garden of contemplation(6)

The person who speaks too much does not have the time to think nor does he have time to study and do research. However when he is quiet, new thoughts and views are able to come into his head which get him to start thinking and contemplating on other issues. Thus, when a person's tongue starts working (and he speaks too much), then there is no opportunity left for him to reflect and ponder. For this reason it has been said that you should associate yourself with those people who speak less since they will inspire you with wisdom.

This is just a small section on the ahadith in relation to silence.

The forty-seventh characteristic of the true believer is that of "صدق اللسان" or the true believer is truthful in his speech.

Another sign of the true believer is that if he does speak, his words are carefully thought out and truthful. It has been mentioned in the ahadith that truthfulness in speech is one sign of true faith and it has been stated, "Do not examine people through the Salat they perform or the fasts that they keep, rather, examine and test them through the truthfulness of their speech. If their tongue is under control, then they have some worth to them and if their tongue is not under their control, then they have no worth to themselves and even if they perform worship of Allah, this worship has no worth or merit to it.

For every single Prophet that Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) raised up, He commanded them to follow two principles in their mission:

#### اداء الامانه وصدق الحديث

Maintain and return trusts given to them and truthfulness in their speech.

Every morning, the tongue speaks to all other parts of the body and asks how the rest of the body parts are doing. The rest of the body parts reply to the tongue that, if you were to leave us, then we would all be ok!

Insha-Allah, all of us will take this issue as something serious and will speak less and more thought out and will also consider whatever we speak to be a part of the actions that we do (that we will have to be accountable for) and we will not take part in those gatherings in which vain and useless talk is going on.

It is our hope that Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) gives us all the ability to act according to these commandments.

In relation to some of the events taking place (around the world) we must mention that these days are very dangerous days in which the enemies have shed their outer-skin and have shown their true colors and thus, we make Dua for the people of Iraq and other countries that they are able to show their strength in the face of this war. The enemies have come with full strength to the arena and the Muslims too must be united and of course, we must also not forget the prayers and supplications.

The first point: We have two issues that we must discuss and it is important that these two are not mixed up with one another. The first is in relation to peace while the other is in relation to a peaceful coexistence and amity with other people.

True peace is in the meaning of letting each person believe in and follow his or her own religion and to accept all religions -However peaceful coexistence and amity is another topic which it can be explained as the saying: I do not follow or accept your beliefs, however since we much live together in one society, thus, we must follow certain rules. For example, those minorities who live within our society must have their wealth and life protected and we must learn to put up with them -However this does not mean that we accept their theological beliefs. Even others such as idol worshippers or Communists who do not believe in any Supreme Deity, they too can live amongst us in peaceful coexistence and we can have political, economic and other forms of relations with them.

There are some people who bring up this concern that, You (the Maraja) recognize their marriages as being correct, thus, you have also accepted their beliefs. Rather, we go a step further and state that we accept all transactions with them and they are all correct (from the Islamic point of view). Just because we accept and permit transactions with them does not mean we accept Pluralism , rather, it means that we accept peaceful coexistence and amity with them since Pluralism (complete peace) in thoughts and ideologies and peaceful coexistence are two things that have no relation to one another.

The second point: Naskh or abrogation takes place in the practical laws, not in the theological beliefs. With this said, when we have a verse of the Quran which reads:

ان الدين الاسلام

Surely the only din (code of life) acceptable to Allah is Al-Islam.

There is no other verse of the Quran that can come forth and abrogate this verse since as we just said, abrogation only takes place in the practical laws (Ahkam),and not in the theological beliefs. Thus, the belief in Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), religion (that He has sent down) and the Prophets (that He has commissioned) are all theological beliefs and are not practical laws that they can be abrogated!

This point has also been noted in Majma al-Bayan as well that: issues of theological belief can not be abrogated.

In addition, naskh or abrogation does not mean that the entire set of practical laws is replaced, rather, when we look at it, the principals of the laws are the same amongst the various Heavenly Religions and in order for this issue to make more sense, we can state that: The Shariah of Nuh can be compared to preschool, the Shariah of Ibrahim could be compared to kindergarten, the Shariah of Musa would be equivalent to elementary school, the Shariah of Isa would be equivalent to university, and the Shariah of Rasullullah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) is at the highest level and we can not accept that a person lives in this day and age that we are in and is still following one of the previous nations and their

teachings. Rather, each and every person must strive to achieve perfection and must not look back at the past (teachings).

### Notes

- 1- Bihar al-Anwar, volume 64, page 311
- 2- Mizan al-Hikmah, under the word Sumt, Hadith 10805
- 3- Mizan al-Hikmah, under the word Sumt, Hadith 10809
- 4- Mizan al-Hikmah, under the word Sumt, Hadith 10816
- 5- Mizan al-Hikmah, under the word Sumt, Hadith 10822
- 6- Mizan al-Hikmah, under the word Sumt, Hadith 10823



## **.017: The True Shia of Ameer-al-Mumineen (a.s.)**

### **Text of Hadith:**

قال (عليه السلام) ولما جعل المأمون الى علي بن موسى الرضا (عليهما السلام) ولاية العهد دخل عليه أذنه و قال إن قوماً بالباب يستأذنون عليك يقولون نحن شيعة علي (عليه السلام) ... )1).

### **Translation of the Hadith:**

When Imam `Ali ibne Musa Al-Rida (a s) was requested to make his way to the city of Tus (present day Mashad) and was ordered to be the heir-apparent of Maumn Rashid, a group of the Shi`a came to see him and requested permission to enter into his presence. The Imam (a s) asked his servant who the people at the door were, to which the servant replied that, They claim that they are the Shi`a of `Ali (a s).The Imam (a.s.) did not give them permission to enter into his presence. This event continued on the second day, third day and continued on for a period of two months every day they would come, ask for permission to see the Imam (a s) to which he would not give them the permission. on the final day this group of people told the servant that, Tell the Imam that if we are to return back to our home town after being in the city of us for two months and the people ask us if we had a chance to visit the Imam or not and we tell them that he did not give us the permission to meet him then none shall respect us. The servant went to the Imam (a s) and told him what these people said and at this point, the Imam (a s) permitted them to meet him. After they entered into the presence of the Imam (a s) and wanted to sit, the Imam (a s) did not give them the permission to sit down. These people protested and said, O Son of the Messenger of Allah! What have we done to you that you are acting in this way towards us? The Imam (a s) replied to them, You claim that you are the Shi`a of `Ali (a s) whereas the true Shi`a of `Ali are people like Imam Hasan (a s) Imam Husain (a s) Abu Dharr, Salman, Miqdad and Muhammad ibne Abu Bakr. These people replied, We ask forgiveness, what else can we say? The Imam replied to them, Say that you are the lovers of `Ali (a s) When the people said this, then the Imam (a.s.) ordered his servant to show these people kindness.(1)

### **Explanation of the Hadith:**

Truly this hadith is one which (spiritually) moves us. We normally state that we (Iran) are the country of the true followers (Shi`a) of `Ali ibne Abi Talib (a s) where as those people who had met and had contact with the Imam (a s) are much better than we are.

Thus, it is clear that this claim to be a Shi`a is something very enormous. In this hadith we see that Imam as-Sadiq (a s) has stated (in relation to the characteristics of the Shi`a) that:

انما اصحابي من له اشد الورع و خاف من عقاب الله و رجا ثواب الله هؤلاء اصحابي

Truly my companions are those people who are the strongest in Wara` and who fear the punishment of Allah and who are hopeful of the reward of Allah these are my companions.

As we know, Taqwa is a lower level of Wara` since Taqwa means that we keep away from sins whereas Wara` means that we keep away from

doubtful things and as we see Imam as-Sadiq (a s) has told us that, My companions are those who are the strongest in Wara` and who are fearful of Allah and who are also hopeful of the reward of Allah and surround themselves with the commandments of Allah.

We have consider the various issues that come up around us as trivial things such that with the performance of the Tawassul, Ziyarat and Du`a, we consider ourselves as Shi`a. We do not wish to lower the worth and value of Tawassul and Ziyarat however there are many other things which must be performed and this is what it means to be a Shi`a.

To be a Shi`a means to be self-sacrificing, to show altruism, to possess cognizance of Allah, to be a person of Taqwa, etc and our entire life, our house, our market place, our religious programs, our travels, our entire presence must all take on the aroma of Wilayah (of the Ahlul Bait).

In these regards we must first start with ourselves and our families and we must implement the Wilayat which Imam Rida (a.s.) has stated and thus, those who make this claim (that they are Shi`a) must first ask repentance for lying! Thus, we must first start with ourselves and must realize that to be a Shi`a of `Ali (a s) does not only mean the performance of these mere acts (of Tawassul, Ziyarat, Du`a).

We hope that Allah gives us the ability to truly be the lovers of Allah in place of just claiming this station such that when we claim that We are the Shi`a of `Ali we are in that form of a Shi`a that would be pleasing to Imam as-Sadiq (a.s.) and to Imam al-Rida (a s).

#### Note

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 65, Page 157

## **.018: The characteristics of a righteous servant of Allah**

Text of the Hadith:

عن ابن عمر قال: خطبنا رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) خطبة ذرفت منها العيون ووجلت منها القلوب فكان مما ضبطت منها: أيها الناس، إن أفضل الناس عبداً من تواضع عن رفعه، وزهد عن رغبه، وانصف عن قوة، وحلم عن قدرة

Translation of Hadith:

It has been narrated from Ibn `Umar that he said, The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) once gave us such a speech that made our eyes flow with tears and made our hearts tremble and some of that which we wrote down (of his speech was that): O Mankind! Surely the greatest servant (of Allah) is the one who shows humility even though he may be of high rank or status and who renounces the world even though he has a desire for it (its pleasures) and who is equitable and just even though he has the strength (to oppress others) and who shows forbearance even though has the ability (to get his rights by force)(1)

Commentary on the Hadith:

The important issue (which we wish to elucidate upon) that has been mentioned in this section of the Hadith is that sometimes a person refrains from committing a sin due to not having the ability to commit that sin. Sometimes it is due to not having an attraction to commit that sin - for example, the person who does not like the taste of alcohol (and thus does not drink) or he likes the taste of it however he does not have the ability (to drink alcohol) or the introductory steps in order to do this sin are not present (for example he does not have money to purchase the alcohol) or he does not drink alcohol due to the negative effects that it has on him.

Such a form of refraining from committing a sin for a person who does not have the ability to commit the sin is not important rather, what is important is when a person has the ability but he still refrains from committing a sin. Thus, according to the words of the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) the greatest person is the one who even though has status, rank and position in the community, however he is still humble and modest with others.<sup>2</sup>

In relation to refraining from sins, we see that people are of various types. There is one group of people who do not commit certain sins since deep down in their heart, those are detested acts. Thus, every person must look deep within himself and see what prohibited things he has a desire to perform so that he can refrain from those things. However this point should also be kept in mind that it is difficult for a person to recognize these things by himself as sometimes there are characteristics within a person that he would not realize he has and maybe after sixty years of his life pass by, then he would then realize he has these defects. Why is this so? Because a person never looks at his own self trying to pick out his own faults and defects.

If a person would like to advance in the spiritual areas of his life and to reach to the higher levels of spirituality, then he must look at his own self with a very critical eye so that he is able to pick out his weak points. It is for this reason that it has been said that when one wants to recognize one's own

weak points and defects then he should rely on his enemies or his own friends who would sincerely criticize him (not those who would hide his defects). However, better than all of this is when a person learns to criticize himself. If a person knows what haram acts he loves to perform and he knows where his defects and slips are and through what channels Shaitan tries to get to him and make use of him, then he will never be held captive by his lower desires and the Shaitan.

It is for this reason that the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, The best of people is that one who even though has the liking (to commit a sin) and even though he has the power and ability (to oppress others) is just, and even though he has greatness, he is still humble.

This advice is addressed to all people, especially the Scholars ('Ulama) - why? Because the Scholars are the leaders of the people and before going to teach others, the leaders must first train themselves.

The more a person's status (within the society) increases, the more his (small) errors and slips become greater (in the eyes of the people). Similarly, when his duties increase and become more sensitive and critical (to perform in the proper way), there is a greater danger that they may not be fulfilled how they should be.

### المخلصون في خطر عظيم

The sincere people (Al-Mukhlsoin) are in the greatest danger.

While a person is young, he may commit sins and then say, When I get older I will repent for this sin.

This act of delaying and postponing one's asking for forgiveness is an act of trickery and deceit on the part of Shaitan and an act of one's own soul.

There is also the person who makes a promise to himself that when the Month of Ramadhan comes along, then he will ask for forgiveness. However, if a person wishes to be a guest and take part in a banquet, he must first purify himself and put on clean clothing and then go forth to be the guest of another person not that he takes part in the banquet while wearing dirty, filthy clothes!<sup>3</sup>

### Notes

1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 179

2 The Noble Quran considers humility and modesty and refraining from any form of pride and arrogance as being one of the characteristics of a true believer (Momin). This is so because pride and arrogance are the first steps on the ladder of disbelief (Kufr) and when a person exercises humility and modesty in the face of truth, he has actually traversed the first steps towards true faith (Iman). Those who tread the path of pride and self-conceit and who not only do not submit and prostrate to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) or busy themselves in His praise and glorification will eventually reach to a stage in their life that where they will not accept the truth that comes to them from the (righteous) servants of Allah and thus, the biggest idol (of worship) turns out to be their own souls. (Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 17, Page 146)

3 The great scholar, Shaikh Bahai has narrated the following incident, There was a man named Tawbah who was continuously busy in taking account of his soul and the acts that he used to perform. When he reached to the age of sixty, he sat down to review his life and the acts that he had done and realized that 21,500 days of his life had gone by. At this point, he said to himself, Woe on me! If each day of my life I had not committed more than one sin, then in the minimum, I would have committed at least 21,000 sins! Do I wish to wish to meet Allah while I have 21,000 sins on my record? At this point, he let out a loud shout

and fell to the ground and passed away on the spot. (Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 24, Page 465)

## .019: The signs of a Muslim

### Text of the Hadith:

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) يقول في خطبته: أيها الناس، إن العبد لا يكتب من المسلمين حتى يسلم الناس من يده ولسانه، ولا ينال درجة المؤمنين حتى يأمن أخوه بوائقه و جاره بوادره، ولا يعد من المتقين حتى يدع ما لا يأس به حذرا عما به البأس. إنه من خاف البيات ادلج

### English translation:

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) said in his speech: O People! Surely a servant will not be counted as one of the Muslims until other people are protected from his hand and his tongue; and he will never reach to the stage of a true believer until his brother (in faith) is safe from his evil and his annoyance, and his neighbor is protected and safe from his harshness and anger; and he will never reach to the stage of being of the Allah-Conscious (one with Taqwa) until he keeps away from those erroneous actions which cause him to spiritually pollute himself. Surely the person who fears that he will remain asleep, moves at night(1)

### Commentary of Hadith:

In reality, in this Hadith the three words: Muslim, Momin and Muttaqi have been explained, and for each of these words, there is a special level and limit set which one must pass through.

The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has stated that, A person cannot be considered as a Muslim until other people are safe from his hand and tongue and if this is not the case, then such a person is not a Muslim. In addition a person is not considered as a Momin until his Muslim brother and his neighbors are safe from him annoying and aggravating them.

The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has used two forms of the words تسليم and أمن in this Hadith since the reality of Islam is complete submission (تسليم) and also making sure that others are safe or protected from the person (سالم) and both of these concepts are contained within the understanding of the word Islam. Thus, a person must be safe from both the physical (hand) of another Muslim and his tongue.

The Momin or true believer is the person whose friends and neighbors are safe from his hands, while the Muttaqi or one who possess consciousness of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) is the one who refrains from all doubtful things. If a person pollutes his soul with the doubtful acts, then surely he is not a true Muttaqi.

Any person whose tongue acts like that of a snake or scorpion and is busy hurting others through his speech, involved in backbiting, levelling false accusations against others, making fun of other people and humiliating them, destroying their character, cursing them, etc and injures other people, is not considered as a Muslim!

There are many people who are tricked and misled by Shaitan (Satan) and thus, when they are involved in a serious conversation, they protect their tongue (from speaking bad things). However when they are busy

joking with others, then they perform these things (which were just listed above) which they would not do while engaged in a serious discussion. For example, while a person is busy joking with others, he may humiliate or make fun of his Muslim brother and would keep busy in bugging and teasing him and then he would say, that (I) was only joking with you and I did not mean what I said.

Sometimes, such joking is even much worse than speaking the truth since when a person is speaking the truth, he is limited and maintains restrictions and boundaries in what he is saying. However when he begins to joke around, then he transgresses these limits and boundaries.<sup>2</sup>

If we carefully look through history, we see that court jesters and clowns used to speak truthful things to those in their presence, however they covered such speech in jokes and amusements. The function of these court jesters was not just to keep the King busy, rather, one of the philosophies of these clowns and jesters was that whenever those who were around the King were not able to tell something very important to the King directly, they would pass the information on to the clown or jester and he would convey this information to the King in a way of joking and amusement and thus, the jokes and playing of the jester was actually more serious than the truth!

The true believer is one who is very respected in Islam and we are not permitted to even joke with a true believer in this meaning of this as was just mentioned and it is not permitted to destroy his character or personality. May we seek refuge with Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) if one of us under the pretence of making a joke destroys the character of another believer!<sup>3</sup>

At this point, we look at the topic of refraining from doubtful things.

In the Science of Jurisprudence (Ilmul Fiqh), actions which are Makruh (reprehensible) fall into the category of being permissible to perform and it has been mentioned that in all areas where there is a doubt whether the act is obligatory or forbidden the principal is that it is permissible. However at the same time, there are many instances in which those same doubtful things act as the bridge towards the forbidden acts. It is for this reason that a person must not make his way to the ultimate level of the permissible acts. Why? This is said because the final level of the permissible acts is the edge where the forbidden acts begin and there is a possibility that at any moment, the person could trip and fall into the forbidden deeds.

In the commentary of Nahjul Balagha if Ibn Abi al-Hadid it is written that:

ألا وإن حمي الله محارمه

Be advised that the protected limits of Allah (which we must not transgress) are those things which He has made impermissible.<sup>4</sup>

There is an area which a person is prohibited from entering into and if he does move close to it, we see that sometimes through transgressing the boundaries, he would be overcome by the evil whisperings such that he would proceed to move forward (towards the haram acts) due to the excuse that:

كل مشكوك جايك كل مظنون جايك

All doubtful acts are permissible, and all acts which are acts which one is uncertain about are (also) permissible.

Thus, such a person would then begin to perform those actions which it is possible, would cause him to enter into sin and would be classified as forbidden (haram) acts. All of these acts are permissible to perform, however at the same time, we must not approach to the boundaries of the forbidden acts since this boundary is one full of danger.

Of course we are not saying that we must refrain from all Makruh (reprehensible) acts, however there is a difference here and in certain instances, we must be extremely careful. If a person wishes to stay away from the danger boundary, then he must also distance himself from the uncertain and doubtful acts.

The final sentence in his Hadith is that if a person succeeds in destroying the mystique behind sins and no longer feels frightened at performing forbidden acts, then he will easily contaminate his pure essence. When some people who sin speak to others about their life and the actions that they had performed in the past, they say, The very first time that I performed such and such sin, I felt my entire body tremble. However after continuously performing that sin, it became common place and second nature for me.

Thus in summary, that which protects a person is him being frightened of performing a sin, however when committing sins becomes common place, then he resorts to trying to justify his sinning and he would try to make every uncertain and doubtful act something permissible.<sup>5</sup>

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم): إن الرجل ليتكلم بكلمه فيضحك بها جلساؤه؛ يهوي بها أبعد من أثريا

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, Surely a person sometimes speaks something at which those present in the gathering begin to laugh and thus he becomes further away (from Allah) than the Pleiades (a star constellation.)

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم): كثرة المزاح، تذهب بماء الوجه

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, Making many jokes results in one's honour being removed.

عن ابي محمد (عليه السلام) قال: لا تمار فيذهب بهاؤك ولا تمازح فيجتراً عليك.

It has been narrated that Abi Muhammad Imam Hasan ibn `Ali al-`Askari (peace be upon him) has said, Do not disagree with others or else your respect will be removed and do not make too many jokes, so that you are not treated with immodesty.

1. The effect on the soul of the person.: The sin has an effect on the heart and soul of the person who commits a sin and if the sin had no other effect than to cover the heart with spiritual darkness, then this itself would be enough to keep away from sins.

When an oppressor raises his hand to hit the oppressed person, the first detriment is that the oppressors heart is darkened.

In the Islamic narrations it has been mentioned that for every sin that a person performs, a black dot is placed on his heart and through the



repetition of sins, these black dots become more and more until the time that they take over his entire heart, and as the Noble Quran has stated:

وأحاطت به خطيئته

and who are surrounded by their evil deeds and sins.

(Surah al-Baqarah (2), Verse 81)

By this we mean that when a person's entire presence is polluted with sin, then it is very hard for him to return back to the straight path. At the time when the black dots on the heart are few and the rest of the heart is still bright (with the Divine Light), one must work hard to remove those few black specks, however when the sins become many, then even those few bright spots are covered over.

2. Effects of Sinning in one's Life: The person is by nature societal and one of the most important merits that a person possesses is his interdependence upon others within his life. Thus, if people were to lie to one another, then everyone would lose confidence and trust in one another such that no one else would ever be able to have trust in each other and everyone would be careful to make sure that others do not try to fool them. It is because of this that lying and performing sins, slowly transform a societal life of people into a life of individualism and the spirit of help and assistance to others is removed from the society.

3. The Effects of Sinning in the Next World: We must fully accept that sins are never destroyed and they are always with the person. For example, the lie that was told many years ago even in the next world will follow the person step by step and be with him continuously just as the Noble Quran tell us that:

يوم ينظر المرء ما قدمت يداه

On that day shall humanity see all that their hands had sent forth.(5)

And thus on that day, all of the actions of the person will be physically manifested in front of him.

### Notes

1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 177

2 Of the sins which result in tearing of the curtains (between a person and Allah) are: Rejecting and changing the talk that one is hearing when it is vain, futile, joking discussions which only make others laugh. In order to better understand this issue, pay attention to the following ahadith:

3 Hakam ibn Abil As (the father of Marwan who later on attained the Khilafat) was one of the strongest enemies of the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) who annoyed the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) quite a lot. Of some of the ways that he bugged the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) was that whenever the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) would walk through the streets of Makkah, he would follow the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him).

4 Volume 4, Page 232

5 As for the punishment and effects of performing sins, some of the Scholars of Akhlaq have mentioned many punishments and effects that performing sins has on a person of which, we suffice which just mentioning three effects.

## .020: Modesty

### Text of the Hadith:

وقال علي عليه السلام: ما المجاهد الشهيد في سبيل الله بأعظم أجرا من قدر فعف لكاد العفيف أن يكون ملكا من الملائكة.

### TRANSLATION:

It has been narrated from Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) that he said, The reward for the Mujahid who dies in the way of Allah is no less than the person who has the ability to perform a sin, however does not perform that sin. It is close (to being that) the person who has modesty is (actually) an Angel from amongst the Angels.(1)

### Commentary of Hadith:

In Islam, the status of the martyrs (Shuhada) is something very high and there is no other status greater than this. The verses of the Quran present to us a message in relation to the Shuhada that is not presented for any other person, and we read:

ولا تحسبن الذين قتلوا في سبيل الله أمواتا بل أحياء عند ربهم يرزقون

Do not consider those who have been killed in the way of Allah as being dead, rather, they are alive in the presence of their Lord receiving sustenance.(2)

The one who is being spoken to in this verse is the Prophet (s.a.) and we see that the wording used has not been mentioned for any other person.

In the ahadith, the Shuhada have also been given great importance. The late Shaykh Kulayni has narrated that the Prophet (s.a.) has said:

فوق كل ذي بر بر حتى يقتل الرجل في سبيل الله فإذا قتل في سبيل الله فليس فوقه بر

Above every goodness is (another) goodness, until that time that a person is killed in the way of Allah. So then when he is killed in the way of Allah, there is no other goodness greater than this.(3)

There is even a statement given by Mawla `Ali (a.s.) in the letter which he wrote to Malik-e-Ashtar, in which he has stated:

وأنا أستل الله بسعة رحمته وبعظيم قدرته أن يختم لي ولك بالسعادة والشهادة

And I ask Allah by the great expanse of His Mercy and by the greatness of His power that he makes my end and your end that with felicity and martyrdom..

There are numerous other ayat and ahadith in relation to this topic which is a sign of the great status of the Shuhada.

From another point of view, the meaning of Shahadat or Martyrdom is something very wide and vast. The standard meaning of it is that a person dies in the way of Allah; in the arena of the battlefield he is killed. This person has a specific set of rules (Ahkam) related to him such that if he dies outside of the battlefield, some of these practical rules do not then apply to him, however he is still considered as a Shahid.

However there is another meaning to this term and according to this meaning, we get a much wider and general meaning. By this we mean that any person who dies on the path of fulfilling his responsibility is a Shahid. For example:

من قتل دون ماله فهو شهيد

The person who dies without his wealth is a Shahid.

من مات في طلب العلم مات شهيدا

The person who dies in the state of seeking knowledge dies a Shahid.

من مات علي فراشه و هو علي معرفة حق من ربه رسوله مات شهيدا

The person who dies upon his bed while having cognizance of the Truth which has come from his Lord and the Truth of His Messenger dies a Shahid.

Even in relation to women who are pregnant and who die while in the state of carrying their baby it has been mentioned that they:

ماتت شهيدة

die as a Shahidah.

The hadith also tell us that:

من مات علي حب آل محمد مات شهيدا

The person who dies on the love of the family of Muhammad (s.a.) dies as a Shahid.

This is the case since the person has died while on the path of fulfilling his responsibility meaning that his death is joined with action and thus, he is a Shahid.

Thus, the meaning of Shahadat is very wide and extended and therefore, martyrdom has a very comprehensive meaning to it.

, he عليه السلام Thus, according to this statement from Imam `Ali has told us that the person who dies in the way of Allah and who spills his blood, is not greater than the person who has the ability to perform sins however due to Allah he stops himself from doing so.

Modesty in this Hadith is not merely limited to covering and lowering one's eyes from the sexual pleasures, rather, it has a very wide meaning and modesty is used to refer to preventing any sin from taking place. According to this explanation, a person is able to gain the reward of being a Shahid each and every single day!

We see that all of the necessary requirements for sin were available to Prophet Yusuf (a.s.), however he renounced sins and in two sentences, said:

قال رب أسجن أحب إلي مما يدعونني إليه و إلا تصرف عيني كيدهن أصب إليهن و أكن

من الجاهلين

He said: My Lord! the prison house is dearer to me than that to which they invite me; and if Thou turn not away their device from me, I will yearn towards them and become (one) of the ignorant.(4)

1. I know that if I renounce sinning, I will be thrown into prison, however the prison is much better for me than that which these women are calling me to do.

2. My Allah! I resign myself to your will.

Asiyah, the wife of Firawn had all of the material needs at her disposal and she was able to become a polytheist and live along side her husband, Firawn. However she too renounced sinning:

قالت رب ابن لي عندك بيتا في الجنة ونجني من فرعون وعمله

My Lord! build for me a house with Thee in the garden and deliver me from Firon and his doing.

It is these people who have the status of a Shahid

The proof that these people have the ranking of a Shahid is clear since we say that the greatest Jihad is the Jihad with the soul and the person who is in the battlefield of the Major Jihad is just like the person who is in the battlefield of the Minor Jihad rather, he is greater than them !

The path of Allah and reaching to closeness to Allah and the ranks of the righteous people and the status of Witnessing (Shuhud) is clear, however the path is a very difficult one to traverse we must resign ourselves entirely to Allah especially us who are living in this day and age in which the ways to sinning are many and close within reach. We must strive to ensure that ourselves, our families and our society are protected from this evil.

#### Notes

- 1 Nahjul Balagha, Short Saying 474
- 2 Surat Ale `Imran (3), Verse 169
- 3 Al-Kafi, Volume 2, Page 348
- 4 Surat Yusuf (12), Verse 33

## **.021: Showing thanks for divine blessings**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن الصادق عليه السلام مكتوب في التوراة: لا زوال للنعمة إذا شكرت ولا بقاء لها إذا

كفرت

### **TRANSLATION:**

It has been narrated from (Imam Ja`far ibne Muhammad) as-Sadiq (a.s.) that, It has been written in the Tawrah (thus, in reality this is what is known as a Hadith-e-Qudsi) that, There is no end to the Divine Blessings if thanks are given (for that blessing) and there is no longevity for it (that blessing) if thanks are not shown (for it).(1)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

Very many of the Divine bounties which a person has at his disposal actually go from hand to hand through a series of complex intermediaries and agents until it reaches the person, and in reality, we only see the outcome (of all of these agents and what part of the plan they are responsible for).

For example, the shirt which a person wears is a blessing from the many (combined) Divine Blessings of Allah and very many people and items have been put together hand in hand so that this blessing would reach the person. The person who plows the land and then grows the cotton; the person who harvests the cotton; the factory which processes the cotton and makes thread and yarn from it; the factory which takes the thread and from that, makes the cloth; and then the factory which extracts iron from the ground and makes the machinery needed to make the shirt and Thus, there are thousands and thousands of people who were responsible for the making of that one shirt. In addition to this, there is also the knowledge and experience which has gone in to making all of these factories which has come about through thousands of years of trial and experiment by humanity.

The Theological Seminaries (Hawzatul `Ilmiyyah) which we presently have access to is also the result of the struggles of countless people. Many people became Shahid (Martyrs) so that this blessing would be able to reach us. If we were to sit down and calculate the time it took those people who laid the foundation stones for the Hawzah and the great scholars who went through great difficulties to expand and develop the Hawzah to where it is today, we would definitely see that it is the outcome of more than a thousand years which has gone into making this blessing reach us today and those of us who wish to study in this system must have peace of mind and the respite which are also other blessings of Allah.

Here too we see the outcome of all of these struggles however we do not sit and think about how many struggles have been put through until today in this Hawzah to reach where it has gotten to.

If we think upon this introduction which we have just mentioned, then the inner feeling of thanks shall definitely be stimulated within ourselves and we shall arrive to the station of being able to thank Him and at the same time, we also ask Allah for Divine Success to be conferred upon us (while in this Hawzah), however it must be noted that the preliminary steps to achieving Divine Success are in our hands.

Showing thanks is not merely a verbal declaration rather, we must, in our actions, show thanks and the way to do this is to make the correct use of the bounty which is given to us.

Since it is the beginning of the new year for our studies, we should make a serious resolution that we will study properly and that from the first day of classes, we will be attentive in our classes and this is the true meaning of showing gratitude for a blessing.

There are people who were not thankful for the blessings which they were given, who ended up wasting away their time and in the end, this Divine Blessing was taken away from them and they were plagued with problem and thus, there were not able to reach to any station (in life). We must show thanks for this Divine Blessing so that until the end of our life, we will be able to be amongst the soldiers of Imam al-Zaman (a.s.) and so that we can be defenders of Islam since the eyes of the Shia world are on this Hawzah.

It was imagined that with the removal of Saddam, the Theological Seminary of Najaf would be revitalized however unfortunately, with the situation which is currently ruling over Iraq, it is not clear when this Theological Seminary shall be brought back to life again.

#### **Note**

1 Al-Kafi, Volume 2, Page 94

## .022: Fulfilling the needs of your adversary

### Text of the Hadith:

قال الصادق (ع): انى لاسارع الى حاجه عدوى خوفا ارده فيستغنى عنى

### TRANSLATION:

as-Sadiq (Imam Jafar ibn Muhammad) (peace be upon him) has said, Surely I make haste in fulfilling the needs of my adversary since I fear that if I were to delay this, he would become needless of me (and this is something which would bring displeasure to me that my enemy becomes needless of me such that I am not able to fulfill his needs.(1)

### Commentary of Hadith:

The sociologists have a differing opinion on the following issue which is: Whilst living within the society, is the human being geared towards societal life or an individual existence? In other words, are we individualistic or communal in spirit?

That which is clear is that from the point of view of the natural world, until various elements do not come into existence, one is not total or complete and thus, as long as there are no individuals, there can be no society just as long as there are no drops of water, there can not be a river. Thus, we see that a community is made up of individuals and thus, in origin, we are individuals however, this is not what the sociologists mean, rather, their premise is one of the two following things:

#### 1- The Essential Nature of Society

The blessings and outcomes are reserved for the community and society where as the benefits and outcomes for an individual are insignificant. Therefore, we see that the benefits and outcomes of people who are independent from one another are not very important. Rather, any positive effects in the fields of knowledge, advancement (of the sciences) and the civilizations all stem from the community and society.

Thus, the meaning of the essential nature is that of a foundation full of blessings and this refers to the society.

#### 2- The Essential nature of the individual

When there is a discrepancy between the benefits of the person and the benefits of the society, if we desire the benefits of the society, then this would mean that the individual must sacrifice himself and his desires. Those people who support the theory of the Essential Nature of the society would hold the benefits of the entire society above everything else.

The faith of Islam also sees and accepts and the Essential Nature of the Society and tells us that:

يدالله مع الجماعة

Or that The hand of Allah is with the Jama or the Congregation.

We are also told in Islam that:

عليك باسواد الاعظم والشاذ من الغنم للذئب

Or that I advise you to stick with the majority as the stray sheep is for the wolf.

Thus, according to the wordings of these two statements, whatever exists does so within the community and congregational level and thus, in various areas, the person must be ready to sacrifice himself for the good of the society.

When the nation of Islam falls into dangers, people must step forth to sacrifice themselves and thus, the suicide missions are nothing more than martyrdom-seeking missions in origin meaning a person sacrifices himself for the religion of Islam.

The acts of worship are also societal and communal acts for example, the official prayers in Islam are the Salatul Jama'at or the congregational prayers; or the act of the Umrah which is an individual act however the important acts of the Hajj is one performed in groups and within an assembly of people.

Thus, Islam is in favour of the society and community and it is because of this fact that one of the things which Islam has given extra importance to is the help and assistance extended to other people. Thus, it has been mentioned in the ahadith that:

الناس كلهم عيال الله

All of mankind are the needy of Allah.

Spending in the way of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) is the same as spending on the servants of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to him) and we have also been told that:

لن تنالوا البر حتى تنفقوا مما تحبون

You shall never attain righteous people, we must spend our wealth in the way of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

In the rewards given in Islam for various acts, there is no reward comparable to giving charity in the way of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). In some of the wordings mentioned, the reward for doing good deeds is ten fold and in some others, it is a seventy fold reward given back to the person. However in relation to spending in way of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), the minimum amount of reward which is given back is 700 times.

مثل الذين ينفقون اموالهم في سبيل الله كمثل حبه انبتت سبع سنابل في كل سنبله مئة حبه

والله يضاعف لمن يشاء

The similitude of those people who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is the similitude of a seed which grows seven ears and within each ear, there is 100 grains and Allah increases for those whom He pleases

" which is يضاعف It should be mentioned that the word " mentioned in this verse can not be translated as double the reward rather, it means a many-fold return.(2)

What is important to note here is that those who must be helped are not only the Muslims rather, we have been told that:

لكل كبد حراء

There is an emancipator for every person.



Thus, the reward for helping is even for helping animals and therefore, the extent of our help and spending in charity in the way of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) would include our friends and enemies, Muslims and non-Muslims, humans and animals.

An example of this fact is the hadith from Imam Jafar ibne Muhammad Sadiq (peace be upon him) in which he has stated that if a person wanted something from the Imam (peace be upon him) and that person was his enemy, the Imam (peace be upon him) would actually work faster to provide it to that person since he does not want that his enemy would go to someone else, thus, the Imam (peace be upon him) he would have been deprived in helping his enemy !

Since we have such a teaching in our faith, thus, how is it possible that our religion can be accused as being one of anger? In which other nation can we find such a program or set of actions?

It is these sorts of teachings and programs which gives Islam its attractive nature and it is through revenge that enmity is perpetuated and if this form of life is sustained (one in which revenge is maintained), then we would definitely reach to a very dangerous situation however, that which would put an end to enmity is to not show hatred in the face of hatred.

If we wish for people to become lovers of Imam al-Zaman (may Allah hasten his return), the Aimmah (prayers be upon all of them) and the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family), then we must follow these teachings.

#### Notes

1 Biharul Anwar, volume 75, page 207

2 Suratul Baqarah (2), verse 161

## .023: Forgiveness and Pardon

### Text of the Hadith:

بيننا رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) جالس، أذا رأيناه ضاحكا حتي بدت ثناياه فقلنا: يا رسول الله، مما ضحكت؟ فقال: رجلان من أمتي جيتا بين يدي ربي فقال أحدهما: يا رب خذلي بمظلمتي من آخر، فقال الله تعالى: أعط أخاك مظلمة. فقال: يا رب، لم يبق من حسناتي شيء. فقال: يا رب، فليحمل من أوزاري. ثم فاضت عينا رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) وقال: إن ذلك اليوم ليوم تحتاج الناس فيه إلي من يحمل عنهم أوزارهم، ثم قال الله تعالى للطلاب بحقه: إرفع بصرك إلي الجنة، فانظر ماذا تری؟ فرفع رأسه، فرأى ما أعجبه من الخير و النعمة. فقال: يا رب لمن هذا؟ فقال: لمن اعطاني ثمنه. فقال: يا رب، و من يملك ثمن ذلك؟ فقال: أنت، فقال: كيف بذلك؟ فقال: بعفوك عن أخيك. فقال: قد عفوت. فقال الله تعالى: فخذ بيد أخيك، فادخلا الجنة. فقال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم): فاتقوا الله، وأصلحوا ذات بينكم.

### English translation:

One day the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) was sitting down and we saw him laugh until you could see the whiteness of his front teeth. We said to him, O Messenger of Allah! Why are you laughing? The Prophet replied, Two men from my nation were in the presence of My Lord when one of the two men said, O Lord! Take my rights (that the other person owed me in the world) from the other person (and give them back to me). Allah the Most High said (to the other person), Give your brother back his rights (which you took from him in the world). Then the second man said, O Lord! There are no more good deeds remaining (for me to give him) in place of the oppression that I did to him. The first person (who had been wronged) then said, O Lord then place all of my sins on his back. At this point, the Prophet began to cry and said, That day is the day which the people will be in need of a person to place their sins upon. Allah the Most High then told the person who was trying to get his rights back, Lift your eyes up towards the Paradise and tell me what you see? So then the person lifted up his head and saw that which amazed him from amongst the goodness and blessings. The man then said, O Lord! Who is this for? Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) replied, This is for the person who gives his worth over to me. The person replied, O Lord! And who is the one whose worth is that (that he can give it over to you)? Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) said, You. The man then said, And how is that possible? Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) replied, By you forgiving your brother (you have given your worth over to me). The man then said, Surely I have forgiven him. At this time, Allah the Noble and High said, So then take your brother by your hand and both of you enter into the Paradise. The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) then said, Have consciousness of Allah and sort out of the disagreements between yourselves.(1 and 2)

### Commentary of Hadith:

In this hadith, there are two very important points which we must pay attention to:

1. In the next life, there is no other way to repay the debts which were left behind from the material world and there is no way to be absolved from any responsibilities that one was under (in this world) and thus, the material rights that are on a person in this world are transformed into spiritual rights (in the next life).

For example, if in this world a person does not pay back his loans, then according to this verse of the Quran which states:

(يوم لا ينفع مال ولا بنون)

On the day when neither wealth nor sons will profit anyone(3)

On this day (Day of Judgment), one must repay his debts through his good deeds. If the person does not have any good deeds, then he must accept the other person's sins on his own record.

This is a very important issue that no matter how many good deeds a person possesses, when he enters into the field of the Day of Resurrection, he will be as a penniless beggar what else does he have to give to other people except his good deeds?

No matter how few sins a person has on his record, on that day and in that great location, his sins will be increased! How can a person possibly take on the responsibility of the sins of other people?

It is for this reason that while in this world, we must do an account of all of our acts and pay back any debts that we have on us since if for example Allah forbid we have insulted a person then we must seek his forgiveness and must repay that person since that which is even more important than the wealth of a Muslim is his honour and dignity.

It has been mentioned in Biharul Anwar that:

إن أربي الربا عرض الرجل المسلم

Surely the worst form of usury is the destruction of the dignity of a Muslim for no reason.(4)

If we destroy the honour and dignity of a person in this world and do not make amends for it in this world, then the amending of this sin will be taken from our good deeds (in the next world), and if we do not have any good deeds with us, then we will have to take their sins upon us. Thus, not only would we have to bear the weight of our own sins on our shoulders, but we will also have to bear the sins of others, just as it is mentioned in the Quran:

وليحملن أثقالهم وأثقالا مع أثقالهم وليسئلن يوم القيمة عما كانوا يفترون

They will bear their own burdens and (other) burdens along with their own, and on the Day of Judgment they will be called to account for their falsehoods.(5)

2. The station of forgiveness - and what a great status it is for the one who forgives others! It has been mentioned in the ahadith that:

ثمن الجنة العفو

The price of Paradise is forgiveness

It is not an honour or distinction for a person that if he sees another person doing a bad deed that he keeps this act in his heart so that one day he

can take revenge on that person, since this act of taking revenge is that of the animals.

There are some people who consider taking revenge as being a proof of their courage and bravery and are of the belief that if a person was to strike a blow to him, then he must strike an even harder blow to that person whereas the opposite of this is true. If a person strikes a blow upon you, and you forgive him, then this is a sign of your courage and that you have complete control over your soul and thus, a hostile and revenge-seeking person is not one who will ever be successful.

In this relation, not only must we forgive the other person, rather even greater than this is that we must try and destroy the difference that exists amongst the believers and if we are able to do this, we should then seek to convert the entire society into one that is built upon forgiveness of others and not seeking revenge.

If this characteristic does not take shape within the society, the surely its opposite will, day by day, become more and more common in the society which will result in the entire population being in disharmony, disunion and dissension since such an issue will never come to an end and the only way that this can come to an end is through forgiveness of others.

#### Notes

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 180

2 In this hadith we see that the issue of the Day of Resurrection has been mentioned in the past tense and this may be done since the present tense verb is used to denote an event that will surely happen in the future or also it may have been done since it may be a form of revelation which came to the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family).

3 Surah al-Shuara', Verse 88

4 Biharul Anwar, Volume 72, Page 222

5 Surah al-Ankabut, Verse 13

## NOURISHMENT OF SOUL

### .024: Al-Jihad Al-Akbar

#### Text of Hadith:

قال الصادق(ع): إهوائكم كما تحذرون أعدائكم فليس شيء أعدي للرجال من اتباع أهوائهم وحصائد ألسنتهم.

#### Translation:

Imam Ja`far ibne Muhammad As-Sadiq (a.s.) has said: Be aware of your lower desires just as you keep aware of your enemies since there is nothing more of an enemy to a person than following his lower desires and that which the tongue reaps.(1)

#### Explanation of the Hadith:

The month of Ramadhan has very many specific programs contained within it one of which is the fasting of the month. There are some people who think that if they are sick or traveling and are not permitted to fast, then there is nothing left to the Month of Ramadhan - whereas the Month of Ramadhan has other programs in it other than just the aspect of fasting and one of these is the combat against the lower desires, and this responsibility shines greater than all other acts (contained within this month).

This hadith under discussion is in relation to this fact and it tells us that we must keep aware of our lower desires just as we keep aware and away from our enemies.

The greatest enemy of a human being is to follow and listen to his lower desires and to speak inappropriate things with his tongue and to follow his refractory desires and wishes.

The lower passions, the uncontrolled desires and the acts of rebellion are all what make up a person. If the lower passions are put under the control of the intellect, then there is no danger; however if they are left without control and parameters to work within and are at the whims of the desires of the heart, then without doubt the laws of Allah and the ethical conscience will not be recognized. The name of this rebellious character within a person is his lower passions and this is the greatest enemy a person has.

When a person recognizes the presence of his enemy, then he would definitely strive to make sure that he is not in the vicinity of his strike and would strive to ensure that he does not fall prey to his plans. Unfortunately however, there are many people who, in the face of their enemies, do not put up any fight and in the same way, they are actually friends of their lower passions and desires and even more than this, we see that there are also people who have taken their lower passions to be their leader and guide and there are many people who even take their lower passions to be the object of worship:

أرأيت من اتخذ إلهه هواه

Have you seen the person who takes his lower desires as his Lord?

Thus, sometimes it is possible that a person would prostrate and humble himself in front of his lower desires.

One of the branches of monotheism (Tawhid) is Tawhid in obedience to Allah. The person who is a Muwahhid is he who obeys none other than Allah (the obedience to the Prophet, the Imam (a s) one's father and mother and the Marja Taqlid are all done through the command of Allah). Thus, if we become those who obey others along side Allah, then we have transformed our actions into polytheism (Shirk) in worship.

Sometimes, the lower desires actually transform our heart into the house of idol worship; the heart which must only be the place in which Allah is present; however sometimes the various idols such as the love of wealth, love of status, love for our children and other such things takes up the room in the heart:

بت ساخته اي در دل و خنديدي بر كيش بد بر همن و بودا را

The poet has stated that sometimes we sit and talk about those people who worship idols in the traditional houses of idol worship whereas we look within our own souls, we see that it itself is the house of idols and within it, are various types of gods and deities!

من أصغي إلي ناطق فقد عبده

It has been stated that the person who listens to one who tells him something has actually worshipped that person! Thus, when we see that we listen to what our lower desires tell us what to do, then in reality, we have actually accepted it (and worshipped it). If the person speaking, extols the words of Allah then in essence, we have ended up worshipping Allah however if the person speaking extols the words of Shaitan, then we have ended up worshipping Shaitan!

The actions during the Month of Ramadhan are just for this reason - that we are able to recognize the enemies which we have and then to purify the society. The statistics in relation to the number of sins which we commit should come down in great number during the Month of Ramadhan even if we do not perform the fast. Thus, the fasting of the Month of Ramadhan is only one way to fight against the lower passions and desires.

There are some points in the Hadith mentioned which must be noted:

or to be aware and does **1. إحدروا**. The Hadith uses the phrase not say to not obey (the lower desires). When one is aware of something, it means that he is a person who is always alert and conscious (of what he is doing) so that he does not fall prey to the lower desires and this is a much higher level than just saying not to follow something.

or more of an **2. أعدا للرجل**. The Hadith also uses the phrase enemy to a person and in our opinion this person refers to the one who possesses character and faith meaning for that person who is a true believer, the greatest enemy is his lower desires and passions and it is they who must fear this enemy (more than others). There is a very well known tradition which may also relate to this tradition which reads:

الناس كلهم هالكون إلا العالمون و العالمون كلهم هالكون إلا العاملون كلهم هالكون إلا  
المخلصون و المخلصون في خطر عظيم

All people are destroyed except for the scholars; and all scholars are destroyed except for the ones who act (according to their knowledge); and all of those who act according to their knowledge are also destroyed except the ones with sincerity and the ones who possess sincerity are in the greatest danger.

and it is possible that this refers to the following of the lower desires.

and is in the **حصيدة** is the plural of the word **حصائد** 3. The word meaning of a thing which is used to gain or reap something. The tongue has been compared to a sickle which is used to reap and gain something (from the farmer's field). The sins which are performed by the tongue fall under the category of following the lower desires however why it is that they have been mentioned separately in our main Hadith under discussion?

The sins of the tongue are related to the following of the lower desires and the reason why they have been mentioned separately in this ahadith in the words of the Imam (a.s.) is to stress the importance of this issue.

By this we mean that the sins of the tongue are such sins that they do not require any special tool or mechanism to perform and they can be done night and day and in any state which a person is in. The danger of this sin is much greater and there are approximately thirty major sins which can be done by the tongue.

There is no sin like the sin of the tongue and there is no sin which in the eyes of the people is as great and important as the sins of the tongue and these are the most dangerous of all sins since it is this tongue which is always at the disposal of the person (ready to work) and is ready to show its indecency (when it is instructed to do so). Thus, this is the reason why Imam as-Sadiq (a s) has mentioned the sin of the tongue in this way.

It has been mentioned in the ahadith that the Noble Prophet had one spoken in regards to the tongue and the dangers associated with speaking and this was being conveyed to a general and common `Arab. The `Arab asked the Prophet:

أفنؤاخذ بما نقول؟

Shall we truly be taken to account for that which we say?

To this question, the Noble Prophet replied:

و هل تكب الناس علي مناخرهم في النار إلا حصائد السنتهم

Shall mankind be thrown into the hell fire except due to that which their tongues have earned them?

Therefore, the proof of the importance of the sins which are committed by the tongue can be summarized as the following three things:

1. The number of sins which can be committed with this part of the body is greater than with any other part of the body and there are approximately thirty major sins which the tongue can perform.

2. The most easy means to committing these sins is available to all people.

3. The despicability of the sins of the tongue is known to all.

The Month of Ramadhan is the month in which we should seek to reform all of our body parts, our lives and the soul and the society and we must truly struggle in these regards.

**Note**

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 67, Page 82



## .025: Training of Soul

### Text of the Hadith:

عن ابن عباس قال، قال رسول الله (ص): يرى جزاء ما قدم، وقله غنا ما خلف ولعله من حق منعه و من باطل جمعه

### TRANSLATION:

It has been narrated from Ibn Abbas that the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, That which is sent forth will be seen and that which is left behind will have the least benefit and woe upon those people who have left behind things (which will be of no use to them in the next life) that which they left behind was either an entitlement which they prevented others (from using) or was something worthless which they had collected (to make use of) but had no benefit.<sup>1</sup>

### Commentary of Hadith:

If we read this Hadith with the verbs as being in the passive state, then its meaning would be, That which is sent forth will be seen and that which is left behind will have the least benefit and woe upon those people who have left behind things (which will be of no used to them in the next life) that which they left behind was either an entitlement which they prevented others (from using) or was something worthless which they had collected (to make use of) but had no benefit.

This Hadith points to the material possessions which a person had at his disposal while living in the world. If these possessions are sent forth before hand then according to this Hadith the person will see all of these things (in the next life). This same issue can also be seen in various Ayat of the Quran and in one particular verse of the Quran in which we read:

أنا انذرناكم عذابا قريبا يوم ينظر المرء ما قدمت يداه ويقول الكافر يا ليتني كنت ترابا

Verily, We have warned you of a penalty near the Day when man will see (the deeds) which his hands have sent forth, and the Unbeliever will say, Woe unto me! Would that I were (mere) dust!<sup>2</sup>

That which a person sent forth, he will definitely see and in other words, this verse clearly alludes to the issue of Tajassumul Amal or the Physical Manifestation of our Actions not that the reward or the effects of the act which were done will be seen. Thus, the material benefits which a person delayed in sending forth will have the least amount of benefit for him especially if he had attained these things through illegitimate means.

Thus, the important issues concerning the actions of a person revolve around the training of the soul (just as the topic of this discussion mentions).

Question: What consequences do the actions of the person have (upon him and others)?

Answer: A person's actions have two effects: 1- The external outcome or the societal effects and 2- the guiding effect on the soul and it is this aspect the training of the soul which is the important issue.

Let us suppose that a person gives away something in the way of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) by offering something in charity we see that this charity has two products or outcomes: The first outcome is that the

society is saved from uneasiness and discomfort when the needy person is given a portion of this gift. The other aspect is the training of the souls (through the act of charity). Simply having a person who is willing to give up the wealth of the world and who is seeking to strengthen the soul of sacrifice and piety in the way of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) this act of his would slowly be transformed from a mere (physical) act into an unusual and common action (that he would constantly perform) and in the end, this act of his would become a regular habit and would become second nature for him.

A great number of actions only see the first aspect (as has been mentioned above). For example, a person may give something in charity, however, his intention or purpose is not Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) rather, he performs this act to show off to others.

Sometimes it is possible that a person in order to attract the love of his close friends and not for Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and not for showing off would perform an act of goodness he does this act for a reason or goal which does not belong to anyone (neither Allah nor himself). The effect of this type of charity remains only within the society and it does not have any effect on the soul of the person since it was not done sincerely for Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

It has been seen that there are some people who state the following in relation to their will or bequest, Even through I myself will not make use of my own wealth, however I shall bequest that after my death, my money should be spent for righteous acts. This person is definitely negligent of the fact that the bequest he makes has a very weak effect on the training of the soul of himself even though through this will, he may end up making a group of people rich! Thus, any good that is done for a person after his death does not result in an honor for him when he gives his wealth to somebody else to do good in his name.

If the person was to bequeath all of his wealth and even though such a will is not correct (from the Islamic point of view) however this act still does not have any affect on the training of the soul of the person.

Thus, after death, what kind of an effect can these acts have on the person?

In a well known Hadith from the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family), it has been mentioned that, A person had made his will and stated that after his death, the entire supply of dates which were in his storage tower should be distributed amongst the poor people directly by the Messenger of Allah (s.a.). When the person died, the Prophet (s.a.) acted just as the man had written in the will. When the distribution of the dates had finished, it was noticed that in the corner of the date silo, one withered, dried up dated remained. The Prophet (s.a.) picked up this dry date and said, If the deceased man had given this one dry date in charity with his own hands, it would have been better for him than giving his entire storehouse of dates in charity through my hands. This is the case since the training of the soul was contained within that one dry date (and giving that in charity by his own hands).

As for that which will truly benefit a person on the Day of Resurrection it is a pure heart (Qalb-e-Saleem) just as we read in the noble Quran:

الامن اتي الله بقلب سليم

Except for the one who comes to Allah with a secure heart (Qalb-e-Saleem)<sup>3</sup>

The response of the healthy heart can be seen in its outward actions which are a direct result of the inner soul, spirit and etiquette of the person and it is for this reason that we are told that we must make our intentions pure and sincere.<sup>4</sup>

Some people state, Why do you speak so much about the intension of the person?? Such and such a person built a hospital and no matter what his intention was, what difference does this make? In any case, and whatever his intention was, there are thousands of unfortunate and downtrodden people who are making use of the hospital!

However, this sort of thought is rejected in Islam and such words and opinions are a grave error since this is only in relation to the outward and material aspect of the deed done, however that which is important is the internal aspect of the action which also has an affect on the training of the person.

We are of the firm belief that all of the actions which a person performs help him to achieve perfection and to reach to the ultimate aim and purpose of life which is:

الاليعبدون

And this purpose is the worship and cognizance of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

The fruits of the world of creation are none other than the sincere servants meaning the perfect human being and this ultimate goal can not be accomplished except with a pure intention and thus, it has been mentioned in Bihar al-Anwar (volume 76, page 210) that:

انما الاعمال بالنيات

Surely, the actions are all based on the intention.

" or the actions include all deeds and الاعمال The word here "

actions not only those of Ibadat or worship. Thus, if a person was to pay attention to the meaning of this Hadith, then he would definitely send things forth for himself and would not wait for others to perform this task for him.<sup>5</sup>

We see that the food which a person eats can be divided into two categories: 1- That food which enables him to continue living and 2- The food which only increases the fat content of his body and only adds to his overall body weight. In the same way, anything which a person acquires while in this temporal world can also be divided into two categories: 1- Those things which can help and benefit him (in the next life) and 2- Those things which only add excess weight to him (and do not benefit him in the next world and which he will have to be accountable for on the Day of Resurrection ).

The extra weight and excess body fat can be withstood by the body even though it is of no benefit to the physical self, however, on the Day of Resurrection, the person must also give account of this just as the wealth which put a person through difficulty and which he also did not benefit from in this world. In other words, there is toil but no benefit; there is accountability but no advantage. Those people who sent things ahead for themselves will benefit from those things and that which remained behind will not help them at all.

Therefore, in summary, the most important issue in relation to the training of the soul is sincerity. Whenever the sincerity of a person increases, the effects which they have on the soul in the training of the person also increase and thus, possessing sincerity is the first step on the path towards attaining spiritual closeness to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

There is a treatise concerning Sair wa Suluk (attaining spiritual closeness to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) which has been attributed to the late Baharul Ulum which is a very important treatise.<sup>6</sup> In the final section of this work, there are things mentioned which make us think that it has not been written by Bahurul Ulum. However, the first and second section meaning almost two-thirds of this treatise expound upon very important issues which form the basis of the Hadith found on page 22, which states:

من اخلص لله اربعين صباحا، حرت ينابيع الحكمة من قلبه الي لسانه

The one sincerely dedicated himself to Allah for forty mornings will having springs of wisdom (Al-Hikmak) flow from his heart to his tongue.

Thus, in summary, if our actions are not performed with sincerity, then they will be as a lamp or bulb which others will be able to benefit from (its light). However, if our actions are performed with sincerity, then not only will others benefit from them, but in addition, we too will make benefit of those acts.

### Notes

1 Biharul Anwar, volume 74, page 179

2 Suratul Naba (78), verse 40

3 Surah al-Shuara, verse 89

4 In verses 88 & 89 of Suratul Shuara, in describing the Day of Resurrection we read that on that Day and in that arena (of the Day of Judgment), nothing except a Qalb-e-Saleem will be of any benefit.

The word Saleem which is from the word Salamat has a very clear meaning to it: this word means the heart which is far removed from any form of spiritual sickness and ethical and theological corruption. Is it not seen that in the Noble Quran we are told in relation to the hypocrites:

في قلوبهم مرض فزادهم الله مرضا

In their hearts is a disease and Allah has thus increased the disease.(Suratul Baqarah, verse 10)

In many very meaningful ahadith, the Qalb-e-Saleem has been introduced as thus:

1- In a Hadith from Imam Jafar ibne Muhammad as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) in relation to the verse of the Quran which speaks about Qalb-e-Saleem, he has stated:

وكل قلب فيه كت او شك فهو ساقط

And any heart in which there is polytheism or doubt, that heart has (spiritually) plummeted and is of no worth.

2- From another point, we know that having a strong affection to the material aspect of the world and the worship of this world causes a person to deviate and gravitate towards sin since:

حب الدنيا راس كل خطيئه

Love of this world is the beginning of all sins.

And thus, the Qalb-e-Saleem is the heart which is devoid of love for this material world just as Imam Jafar ibne Muhammad as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) has stated in another Hadith under this same verse of the Quran:

هو قلب النى سلم من حب الدنيا

This is the heart which is safe from the love of the material world.

3- The final word on this discussion is that the Qalb-e-Saleem is that heart in which there are no others except Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and this can be seen in the words of Imam Jafar ibne Muhammad as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) in response to a question which was asked of him in regards to the verse of Qalb-e-Saleem to which he replied:

القلب السليم النى يلتقى ربه، و ليس فيه احد سواه

The Qalb-e-Saleem (Secure Heart) is the heart which meets with its Lord and there is none other than Him within that heart.

It goes without saying that the meaning of Heart in these examples is the soul and essence of the person (and not the physical heart) Tafsir-e-Namuna, volume 15, page 273-274

5 In the words of Sadi:

برگ عيشى به گور خوديش فرست کس نيارد ز پس، تو پيش فرست

6 This magnificent work can be read at: [www.al-islam.org/al-tawhid/sayrsuluk](http://www.al-islam.org/al-tawhid/sayrsuluk) (Tr.)

## .026: Taqwa [ Conciousness Of Allah ]

### Text of the Hadith:

عن أنس بن مالك قال: سمعت رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) يقول: أيها الناس! اتقوا الله حق تقاته و اسمعوا في مرضاته، وأيقنوا من الدنيا بالفناء و من الآخرة بالبقاء و اعملوا لما بعد الموت فكانكم بالدنيا لم تكن، و بالآخرة لم تزل. أيها الناس، إن من في الدنيا ضيف، و ما في أيديهم عارية، و إن الضيف مرتحل، و العارية مردودة. ألا و إن الدنيا، عرض حاضر يأكل منه البر و الفاجر، و الآخرة وعد صادق، يحكم فيها ملك عادل قادر، فرحم الله امرءا ينظر لنفسه و مهد لرمسه ما دام رسنه مرخيا و حبله علي غاربه ملقيا قبل أن ينقذ أآجله، و ينقطع عمله.

### TRANSLATION:

It has been narrated by Anas ibne Malik that he said, I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) say, O People! Have Taqwa of Allah as He is entitled to, and strive in gaining His pleasure and have certainty that the World is temporal and that the Next Life is everlasting and work and strive for the life after death such that it could be said about you that it is as if you were never in this world and (so that it could be said about you) that it is as if you have been in the Next Life for time memorial. O People! Surely all who are in the world are only guests (of this world) and all that they possess are simply trusts (given to them) and these guests shall (one day) leave and the trusts that were with them shall return back to their owners. You must know that surely this world is a merchandise and tangible commodity in which both the righteous person and the wicked person make use of, while the Next Life is the true promise (of Allah) which is ruled by the Just and Powerful one. So then may the mercy of Allah be on that person who looks at his own soul, and prepares his own grave before death comes to him during this time that his halters are loosened from around him (while he has the opportunity in this life) before he arrives at his appointed time of death and then (at that time), the ability to perform actions will be cut from him. 1

### Commentary of Hadith:

This is a hadith in which there is both a summarized and detailed explanation given for the topic at hand since in the beginning we see that we have been commanded to observe Taqwa and to give it its due right and then later on we see that this issue has been explained in more detail.

Many things have been said in relation to the definition of Taqwa, however we are able to explain this very detailed issue through employing a very concise statement which is that: Taqwa is that inner protection and internal lock which prevents a person from committing sins. Of course, Taqwa has various levels.

Sometimes we see that it is at the level of `Adalah or Justice (with others) and sometimes Taqwa goes even higher than just plain Justice such that we reach to the level of `Ismah or Infallibility since the level of `Ismah is nothing more than the highest level of Taqwa.

Thus, that feeling of responsibility which is inside the spirit of a person and that state of Wiqayah (inner protection) is nothing other than Taqwa!

The due or right of Taqwa is that it is nurtured to its highest level not the lower forms and levels - and this can be best understood from the following example where a person rushes to shut all the openings of his house when a flood comes whether the openings and doors are small and weak or if they are powerful and large. The more powerful and larger the doors of Taqwa become, the less damage will come about. The lower desires and passions and following of the lower soul are just like a flood of water, while Taqwa is like the door or gate (to protection) from this tumult. If the person was able to control and regulate the flood waters, then we see that he would be able to actually convert the energy of the water into electricity and power!

In continuation of the hadith, the Noble Prophet (s.a.) has stated the following commandments for us to follow:

1. We must struggle to earn the pleasure of Allah

As we know, there are three forms of pleasure which are attainable (in this world):

1. The pleasure of Allah

2. The pleasure of the people.

3. The pleasure of our own soul.

The person who possesses Taqwa would always seek to place the pleasure of Allah above all others and in this, the people must also be pleased and content with what such a person decides if the others become pleased with that person then what could be better, however if they are not pleased, then at least that person himself knows that he has done the right thing.

If we are able to reach to this station, then we would have reached to the highest station of Taqwa. With this, definitely when something comes up in our life, we would first seek to gain the pleasure of Allah which would be followed by the creations of Allah too being pleased with us, and then finally the pleasure of ourselves would also come about and this is the desirable order to follow.

Thus, if we want to see how this plays out in the real world and how it is enacted, then in any issue, we should see if that which we wish to follow would be in our own personal benefit or not and what it is that Allah wants us to do. If we see what Allah wants (us to do) and at the same time we see if this would also be what the people would want (us to do) and what we ourselves would want (for ourselves), then this would be classified as Shirk (Polytheism) in our actions while the pure form of Tawhid is other than this.

Thus, in order to reach to the stage of pure Tawhid, anytime anything comes up in our lives, we must first see what it is that Allah would want of us and then we must see what the people and ourselves desire.

It has been mentioned in the ahadith that,

من أصلح بينه وبين الله، أصلح الله بينه وبين الناس

The one who corrects the relationship between himself and Allah, Allah will correct the relations between that person and the people.

If in reality we are truly looking to earn the pleasure of Allah then just as the Du`a of Prophet Ibrahim (s.a.) in relation to his wife and son, Hajar (a.s.) and Ismail (a.s.) when he prayed:

فاجعل أفئدة من الناس تهوي إليهم وارزقهم من الثمرات

therefore make the hearts of some people yearn towards them and provide them with fruits;2

Allah would also make the hearts of the people gravitate towards us!

With complete clarity, the Noble Quran states:

إن الذين آمنوا و عملوا الصالحات سيجعل لهم الرحمن ودا

Surely (as for) those who possess true faith and who perform righteous deeds, the Most Merciful (Allah) will bring about love for them (in the hearts of others).3

However first off, we must set the record straight between ourselves and Allah and it is at that time that the record of deeds that have been performed by us in relation to others shall be cleared and set right.

2. We must have certainty that this World will come to an end while the Next life is perpetual

We must see what stage of certainty is meant in this hadith. Is the meaning of certainty in this hadith at the level of actions or at the level of deep pondering and thinking?

From the point of view of our intelligence, we have certainty that this world shall come to an end, however at the level of our actions, we are acting in the way of the person who has certainty that this world shall last forever while the next life shall be terminated!

If we have certainty that this world is temporal and shall end, then why is it that all of the efforts which we expound for the life of this world are not channeled for the life of the next world!? We speak the words of one who is an ascetic in relation to this world, however our actions are of the person who is actively seeking the life of this world!

يقول في الدنيا بقول الزاهدين ويعمل فيها عمل الراغبين

He speaks about the life of this world as one who is a righteous and ascetic one however he acts in this world as if he is actively perusing this material life!

3. The State of the World

Various phrase and terms have been used in the Islamic ahadith in relation to the state of the world, and in this section of the hadith under discussion, we see that all of humanity have been addressed and have been told that both the believers and unbelievers are all the same and that there is no difference between any of them: O People! All of the people in this world are merely guests (in this temporal world) and whatever they possess are simply loans and things borrowed from others and in the end when they die, these things will return back to their rightful owners!

Point of Interest: This is a very expressive and eloquent analogy which has been used. If we suppose for one minute that we have been invited to someone's mansion and when we enter we see that it is full of beautiful expensive silk carpets and a table full of various types of foods served on



dishes of jewels and other such things in this house, however when we realize that all of these things are temporary and have been lent to that person to use (while living in this material world), then we would not have even the slightest attraction to them!

Therefore, if we were to have the same feeling for the life of this world (in all of its aspects), then without doubt, we would not have even the slightest attraction to this world.

Problem: There are some self-proclaimed intellectuals and those who are opposed to the faith of Islam who state that: These sorts of teachings are actually a type of drug which lead the people to becoming lazy and lethargic and through these sorts of teachings, the Islamic society has been left behind and are a totally backward nation! Others state that, These sorts of ahadith are made up and forged by the rich class of people who would like to see the common people break off all attraction to these sorts of things so that they (the rich) would be able to pillage and ravish all the luxuries for themselves!

Answer: Islam has actually commanded all of us to struggle and strive and has actually prevented people from being lazy and idle and being reliant upon the society for assistance:

ملعون من أكله علي الناس

May the mercy of Allah be removed from the person who becomes a burden on other people.<sup>4</sup>

One time, a young man was with the Noble Prophet and the Messenger of Allah said, What does this young man do? The people replied to the Prophet (s.a.) and said, He is unemployed and does not do any work. The Prophet (s.a.) replied:

سقط من عيني

He has fallen out of my sight (I have no regard for him).

Islam has brought with it such a set of teachings that even the Great Prophet of Islam (s.a.) would be seen kissing the hand of people who would go out and work for a living!

Those ahadith which bring forth the lowliness of this material world have been spoken since the Prophet (s.a.) and Aimmah (a.s.) since they wished to bring forth a balance in life:

إني لا اوصيكم بدار الدنيا فإنكم بها مستوثقون

Surely I do not advise you to the life of this material world since without doubt all of you have developed a strong attraction to it. However, I advise you to prepare yourselves for the life of the next world.

Thus, we see that we have not been advised to the life of this material world, rather, we have been advised to keep the next life in view so that through this, we can strike a balance between these two since all of the tragedies which strike the people of this material world come about through the worship of this temporal life!

At the end of this hadith, this World and the Next Life have been compared to one another and we are told that the life of this world is something which has been loaned or lent out to us.

Of the other characteristics of the life of this world is that although from one point of view, the life of this world is that of a place of trial and examination in which both the good and the bad doer profit, however conversely, the next life is that which has been promised to us and that too a truthful promise. This material world is low which shall dissipate, whereas the next life is a trust - and that too a truthful and firm promise and trust.

In that world (the next life), the ruler shall be an Authority who is not only Just, but also All Powerful and there shall not be a single person who will be able to run away from His government:

لا يمكن الفرار من حكومتك

It shall not be possible to flee from Your Authority. (Du`a Kumayl)

Therefore, we see that we have been placed in front of three things:

1) The temporal environment (the life of this World).

2) A truthful promise (the life of the Next World).

3) An authority to which there is no way to escape

and that too an Authority which the Quran describes as being:

وإن كان مثقال حبة من خردل أتينا بها وكفي بنا حاسبين

and though there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed (any deed good or bad), (yet) will We bring it, and sufficient are We to take account.<sup>5</sup>

In another verse of the Quran, we are told that:

فمن يعمل مثقال ذرة إيره ومن يعمل مثقال ذرة إيره

So he who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, there is not a single thing which would be hidden from the sight of Allah K and all things will be taken account of.

However, in relation to the Next Life, the Noble Quran states:

وامتازوا اليوم ايها المجرمون

(To that group of people it shall be said): and get aside today, O guilty ones!<sup>7</sup>

At this time, the congregations of people shall be divided and when this occurs, Allah will shower His mercy upon those people who had prepared themselves for the Next Life.

refers to the *رَمَسَ* In the hadith under discussion, the word grave. When a person's grave was made smooth and flat, the . Thus, when a person *رَمَسَ* Arabs would call it using the word has been given the time and his hands are free (just as an animal, who when the ropes are taken off of him, is left loose in the pasture to graze), at this instance when a person has been given the opportunity before death comes to him, he must perform righteous deeds!

There is an important issue which is an addenda to the discussion of this hadith which is that this World, with all of its problems and difficulties is a great thing - and the Next Life with all of the good things promised therein has one problem with it: The good thing about the life of this World is that

while we are here, our deed of records is open and thus, a person is able to wipe out and cross out all of his bad deeds which he performs, however, with the coming of death (and the Next Life), the person's deed of records shall be sealed.

In speech number 230 in Nahjul Balagha, Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) has stated:

لا عن قبيح يستطيعون إنتقالا و لا في حسن يستطيعون إزديادا

(In the next life) neither shall you be able to remove or get rid of the bad deeds and sins nor shall you have able to add to the good and righteous deeds (on your record).

Sometimes while in this World, a person would shed one tear, let out a single cry and repent from deep within his soul and through this act, he would be able to extinguish an entire ocean of fire which had been ignited through his performance of sins!

The Ma`ad or the Next Life is an issue which the Noble Quran has placed a great deal of emphasis upon since we see that there are two things which form the fundamentals of the training of a person:

1. Keeping the issue of our origin in perspective;
2. Keeping in mind the accountability and resurrection.

If both of these two issues are kept in mind amongst any nation on Earth, then without a doubt that nation would stay on the right course. The weaker our faith becomes in these two issues, the more we will see that our actions become corrupt and impure. Thus, we make Du`a that we are able to keep these two issues in our mind day and night. In addition, we see that in our daily Salat, we repeat the following line a minimum of ten times:

مالك يوم الدين

Master of the Day of Judgment.

Half of Suratul Hamd is reserved for the praise and extolling the characteristics of Allah K while the other half is in relation to describing the Resurrection Day and it is with this Surah that a person can truly build himself spiritually. It is a Surah in which the second half contains:

إهدنا الصراط المستقيم

Keep us upon the straight path.

Thus, after attesting to true faith in our beginning (creation) and eventual end (death), we see that we request guidance onto the Straight Path.

The more we pay attention to the contents of this Surah, the better we understand why this Surah has been chosen for the daily prayers and why it MUST be read in each of the daily prayers - and the main reason is due to the secrets related to the beginnings of humanity and our eventual end and the upbringing and training of each one of us.

We must make sure that especially while we are in a state of Salat, that we do not drift towards thinking about the material world as any form of worship in which there is no deep thought and Presence of Heart is like the skin of a fruit with no fruit inside it.

At this point, we must think about the following important issue which is: What must we do so that we can develop Presence of Heart in our Salat?

The Presence of Heart is an extensive discussion, however we can state that: A person gives the most importance to that thing which occupies his thoughts the most. Therefore, if the material world is important to him, then during the Salat, he will constantly be thinking about that, whereas if the next life is what is most important to him, then even when he is not in a state of Salat, he will be thinking about the next life, not to mention while he is in the state of Salat!

In summary we can state that, Presence of Heart follows and is under the direct influence of those things which we are attracted to, and it is for this reason that we must seriously think about those things which we are attracted to and work such that the pages of our heart are always being pulled towards the True Existence (of Allah)<sup>8</sup>

### Notes

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 177

2 Surat Ibrahim (14), Verse 37

3 Surat Mariam (19), Verse 36

4 Biharul Anwar, Volume 75, Page 142

5 Suratul Anbiya (21), Verse 47

6 Suratul Zilzaal (99), Verses 7 and 8

7 Surah Yaasin (36), Verse 59

8 In order to achieve presence of the heart in the Salat and even in other acts of worship, the following points have been strictly recommended to be followed:

1) We must acquire a deep insight (into the faith of al-Islam) such that through this, each and every person would be able to realize for him or herself that the material world is something insignificant, while Allah is something grand and great. Through this, the worshipper would be able to reach to a level that not a single act of this material world would be able to distract him while he is in a state of asking and begging his needs from the one whom he worships.

2. By paying attention to the various scattered things which need to be done in our daily life (and other such thoughts about various issues), a person is usually prevented from being able to centralize and focus his thoughts and senses, and the more a person is able to lessen his uneasiness and scattered thoughts, the more this will help him in developing Presence of Heart.

3. The person must choose a special place and area to offer his Salat and other acts of worship as this has a great impact on his Presence of Heart. It is because of this fact that to perform our Salat in front of certain things and especially in front of those things which would make a person preoccupied (with what is around him) is Makruh (Discouraged). In addition, it has been discouraged to perform our Salat in front of the door which is open; anywhere that people are passing by or where there is a lot of activity; in front of a mirror; in front of a picture and other places such as this. Thus, the simpler the place of worship is for the Muslim and empty of lustre, pizzazz and formalities, the better it is since this act too assists one in attaining Presence of Heart.

4. Keeping away from all sins is also very effective in achieving Presence of the Heart since sinning makes the heart distanced from Allah and destroys any Presence of Heart.

5. Becoming acquainted with the meanings of the Salat, the philosophy of each of the actions in the prayer and the Adhkar which we recite in it.

6. Performing all of the recommended (Mustahabat) acts of the Salat by following their own specific etiquette both in relation to the preliminary actions which lead up to the Salat or in the actual Salat.

7. In addition to all of these which have been mentioned, just as in all other acts, one is in need of paying close attention and exercising vigilance, practice and continuity and diligence. Many times it has been seen that in the beginning (of this struggle), a person would be able to focus all of this thoughts and energies on the Salat for a short period of time, however through continuing in this way and through following this pattern and staying firm on it, his soul would be able to develop such a power that at the time of the

Salat, his entire presence of thought would be shut off to everything other than the one whom he is worshipping pay attention to this point. (Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 14, Page 204)

## .027: Five Good Qualities

### Text of the Hadith:

عن انس بن مالك، قال: سمعت رسول الله (صل الله عليه وآله وسلم) في بعض خطبه و مواعظه رحم الله امراء قدم خيرا، و أنفق قصدا، و قال صدقا، و ملك دواعي شهوته و لم تملكه، و عصي امر نفسه فلم تملكه.

### Translation of Hadith:

It has been narrated from Anas ibn Malik that, I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) say in one of his speeches and words of admonition, May the mercy of Allah be upon that person who sends forth (for himself) something good, and who gives in charity from the middle path (not too much) and who speaks the truth and who is the owner (in control) of his own desires and wishes and not held captive by them and who controls his own soul so that it (the soul) does not take charge over him.<sup>1</sup>

### Commentary of Hadith:

In this Hadith, the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family), has sent mercy upon that person who possess the following five characteristics:

[ 1. قدم خيرا ] He is not waiting for others to send things ahead for him (in Paradise), rather he himself before others - sends things forward for his own soul and he himself is making his home in the next life a habitable place.

[ 2. أنفق قصدا ] He treads upon the middle path (in giving in charity) not through either extravagance or being miserly he gives out of his wealth. When he gives in charity, he is sure to follow the middle course he does not give out so much that he makes himself poor and without anything nor does he give out so little that the goodness that he has been given does not reach other people:

ولا تجعل يدك مغلولة الي عنقك ولا تبسطها كل البسط فتقعد و ملوما محسورا

Do not make your hand tied to your neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach so that you become blameworthy and destitute.<sup>2</sup>

In another verse of the Quran, it is mentioned that:

والذين اذا اتفقوا لم يسرفوا ولم يقتروا و كان قواما

Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not stingy, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes).<sup>3</sup>

[ 3. قال صدقا ] The person's tongue is not polluted with lies and speaking untruths.

All of these three characteristics listed are very good, however, our emphasis is more on the fourth and fifth characteristics:

4 and 5. [ملك دواعي شهوته ولم تملكه و عصى- امر نفسه فلم تملكه] what is important here is that a person captures his own soul and enslaves it and controls and keeps reins on it - not that he is made the slave of his own soul. The complete worth of a person is in this point that he becomes the leader of his own soul and not the slave of it.

For example, when a person becomes angry, is his tongue in his control or not? Or when a person has the flames of jealousy burning up inside of him, does his true faith (Iman) put out such a fire? In summary, the person has been placed at the intersection of two roads one road leads towards Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and Paradise while the other path which is not limited to one particular path, rather it is a path that has many other paths branching off of it is going towards the Hell Fire.

It is easy to discuss this issue however putting these things into practice is extremely difficult. Sometimes, our leaders who have and are traversing the path of getting closer to Allah (Sair wa Suluk) use the following expression, He is a person who has done a lot of work and by this phrase they mean that the person has fought against his own soul so much that he has fallen down to the ground and has gotten back up again and has continued to fight against his soul till the point where he has become triumphant and has taken control of it as it takes self-discipline to win control over the soul. It also takes a complete knowledge of the meanings of the Quran and the ahadith of the Ahl al-Bait (prayers be upon all of them). Each and every day, such a person must read the Quran, the commentaries of the Quran and the ahadith and transfer this knowledge into his mind and must take energy and power from these things.

There are some people who say that, We know that such and such an act is not right, however, we do not know why when we reach to performing this act, we lose control over ourselves!

This is the meaning of being a servant that the person knows why (he is doing an act) but he does not know how to stop it since he is not the one in control of his own self. It is similar to a driver who is going down a steep hill and his car is picking up speed and he says, I have lost control of my car and then smashes his car on the side of a mountain. Or he ends up in the ditch and is killed. Another example is that of a person at the top of a mountain and is going down at a fast speed with nothing in front of him to control his descent and control his speed coming down. However, when he reaches to the bottom of the mountain, then his speed will eventually slow down and he will come to a rest.

Our soul works in the same manner! How painful it is for a person that he knows (right from wrong) however he does not have the ability to prevent himself (from sinning) since for that time period when he does not know and he commits sins, it is possible that he may not have a great responsibility (in the presence of Allah).

These are all warnings that we must be careful of our actions and that we must sent forth good deeds for our own benefit. However, if we fall prey to performing wicked deeds and we are not successful in repenting to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and we leave the world in this state (of being sinners), then we must be ready and prepared to face the punishment

since after we die, the ink in the pen of responsibility will have dried up and at this time, a person will not be able to ask for forgiveness nor send any good deeds for his use in the next world.

#### Notes

- 1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 179
- 2 Surah Isra (17), Verse 29
- 3 Surah al-Furqan (25), Verse 67



## THE MATERIALISTIC & THE NEXT WORLD

### .028: The relation between the religion and the material world

#### Text of the Hadith:

عن أبي سعيد الخدري، قال: سمعت رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) يقول عند منصرفه من أحد و الناس يمدقون به و قد أسند ظهره إلي طلحة: أيها الناس، أقبلوا علي ما كلفتموه من إصلاح آخرتكم، و أعرضوا عما ضمن لكم من دنياكم، و لا ستعملوا جوارح غذيت في التعرض لسخطه ينقمته، و اجعلوا شغلكم في التماس مغفرته

#### TRANSLATION:

It has been narrated by Abi Sa'id al-Khudri that he said, When the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) was returning back from Uhud, and while he was in a state of leaning upon Talhah with throngs of people around them both, I heard him say O Mankind! Engage in those actions which form your primary responsibility for the improvement of your next life, and turn away (do not keep yourself busy) from all of those things which have been guaranteed for you for the life of this world (your sustenance) and do not make use of the body parts which have been given to you as a blessing in the way of sins and against the laws (of Allah) and make your primary task (in this world) that of seeking the forgiveness (from Allah for your sins).(1)

#### Commentary of Hadith:

Any hadith which we examine, as we know, has been spoken at a specific instance in time and the depths of the meaning of the ahadith is also different when we keep in mind the various instances (in which they were spoken).

The situation after the Battle of Uhud was an exclusive instance in time. The Muslims had lost many of their dear ones - such as Hamzah, the Leader of the Martyrs. The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) himself had many injuries on his body and even his blessed teeth had been shattered - and according to the hadith from Imam `Ali ibne Abi Talib (peace be upon him), the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) had over ninety injuries on his body!

In summary, the situation at that time was very tense and critical and thus, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) not only had to give the people a sense of hope (for the future), but he also had to calm and settle them down. In addition to all of this, he also had to strengthen their spiritual foundations and prepare them to compensate for this loss which they had just suffered.

In such a sensitive time, he gave them four commandments which would not only act as a source of tranquility to their hearts and lives, but it would also make clear for them the path to removing the tension for the losses which they suffered at Uhud and which would lead to their victory in the future.

The essence of the words spoken by the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) which have been contained in these commandments are in relation to the religion and this material world:

أقبلوا علي ما كلفتموه من إصلاح آخرتكم

Perform those things which are your primary and principal responsibilities.

As we know, people have one set of responsibilities which are their primary responsibilities; however they also have others which are their secondary duties. The primary responsibility of the person is the correction and reformation of the next life, while the secondary program in one's life is that of this material world which has been guaranteed by Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

In relation to this fact, the Noble Quran tells us:

وما من دابة في الارض إلا علي الله رزقها ويعلم مستقرها ومستودعها كل في كتاب مبين

There is no moving creature on Earth but its sustenance depends on Allah and He knows the time and place of its resting and its temporary repository (of goods): all this is in a manifest Book.(2)

In relation to the next life, we do not have a single verse of the Quran which has given us such a guarantee such that (through that verse) all people would be assured of entering into Paradise !

From one point of view, Islam tells us that we should not busy ourselves too much with the life of this world, and in reality, we are commanded that we must spend most of our time in the remembrance of the next life since naturally, within the self of the person, there is something which pulls him towards the material world and we know that the various spiritual dimensions which seek to pull him towards the next life are weak within the person. It is for this fact that in relation to this material world, people are just like machines who are chasing something (of this material life) while in relation to the next life, it is like the machine is moving fast and rapidly around them (which they can not catch up with).

Thus, the issue of not paying attention to the material world does not mean that Islam wants people to be lazy, poor and not to be prosperous in the economic spheres of life no it is definitely not like this! The nature and instinct of man is that he gravitates towards the material world and thus, we see that the greatest teacher of humanity, the Noble Prophet of Islam (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family), has ordered that there must be a balance in life.

After this commandment, the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) then brings forth a very affectionate commandment and states that, Are you not ashamed that you are making use of the blessings of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and are performing sins with these things which He has granted you?

In other words, you eat the salt but you end up breaking the salt shaker! Is it not something very indecent and rude that for example, you go to someone's house, eat from the food he has provided at his table for you and then you get up and start to insult that very same host !?!

Without doubt, if at the time when a person was moving close to sinning, if he were to remember this line that: All the power and energy lies solely with Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), he would definitely stop in the face of committing sins.

In conclusion, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) then states that, Seek forgiveness from Allah and struggle to attain closeness to the obedience of Allah and expend all of your ambitions in this regards so that you are able to become His servant.

### **Notes**

1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 182

2 Noble Quran, Surah 11 (Suratul Hud), Verse 6

## **.029: The status of man in this life and the next world**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال علي (عليه السلام): ألا وإن اليوم المضمار، وغدا ألسباق، والسبقة الجنة، والغاية النار

### **English Translation:**

Amir al-Mominin Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him) has said, You should know that today (this world) is the day to prepare (for the next life), and tomorrow (the day of Judgment) is the day of the competition and the prize (for this competition) is Paradise (for the good doers) and Hell (for the evil doers).(1)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this Hadith from our Mawla Amir al-Mominin Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him), we see a very clear explanation of this world and the next life. In addition, the picture of the sojourn of humanity in these two places is also presented in this Hadith. In a very interesting explanation of the next life, it has been compared to a competition ground and just as he (peace be upon him) has said, Today is the day of preparation.(2)

The word مضمار comes from the root words ضمور and إضمار in the meaning of preparing and training a horse for a competition. It is known that in order to take part in competitions, horses must go through intense training and practice so that they can eliminate their body fat and ready themselves for competition against other horses this entire time frame of preparation and training is known as مضمار.

In reality, the entire world outlook of Islam in relation to this world and the next life can be summed up in these two sentences:

السبقة الجنة والغاية النار

Therefore, this world is the place of preparation and is not our final or original goal. During this time of preparation and training, the person must continuously be within the stage of self-building and if he slips or falls into neglect for even one second while on this path and is not able to develop the necessary prerequisites, then there will be no chance for him in the field of the next life.

Maybe you have heard of the preparation and training that astronauts go through in their profession? They have a very difficult training mission in which they operate in a weight-less environment. Everything that is outside of the gravity of the Earth becomes weightless and even the human being himself is not beyond this law. This state of weightlessness for the person who has become accustomed to the gravity of the Earth - is a very difficult, frightening state to be put in and thus, they must train and prepare in a man-made weight-less environment so that when these astronauts are put face to face in such an environment in space, they are not dazed, rather, they are able to accomplish their goals.

Thus, these astronauts are placed in a specially designed chamber and are continuously moved up and down of course in such a way that would not lead any broken bones such that after coming out of this enclosed chamber, the face, head and feet of some of these astronauts are sometimes covered in blood (due to minor injuries) and no matter how much they try and take care

to protect themselves, this free falling is not something that a person can come out of easily with no scratches on his body.

This sensation of weightlessness can be experienced on Earth when a person is free-falling such as when a person falls from a high place down to the ground. For those few seconds that he is in the air, he would experience what it means to be weightless that same feeling that the astronauts feel!

If we consider the journey that astronauts take, we see that it requires a lot of preparation (on their part) accompanied by difficulties and struggles. Now just imagine what is required for that great trip the one towards the next life! How much must the person prepare for that trip how many difficulties must he go through and what sort of things must his soul (Nafs) struggle to fight against so that he would be able to reach to that great and exalted status of the next life!

As if it is possible that without any struggles or difficulties and by not tasting the pain of inconvenience and of bereavement, one thinks that he can reach to any station or rank (in the next world)!

There are many people, who in order to reach to high levels and ranks with the military, who would go through difficult exercises and training and would taste the difficulty of hunger and thirst sometimes going for long periods of time with water just to train the body:

نابرده رنج گنج میسر نمیشود مزد آن گرفت که جان برادر که کار کرد

It is not possible to gain the prize without going through difficulties,

The one who went through troubles is the one who got the reward.

It is here that we must stop and think - What we have done in this world? What stage have we reached to here in this world?(3)

If we wish to reach to grand and lofty (spiritual) levels and we desire to attain proximity to the Lord, then we must endure and withstand the difficulties and challenges and must struggle against our soul.

If we look at those people who live for only this material world, we see that they have not attained the materialistic pleasures of the world without going through difficulties - thus, how can we assume that without any difficulty or challenge, we would be able to reach to the (lofty levels of the) next life?

This world is the house of difficulties and tests and in this temporary residence, the tests of the close, intimate friends (the Awliyah) of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) are harder and much more difficult (than others face):

هر که در این بزم مقرب تراست جام بلا بیشترش می دهند

Whosoever is closer (to Allah) in this world, Will have to give a more difficult examination.

Some of the examinations (of this world) are general while others are specific. The common people are tested in one way while the intimate friends (the Awliyah) of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) are tested in other ways and thus, this world must continuously be a place of competition for all people.

Of course, there are some people, who depending on the time period that they live in, who are faced with special tests related to that specific time. For

example, that person who was in the battlefield in Karbala or who was taking part in the Battle of Badr had a special test (that he was put through).

During the Islamic Revolution (of Iran) and the time immediately following the Revolution, the situation was very unique and extraordinary and some people were not able to make it through those days. It is as if there was a sieve or strainer that was busy removing all of those people who were not sincere and only preserved those who were genuine and honest. In that period during the course of the Revolution, those who forgave (others), were aware of what was happening (around them) and who were sincere, etc were known and well-defined (from the others).

In any case, it was a time period that from one point of view, was very dangerous and something that was confusing to people and from another point of view, it also brought about great happiness and joy.

Therefore, in those areas where the difficult storm of the tests of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) are active, it is that same area where some people actually take benefit from such an environment.

However it is also a very dangerous place for those people who have not prepared themselves (for the tests) and thus, they get caught in the tail wind of such a storm and are destroyed.

### Notes

1 Nahjul Balagha, Speech 28

2 It has been mentioned in the Quran that:

(يا ايها الإنسان إنك كادح دلي ربك كدحا فملاقيه)

O man! Surely you are ever toiling on towards your Lord, painfully toiling, but you shall definitely meet Him. (al-Quran 84:6)

This verse points to the fact that the nature of the life of this world is that it is not free of difficulties or tribulations at any stage and that there is no difficulty or challenge whether they be physical and related to our bodies or whether these be spiritual and related to our soul or both except that they will definitely occur to us.

In very many thought-provoking ahadith from Imam Ali ibn al-Husain (prayers be upon both of them) we read that, Ease and comfort are not present in this world nor for the people who are living in this world. Ease and comfort are only reserved for Paradise and thus, difficulty and trials have been reserved in the world for the people of Paradise. It is for this reason that difficulties and challenges have been created in the world and for those who are living in this world. Thus, any person who receives a measure of this world in his hand, two times this amount will actually be given to him (in this world).

In other words, whoever gets more pleasure and enjoyment from this life is actually poorer and more needy (than others) since (when he has more in this world), then he needs other people to be around him to protect his wealth and for this, he is also in need of more things (to help him protect himself and his wealth). Thus, in the wealth of this material world, there is no way to gain solace and relaxation.

3 In addition to the competition for the next life, in this world too, we have a form of competition which has been referred to as the competition while on the path of spiritual happiness.

Just as it has been mentioned in verse 133 of Surah Ale Imran:

(وسارعوا إلي مغفرة من ربكم)

And compete with one another to reach to the forgiveness from your Lord.

This verse compares the struggling and striving of the righteous doers to the competitors taking part in a contest in this material world. However, the ultimate purpose and aim (of

the competition of this life) is the forgiveness of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and the blessings of the ever lasting home in Paradise.

In reality, in this verse, the noble Quran has made use of a very interesting, physically demanding similitude which is that: When a person wants to do some act, if he is alone in this endeavor (with no one around him or competing with him), then naturally he would carry out his task slowly and in a normal manner. However, if he was to take his job or work as a competition, that too a competition in which the prize is something very valuable which he has even been told about before hand, then he would definitely put forth all of his energy and strength to get the job done and would also try and work as fast as possible so that he would be able to reach to his goal faster.

If the primary goal of this competition (of this life) is to reach to forgiveness (of Allah, Glory and Greatness be to Him), then it is so because it is not possible to reach to any spiritual level without first achieving and attaining the forgiveness of our sins, followed by the purification of the soul.

The first thing which must be performed is the washing away of our sins and then we will be able to reach to the level of spiritual proximity to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him):

شستشوي کن و آنکه به خرابات در آي

Spiritually cleanse yourself and remove all that which is bad from yourself.

4 Tafsir Namuna, Volume 3, Page 91

### **.030: The world is a storehouse of treasures**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن عبد الله بن عباس قال: سمعت رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) يقول: أيها الناس، بسط الأمل متقدماً لحلول الأجل، والمعاد مضمار العمل، فمغتبط بما احتقب غانم، و متيسر بمافاته . أيها الناس، الطمع فقر، والياس غني والقناعة راحة، والعزلة عبادة، والعمل كنز، والدينيا معدن... فبادروا العمل وأنتم في مهل الانفاس، و جده الاحلاس، قبل أن تأخذوا بالكظم، فلا ينفع الندم

#### **English translation:**

It has been narrated from Abdillah ibn `Abbas that he said, I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) say: O Mankind! Before death comes to a person, all sorts of wishes and desires are placed in front of him, and the Resurrection Day is a field of trial and a competition. (On this day, people will be in one of two groups) The (poor) person will possess (the good form) of envy (Al-Ghibtah). In that same amount as the wealth which he gives (in the way of Allah), will he be successful and dignified. The other type of person is that rich person who possessed things however did not make use of his wealth and did not spend it in the way of Allah and thus, he will be in grief and upset. O People! Surely greed is (actually) poverty, and disregarding (that which other people have) is richness, and contentment (with what one possesses) is comfort and distancing one's self (from people) is worship, and (righteous) actions are a treasure, and this world is the mine (of treasures). Thus while you have the opportunity, strive to perform good deeds even if the time remaining for you (on this Earth) is as much as the time between two breaths or the time it takes to mount upon your saddle, before the way of breathing is taken (away from you) at which time any remorse will be of no use.(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

The Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has brought forth two points in this Hadith:

1. Before the time of parting (from this world) and before death comes to a person, all of the wishes and desires (which the person possesses) will be presented in front of him.

This part of the hadith may point to the fact that as a person gets older, his desires or wishes also increase these desires also become spiritually devoid and less logical as times goes on.(2)

Thus, this is the danger bell to that person no matter how old he is whose wishes and desires (for material things) increase. It is this same thing which will prevent that person from just as he must do make the best of this world in order to be able to have a better life in the next world.

2. The Resurrection Day is the field and area of actions. The reason why the `Arabs refer to the competition ground as a مضمار is due to the fact that before they would start a horseback riding competition, they would first look to find an open area to practice in and it is here that they would try to get their horses to run as



much as they could and it is through this act that they would accomplish two things:

1. The horse would get more training and experience.
2. The horse would get thinner and fitter.

is also in the meaning of becoming thinner and مضمار. The word thus, in the 24th speech recorded in Nahjul Balagha it is mentioned that, Today is the day of the competition ground. This world which we are in is the training ground and the competition is the next life. From this expression, we can deduce that sometimes the area of competition the competition ground is since it is there that the horses would مضمار also referred to as the run and would also get thinner and fitter.

In any case, according to this commandment from the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family), the Resurrection Day is the competition ground of acts. We should not think that a person will be able to reach to any status in life with long desires and hopes. At that place (on the Day of Resurrection) it is the actions of each person which will compete with one another, and the person who had more good deeds will be the winner of this competition and whoever had less good deeds which were polluted (with evil and sin) would be the loser.

This world tries to keep you busy with longings and desires where as in the market of the Resurrection, these longings and desires will serve absolutely no purpose rather, it is only those actions which produce fruits or benefits which will be of use to us.

From the next sentence, we understand that people are of two types:

One group are those who are envious of others or مغتبط where as the second group are those who are content or متيسر. Some people have stated that the first word actually means one who is happy or joyous however according to our opinion, it refers to a poor person who is envious and jealous of others and in that same amount that he spends his wealth in the way of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), in that same amount does he attain happiness and success.

There are some people who possess everything (materialistically speaking) however since they are not able to make use of their wealth, thus, they are always upset and discontent.

In the next sentence, there are six points which have been mentioned:

1) and 2) The wealth and poverty of a person are related to the inside (spiritual aspects) of a person and are not related to his apparent aspects. If a person who possesses everything was to own all that is within the world, he would still be poor and the opposite of this is true as well as if a person who does not pay any attention to the material world, even if he did not possess anything, he would still be rich. It is the soul which must be full (of spiritual blessings) and which must remain self-sufficient and needless (of others) since the best wealth of a person is his internal and spiritual wealth. Thus,

one who possesses everything (materialistically) is actually poor, and disregarding wealth and material pleasures of this world are the true wealth of a person:

أن الطمع فقر، والياس غني

3) A person is in need of rest and relaxation, and if he wishes to find this rest and relaxation, then he must do so by searching deep within himself since it is through contentment that a person finds ease and comfort:

والقناعة راحة

and it is owing to greed that a person is put through difficulties and challenges.

4) In order for a person to continuously be in the worship and servitude of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), he must sit in a quiet and tranquil area by this, we do not mean that he distances himself entirely from the people rather, we mean that during the 24 hour period, he must put aside some time for himself to be with his soul and his Allah. The best time to engage in this contemplation is the last part of the night just before the rising of the sun when normally, most people are asleep. The worship and prayer with full attention and presence of the heart in the middle of the night gives the heart and soul of the person spiritual energy:

والعزلة عبادة

5 and 6) The treasures and riches of a person are his actions, and this world is the quarry (where these treasures can be extracted). I have heard various explanations and similitudes in relation to the world - for example it has been said that this world is the planting ground for the next life or that this life is a house of admonition and a bridge to cross (to the next life), however it is only in this hadith that it has been mentioned that this world is a quarry, and this is the only place where I have seen this similitude. This world is a mine out of which treasures are extracted.

Thus in summary, for that person who makes use of this world (for the next life), this world is not such a bad place.

From these sentences we can deduce that in reality, the world is not something despised and despicable, rather, it is us who have made this world something reviled:

والعمل كنز الدنيا معدن

In closing, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has ended his dialogue with a discussion on the end of the life of a person and has stated that, Of those issues which are hidden from people is that of the end of his life. Not a single person knows exactly when he or she will die.

In the Quran, we read the following:

ما تدري نفس ماذا تكسب غدا و ما تدري نفس بأي أرض تموت

And no soul knows that which it will earn tomorrow and no soul knows in which land it will die.(3)

Thus, it is from the wisdom of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) that a person is kept unaware of the time when he will die and keeping this

hidden has two benefits which have been mentioned in the book, Tawhid al-Mufaddhal. If man knew the time span of his life, then his existence on this Earth would not fall out of the following two scopes:

1. If he knew he had a long life, then in this scenario, negligence would overtake him and he would reassure himself that, I have 10, 20 or 50 years left to live and thus, the need to ask forgiveness for my sins can be delayed and it is not necessary to make haste in asking for forgiveness. At this time, the person would continue to perform sins and pollute himself with negligence and falling into carelessness.

2. If a person knew that he would live for one more hour, one day, one month or even one more year, then life would have no meaning for him as he would say to himself, I am only going to live one more month, so then why should I go through all of this struggle ? Thus, the pleasure and enjoyment from life would be gone and a person would fall into despair.

This issue has other benefits to it which make a person lean towards the two states at any given time - meaning that he is constantly in a state of fear and hope ( خوف ورجا ). From one point of view, he does not stop stretching his hand forth and at the same time, he does not come close to sins since he does not know if he is going to live another hour. In the Islamic narrations this issue has been mentioned quite frequently.

In this hadith, two topics have been mentioned and I personally understand these two in the following way: In that time period that we have been given respite and are still breathing, we must work this wording may allude to the fact that in between each breath that a person takes (when he breathes in and then exhales), the time period between this cycle is something very short. Incidentally, it has also been mentioned that between the beats of the heart of the person, there is a very short time period of rest which is referred to as the respite of the heart and thus in summary, we see that even in between the breaths which a person takes, there is also a respite between each one and this is the shortest period of time that a person is able to imagine.

The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has then stated, just as you are given the respite to live, during the time when you are inhaling and exhaling each breath, in that same amount of time between each breathing, you should not have hopes in living in this life for a long period as it is possible that when you exhale you may never inhale again. Therefore, in this short period of time, you must work towards righteous actions:

فبادروا العمل وأنتم في مهل الأنفاس

In the past, it was common place that when a noble person mounted his steed, he would place a cloth or some material on the horse (and then mount it) and thus, the Prophet has said, If you have been given respite during your life even for that period that it would take to put on and take off the cloth from your house meaning such a short period of time then you must work towards righteous actions since it is very likely that in the next instant, your life would come to a close.

Before the time that you breathe your next breath and do some action that you would later feel guilty about and which has no benefit to you after which there is no turning back, you should perform righteous deeds.

If a person has even a small amount of knowledge in relation to the laws of universe, then he would know how close death is to a person. In the body of a person, we see two important organs which can easily stop working: the heart and the brain. There are a series of thin veins which are responsible for the nutrients going to the heart and if these thin veins were to break, then a part of the heart would stop working and a person would end up having a heart attack.

Within the brain of the person too, there are various capillary veins and if even one of these was to lose its power, then the brain would stop working - and how tragic it would be if that part of the brain that stopped working happened to be the control centre of the brain which could happen even if the heart was working properly and was healthy since it is the brain which commands the heart in its activities.

Or can we imagine if one of the veins were to lose its power which controls actions of one side of the body as in this case, one side of the person's body would become paralyzed. Or if due to an impact on one of the veins, if a person was to develop a blood clot, then in this event too, a person would lose the faculty of movement.

We see that when we are eating food and are swallowing our morsels, this small tongue that we have which is inside the throat of a person actually covers over the air pipe which is in our throat and if this act was to take place with even the slightest delay, then we know that a small amount of food would get caught in our wind pipe and if through coughing, we could not release or remove this food, then without doubt, our death would be sealed.

Thus in summary, if a person does a bit of contemplation on the creation and at his own life, then slowly he would definitely develop thoughts in his own mind that tonight if he goes to sleep, is there not a possibility that he will not wake up in the morning ?

In any case, these events that take place both within us and outside of our bodies are numerous. If we just take for example these travels that we take which is now a part of everyone's life we see that all travels and journeys that we take are full of dangers even if a person is careful and vigilant - however it is possible that others may not have this same vigilance.

Thus, while we are able to and as long as we have the strength and energy, we must go forth to righteous actions and all the actions that we do, we should leave with Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) for their accountability. Can we truly say that all the actions that we have performed have been sincerely for Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and that no amount of insincerity or material gain were involved in them?

We must seek refuge with Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) since when a person enters into the presence of the Most High and sees his hands empty (of good deeds) and when he is given his book of records in his hand, he will scream out, just as it has been mentioned in the Quran:

يا ويلتنا مال هذا الكتاب لا يغادر صغيرة ولا كبيرة إلا أحصياها ووجدوا ما عملوا حاضرا

Ah! Woe to us! What a book is this! It leaves out nothing small or great but takes account thereof! They will find all that they did placed before them.

2 Without doubt, wishes and desires or in the language of the `Arabs, Aml (أمل) - is the thing which keeps the wheels of life of a person in constant motion, and if this quality was to be removed from the hearts of the people of the world for even one day, then surely the entire system of organization and harmony of the people would be disrupted and very few people would have any reason to stay active, and strive and struggle towards a purpose.

However if this same characteristic and trait transgresses the boundaries and turns into those long desires that are far from reach, then this would lead to the worst of traits including misguidedness and bad fortune for the person. This can be compared to the water of life which rains down from the skies however, if this rain was to pour down in large amounts, then it would then lead to the destruction and ultimate drowning of a person.

These long desires are the same ones which have been mentioned in verses 1 to 5 of Surah al-Hijr and it is stated that this is the same thing which leads to negligence of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), the truth and the realities around Him. { 1\_Alif. Lam. Ra. These are the Ayats of Revelation of a Quran that makes things clear

2\_ Again and again will those who disbelieve wish that they had bowed (to Allah's Will) in Islam.

3\_ Leave them alone to enjoy (the good things of this life) and to please themselves: let (false) Hope amuse them: soon will knowledge (undeceive them).

4\_ Never did We destroy a population that had not a term decreed and assigned beforehand.

5\_ Neither can a people anticipate its term nor delay it. }

Thus, these long desires and wishes that one can not attain or reach to keep a person so busy and preoccupied that he drowns himself in the world of imagination and fantasy and thus, removes himself completely from the realities of life and makes himself a stranger to this life and the ultimate aims and purposes of why we are here.

In the well known hadith which has been narrated in Nahjul Balagha in speech 42 from `Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) which also speaks on the reality of this issue, it has been mentioned that:

أيها الناس، إن أخوف ما أخاف عليكم اثنتان: إتباع الهوي و طول الأمل . فأما

الهوي فيصد عن الحق وأما طول الأمل فينسي الآخرة

O people! Surely the most frightening of things which I frighten you about are these two: Following the lower passions and having long desires. So then as for following your lower passions, this will distract you from The Truth and as for having long desires, this will cause you to forget the next life.

And truly how many people who possessed great abilities, talents and the capacity (to achieve in this life) have been transformed and changed into weak individuals due to the negative effects of having long desires and wishes. In such a state, the person is no longer any worth or benefit to the society rather, he has even trampled upon his own self worth and greatness and has distanced himself from any form of perfection, just as we read in the Supplication of Kumayl:

وحبسني عن نفعي بعد أملي

Principally, those desires which go beyond limits always keep a person in trouble and preoccupied, and thus we see that day and night he must strive and struggle thinking to himself that he is working towards his own happiness, welfare and well-being whereas we see that actually, he is going towards nothing except loss, failure and discontent. It is these sorts of people who normally in this state that they find themselves in end their lives through suicide, and it is their painful and sorrowful life and example which can be used by others who have the spiritual eyes to see (the realities) and the spiritual ears (to hear and understand the truth) as a source of inspiration and learning.

#### Notes

- 1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 183
- 2- Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 11, Page 11
- 3 Surah Luqman, Verse 34

### **.031: Upheavals around the world**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن علقمه بن الحصين قال: سمعت قيس بن عاصم المنقري يقول: قدمت علي رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) في وفد من جماعة من بني تميم، فقال لي: اغسل بماء و سدر، ففعلت، ثم عدت إليه وقلت: يا رسول الله، عظنا عظة ننتفع بها، فقال: يا قيس، إن مع العز ذلا، وإن مع الحياة موتا، وإن مع الدنيا آخرة و إن لكل شيء حسيبا، وعلي كل شيء رقيباً و إن لكل حسن ثواباً و لكل سيئه عقبا

#### **English translation:**

It has been narrated from Alqamah ibn al-Hasin that he said, I heard Qais ibn Asim al-Minqari say, I was with the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) with a contingent from the tribe of Bani Tamim, when he said to me: Go and perform a ghusl with water mixed with sidr (a type of tree). The companion said, So I did as I was told and then returned back to the Prophet and said to him, O Messenger of Allah! Give us some good council so that we can make use of this advice. The Prophet said, O Qais! Surely along with honour and glory comes abasement; and surely along with life comes death; and surely with the world there is the next world; and surely there is an accountability for everything and there is a watcher over everything and for every good deed, there is a reward and for every bad deed is a punishment.(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

One of the traits of this world is the upheaval that comes along with it. By this we mean that both this world and even man himself who is a part of this world - will never remain in one state. It is through paying attention to this point that a person's pride and vanity is destroyed since most of the problems and troubles of man are due to his negligence.

Thus, if man was not negligent, then he would not easily give himself up to abasement, nor would he commit sins. In summary it can be said that this negligence is the root of the misfortunes of man and in order to remove and protect a person from this wicked state, Islam has brought forth various ways and means that must be employed.

#### **The Things which Destroy Pride and Negligence**

A) Paying attention to the upheavals that take place around the world is enough to wake a person up and make him humble. If he notices that after every period of greatness (of a person or country), there is a period of abasement, after health there is sickness, after safety and security there is danger and anarchy, and after youth there is old age, then he would definitely humble himself and try to remove all forms of negligence from himself.

The person must know that status, wealth, power and all other material bounties are not everlasting and whether he likes it or not, one day, all of these will be taken away from him. This truth is something very important that: the world will never remain in one state rather, it is always changing and evolving and thus, we can not rely upon it. Yes, we must take this world as a bridge and a crossing point and a (temporary) residence to prepare



ourselves for the next life, however we must understand that it is only the sacred essence of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) which will remain for eternity.

B) Obedience and worship (of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him)) are two more things which can remove pride, arrogance and negligence. It is through the Salat that a person can remember Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and remove the negligence that is within himself.

There are some people who ask, Till when must we perform this Salat ? It must be said to them that, As long as we are in this world, we must continue performing this Salat since principally: we are in need of this Salat. We must lift our hands in need in this Salat while in the presence of the one who is completely free of all needs and it is from Him alone that we must ask for the spiritual medicine to cure ourselves. Thus, the Salat is the thing which removes our negligence and which spiritually awakens us.

C) Facing tribulations and difficulties also removes the veils of negligence from a person. When a person is facing difficulties, we see that in the early stages, they are hard to go through, however if we carefully look at these difficulties, they are actually a blessing for us. In other words, these tribulations and all of the difficulties which they cause are only one side of the coin while the other side of this coin is the happiness and pleasure that one will achieve (after having passed these tests). one of the people who used to speak to us from the Mimbar in the past used to give us a very good example and used to say, If the entire highway was clean and flat (with no bumps on it), then surely the driver would fall asleep at the wheel. However if a portion of the highway was under construction, then the person would stay awake while driving so that he would drive with caution and be alert.

In addition, sometimes they make a portion of the road (on the side the shoulder) uneven, so that the driver does not fall asleep at the wheel. Trials and tribulations are just the same the apparent aspect of these challenges are things which may upset the person, however there is mercy and blessing contained within them.

Another issue that has been alluded to in this Hadith is that the person must know and understand that every act he does however great or small even something such as his breathing is all under watch and is recorded and there is someone who is writing all of these things down(2)

Before any other single creature, Allah the Most High is watching over and seeing what we do and then the two Angels are commanded to be witnesses and even the land that a person lives upon and his own body parts will bear witness for or against him on the Day of Resurrection.

In addition, it is mentioned in the Hadith that even the day (each and every time period) will also bear witness on the Day of Judgment in relation to our actions and deeds.

This in summary we must know that we are under close watch and scrutiny.

### Notes

1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 175



2 Not only are the two Angels Raqib and Atid watching everything that we do, however Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) is also witness to our actions and thus, in the supplication of Kumayl, Imam Ali (peace be upon him) says the following:

و كل سيئة امرت باثباتها الكرام الكاتبين الذين و كتهم بحفظ ما يكون مني وجعلتهم  
شهودا علي مع جوارحي، و كنت انت الرقيب علي من ورائهم، و الشاهد لما خفي عنهم

and for every evil action that You have ordered the two Noble Scribes to confirm (write down) whom You have appointed to record all my actions and to be witnesses over me along with the limbs of my body, while You observe me beside them two and You witness those acts which You have concealed even from them.

## .032 The psychological effects of loving the transient world

### Text of the Hadith:

عن ابن عباس قال: سمعت رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) يقول: انه ما سكن حب الدنيا قلب عبد الا التايط فيها بثلاث: شغل لاينفد عناؤه و فقر لايدرك غناه و امل لا ينال منتهاه، الا ان الدنيا و الاخرة طالبتان و مطلوبتان، فطالب الاخرة تطلبه الدنيا حتي يستكمل رزقه و طالب الدنيا تطلبه الاخرة حتي يأخذه الموت يعفته

### TRANSLATION:

It has been narrated from Ibn `Abbas that he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (s.a.) say: The person who becomes plagued with the love of the transient world within the heart will be overcome by three trials: the continuous thoughts about the material world will tire him out to the point that they will never stop; (he will develop a) poverty which will never be able to be satiated; his long desires and wishes (which he possesses) will never be fulfilled. Be aware that the transient world and the next life are both searchers and also the things which are being sought after (by others). So then the searcher of the next life is the one being sought after by the transient world so that it (the material world) can complete its granting of sustenance (to that person) and the searcher of the material world is being sought after by the next life so that it can take him through a sudden death and gratify itself.(1)

### Commentary of Hadith:

In the ahadith concerning love for the transient world, although this is in the meaning of worshipping the material world and not mere affection for it which is governed by a balance, there are various expressions used such as that love of the material world is the prelude to all sins. In addition, there are various branches to this Hadith as the effects which love of this material world exert on the psychology of a person states that: The person who is plagued with the love of the transient world will be overcome with three tribulations and in reality, there are three spiritual inconveniences which will come about.(2)

1. The person's mind will always be preoccupied. A person will develop a continuously preoccupied mind and due to this, he will always feel tired, and this exhaustion will never go away and almost the same phrase can be seen in Nahjul Balagha where it is mentioned:

من لهج قلبه بحب الدنيا، التايط قلبه منها بثلاث

The one whose heart is taken over by the love of the transient world will have his heart overcome by three things(3)

2. Perpetual poverty involves spiritual poverty for which there is no way to become prosperous and the more a person attains things from the transient world, the more he will feel that he does not have enough since in reality, the issue of being needless is not something which is based on the exterior of the presence of a person rather, it has its roots in the inner recesses of the soul of a person. The person who worships this transient world will always be thirsty and hungry (for more) and will never be satiated and filled.

3. Long desires with no end. The long wishes and desires also do not give up attracting the person and anytime any of these desires is acquired, another desire comes forth and takes its place and in this way, these desires and wishes have no end to them. Such a person (who has these continuous desires) would never be able to find tranquility, meaning that he has lost control of this issue and the tranquility and ease is taken away from such a person such that even during the state of Salat, the person's mind is on the transient world; while eating his food, his thoughts are on the material world such that he does not even pay attention or know what he has read or what he has eaten !

At this point, it is necessary to mention the following points:

1. People give importance to those things which in reality have no value to them at all and why is this? It is because it is important for people, that during their life in this transient world, they have peace of mind.

However we see that today even though the life of people is much better and organized, however still the psychological and mental pressures have increased. In other words, the (physical) difficulties which existed in the past do not exist today for humanity for example, long journeys are now made in a short time period whereas in the past it used to be said:

السفر قطعة من السقر

Traveling is a fragment of the hell.

With all of these eases, we see that the spiritual problems (of the society) are on the increase since the mental tranquility of the people has decreased. At this point we must ask the question that why has this mental tranquility decreased so much in the people?

There are two very important reasons which have been mentioned in regards to this question:

1. Not possessing true faith.
2. Worship of this transient world.

We see that the issue of the worship of the transient world takes place in some of the best centres of worship such as the Hajj which is one place where this issue grabs hold of a person. Truthfully it is something to witness what the creations of Allah perform at the Hajj time! While in that place (Mecca), the people are transformed into another world, however when worship of this transient world takes over a person, then even in the city of Mecca, the person runs after this temporal world he runs from here to there (trying to acquire this ethereal world) whereas maybe some of these people, while they were in their own home in Iran would not have run after these things!

Various Branches of Worship of the Transient World:

Worship of this temporal world is not limited to the worship of money alone. Rather, it is possible that love of attaining a specific status, position or any sort of other worldly ranking (may make up worship of the temporal world). For example, when a person enters into a gathering and is forced to sit at the back of the hall (since there is no other room left), he would not be able to sleep that evening. He would be upset within his self that why was this insult leveled upon him? Slowly, this issue would grow within him and this apparent insult leveled upon himself would then be extended to him

leveling insults against Islam and even against those things held sacred in Islam and would even reach to the insulting of the Theological Seminaries!

In summary, this person would concoct all sorts of false rumors (against Islam and its sacred symbols). Thus it has been stated in a Hadith that:

آخر ما يخرج من قلوب الصديقين حب المجاه

The final thing to leave the heart of the truthful people (As-Siddiqin) is the love of status and position.

الان والاخرة طالبتان ومطلوبتان

In this part of the Hadith, the Prophet (s.a.) has come with a new phrase in which he has shown the fraudulence of the material world, and what an interesting phrase he has used!

The Prophet (s.a.) has stated that, The material World and the Next Life both of these are both in search of something and also are things which others are searching for.

Whatever direction we place ourselves in, we see that these two things (the material world and the Next Life) are at the opposite side! For example, when we aim to seek the next life, we see that the Material World comes after us and we become that which the Material World is searching for. Seeing as how Allah has promised that whatever sustenance He has decreed to reach us will definitely come to us, thus even though we seek the next life, the material world still comes after us and is in search of us. The opposite of this theorem is also accurate that if we go in search of the material world, the next life will come looking for us. The next life will come looking for us to pull us closer to death we would be so caught up in the material world that all of a sudden death would come upon us (and we would not even realize it).

Do not think that if a person goes in search of the next life that he must deprive himself of the transient world not at all! If we struggle to achieve the next life, then this does not mean we have deprived ourselves of this material world.

I have thought about this issue numerous times that if we desire the material world then we must be people of the material world AND people of the next life since if we wish to live in this world then we must faith in both of these issues since if we do not have reliance on both (the material world and the next life) then it is not possible to live a societal life.

If millions of bricks were to be placed in random order on top of one another, they would never be able to make a building, however if we were to follow an orderly and methodical manner, then we would be able to assemble a new building.

If we are people of the material World, then we must also be people of the Next Life and we must have faith in a series of issues (of the theological beliefs) so that we would be able to, by putting them all together in an orderly manner, reach to tranquility and peace in the life of this world. If the entire society were to become true believers, then the people would definitely be optimistic and cheerful with one another and would have trust in each other and an atmosphere of sincerity, intimacy and honesty would be brought about.

We are told in the ahadith that the Prophet (s.a.):

طبيب دوار بطبه

A (spiritual) doctor treating patients with his medication.

He knew where our pains lied and thus he was able to pinpoint our illnesses and was also able to show us the medication and prescription to take. If today, you were to take a look at the cases which are in the court systems, you would notice that none of the arguments are of a spiritual type all of the files and cases are in relation to the material, transient world. For a small amount of possessions of the material world, people are fighting with one another; people are being treacherous to one another; people are acting criminally with one another.

Sometimes, two brothers are standing opposite of one another in the court and without doubt the source of all these sins is the love of the material world. In these regards, the Noble Quran has told us that:

زين للناس حب الشهوات من النساء و البنين و القناطير المقنطرة من الذهب و الفضة و

الخيول المسومة و الانعام

The love of desires, of women and sons and hoarded treasures of gold and silver and well bred horses and cattle and tilth, is made to seem fair to men(4)

Women, children, money, gold, all of these things are simply a beauty for the life of this world. In this verse, the verb used is in the passive tense such that through employing the verb in this way, it should sink into the heads of the people that who is it that has made these things an attraction is it the Shaitan who has made these things fair seeming; is it one's friends; is it one's own lower desires and passions or is it Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) who has done this to test us??

All of these forms of beauty and attraction prevent us from moving in any (spiritual) direction and thus, Islam has continuously recommended and advised us to abandon these things so that we are able to build up a wall of defense around us to protect us from our lower desires since the things in this material world which aim to allure and distract us are many.

### Notes

- 1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 188
- 2 The meaning of heart in this Hadith is one's soul.
- 3 Nahjul Balagha, Short Saying 228
- 4 Surah Aale Imran (3), Verse 14

### **.033: How to gain the love of Allah and the love of people**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن أبي سعيد الخدري قال: سمعت رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) يقول لرجل يعظه: إرغب فيما عند الله يحبك الله، وازهد ما في أيدي الناس يحبك الناس. إن الزاهد في الدنيا يريح، ويريح قلبه وبدنه في الدنيا والآخرة، والراغب فيها يعتب قلبه وبدنه في الدنيا والآخرة ليجيء أقوام يوم القيامة لهم حسنات كأمثال الجبال فيأمر بهم إلى النار فقيل: يا نبي الله، أمصلون كانوا؟ قال: نعم، كانوا يصلون ويصومون يأخذون وهنا من الليل، لكنهم إذا لاح لهم شيء من أمر الدنيا وثبوا عليه

#### **TRANSLATION:**

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) said the following to a person whom he was advising: Actively seek that which is in the presence of Allah so that Allah will have love for you and keep away from that which is in the hands of the people so that the people will have love for you. Surely the one who is an ascetic in this material world is at ease and his heart and body are both at ease in the world and the next life. However the one who seeks that which is in the world (its material pleasures) both his heart and his both will be fatigued and put through toil both in the world and the next life. on the Day of Resurrection, a nation shall be brought forth whose good deeds shall be like the size of mountains and they will then be commanded to go to the Hell Fire. It was said, O Prophet of Allah! Did these people offer the Salat? The Prophet replied, Yes, they used to offer the Salat and they used to fast and they even used to stay up a portion of the night (in the night prayer) however when anything of this material world was brought in front of these people, they followed it (and took it without regarding if it was hgalal or haram).(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this hadith, the Noble Prophet (s.a.) has given warning and council to a man, and then at the end of his warning, he (s.a.) brings forth a discussion in relation to the material world and its dangers.

1. If you want Allah to love you, then you must seek that which is in the presence of Allah and if you want the people to love you, then you should not look at what is in the hands of the people and should not look at the wealth of the people, nor seek it.

that which is with **ما عند الله** What does it mean by the phrase

Allah ?

The meaning of that which is with Allah is the Divine Reward of Allah close proximity to Allah and His blessings and favours and if we request these things, then Allah will definitely love us.

However, we are told that when the people begin to love you, then you must not pay any attention to those things which they are in love with (meaning the things of the material world) since miserliness is that which rules and governs a person who is stingy and this rulership of miserliness in a person would lead to the person who is not interested in the material world

to develop an attraction to materialism (through loing those people who have material possessions).

Without doubt, if a person wishes to protect his own position, status and worth, then he must not pay any attention to that which the people have in their possession.

During the course of history, there are some amazing events and incidents which have taken place in these regards. There are some rulers who had killed the people who were close to them and even ended up killing their own brothers just to protect their own reign! For example, king Muhammad Fatih, the `Uthmani king when he reached to the position of the emperor, he commanded that all of his brothers should be killed since he feared that they would be a threat to his governorship! After king Muhammad Fatih, it became the norm amongst the `Uthmani rulers that whoever reached to the position of the emperor would begin his reign by killing all of his brothers!

In relation to one of the Parthian kings, it has been written that when he reached to the kingship, his first task was to kill his father and thirty of his brothers. He then married his mother and the progeny which came forth from this marriage were spared however he also killed his mother. This is how the world is for those who worship it.

2. For the person who does not pay any attention to the material world both for himself, and also his body and soul - there is ease and comfort and for others as well (around him) there is ease and comfort.

To have a very intense attachment to this world will definitely lead to pain and suffering and toils, and as such, a person would not, for example, be able to have a peaceful sleep.

There are many people who, when they reach home in the evening from work, see all of the events which took place in their day in the market and all of the transactions which they carried out marching in front of their very eyes and in their thoughts. If they are able to get to sleep, then we still see that they do not gain any satisfaction from such a sleep, and if they do not sleep, then it is a night full of grief and sorrow such people must take sleeping pills just to go to sleep and in this state, their soul is continuously tormented.

However that person who does not give any importance to the world, both his body and soul are at rest and are tranquil.

These Divine Commandments are not simply commandments that only have importance in the next life, rather their rewards and punishments will be physically manifested while in this world. If may Allah protect us there was no next life, then it would have still been necessary to think about the execution of these commandments for the life of this world and for the safety and ease of our body and soul and its comfort.

It is said that due to the advancements in medicine, the number of physical sicknesses has been reduced, however the number of spiritual and psychological ailments are increasing day by day and maybe we will reach to a day when the world, in our words, or the Abode of the دار المجانين will reach to a great big place of

Insane Ones and across the entire Earth, we would not be able to find a single person whose nerves are at ease and free from any spiritual sicknesses.

The mental and psychological illnesses are increasing day by day and these are all related to some agents and factors. By a person having a strong affinity to the world, it leads his soul to be continuously tortured and tormented. Without doubt, we must keep the following verse of the Qur'an in mind in relation to the issues of this material world which states:

لكيلا تأسوا علي ما فاتكم ولا تفرحوا بما آتاكم

So that you may not grieve for what has escaped you (from the material word), nor be exultant at what He has given you(2)

We must have firm and true faith and act according to this verse to be at complete ease. This verse of the Quran is the prescription for the good health of our soul and the asceticism which has been mentioned in these two lines of the ahadith have actually been summarized and defined in this verse of the Quran given above.

The material life of the people of true faith is one which is very good since they do not gain tranquility through money and wealth and they do not consider status are what brings them happiness.

There are people who have all of the material possessions, however they are the worst off people in the entire world and are consistently in anxiety and distress and hope that no one comes and takes away what they have nor tries to pull the wool over their eyes and trick them! Thus, these types of people are continuously in mental punishment and torture.

On the opposite side of these people, there are those who do not possess anything from this material world however they are the richest people in the entire universe. In this, the meaning of Zuhd or asceticism is not that they do not possess anything, rather, the meaning of it is that they do not have any attachment or interest to the material world.

After this, Abu Sa`id Khudri relates from the Noble Prophet (s.a.) that he has stated that on the Day of Judgment, a nation shall be brought forth and they will be commanded to go towards the hell fire, where as they had good deeds on their record equivalent to the size of mountains! The narrator of the hadith then asked the Prophet (s.a.), Did these people offer their Salat? The Prophet (s.a.) replied, Yes, they offered their Salat, they fasted and in addition, they performed the recommended acts and they even stayed up in the night and performed the night Salat.

The companions were obviously shocked at this statement that would could have lead these people to go to the hell-fire? Their problem was, as the Prophet(s.a.) put it, that when they when any issue of the issues of the world came in front of them, they did not pay any attention to halal and haram (permissible and forbidden) and they just took what came.

is a very meaningful expression. **وتعبوا عليه** The phrase used, This phrase means that they were just like animals that just as when the animal sees any food in front of him, it just pounces on



top of it - and these people too are just the same in relation to the affairs of this world and this is the same thing which they do.

When a person looks and reflects on the verses of the Quran and the ahadith and looks at them from the point of view of his own life and from the point of view of the history of humanity, he would truly see the veracity behind the hadith which tells us:

حب الدنيا رأس كل خطيئة

Love of the material world is the beginning of all sins.

Through this, he would definitely become more acquainted with this issue. The phrase love of the material world has a very deep meaning to it the material world is not just limited to money and wealth. Sometimes for the love of status, the love of a woman, and thousands of other loves, a person would completely subordinate himself and thus, the spring of all pillaging and plundering is the love of this material world.

These days, this issue has been made completely clear and open for all and others do not even try to hide it when they ask, Why are you perpetrating all of these crimes ? To this question, the reply comes, There is no profit or benefit for us here ! Thus, in order to for them to reach to their own personal profit and benefit, they commit thousands of crimes and felonies.

These people who are committing these crimes are referred to as however if you were to ask those self proclaimed holy people and those with no Taqwa why they are performing such wicked deeds they would explain why they do so through religious reasonings such that if they were to say, We too have some benefit in this issue.

They feel that they are much more noble or honourable that they would have any love of the material world and to also show pride and arrogance. However when those so-called and self-proclaimed religious and holy people are asked about how a particular person is (who has this love of the world) he would reply to you, Do not speak about these things as the Islamic legislations have prevented us from speaking things about another person. However it would have been better for that person to speak and tell others about the sins of that person since by him stating this, the thoughts of the person would go from place to place and he would begin to think what kind of a sin that person must have performed for it not to be permissible for us to speak about!

It is at this point that the great teacher of Akhlaq (the Noble Prophet Muhammad (s.a.) has told us that, This person thinks that he has not committed a sin however in addition to backbiting another person he has also performed the sin of showing off.

### Notes

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 186

2 Suratul Hadid (57), Verse 23

### **.034: Two opinions in regards to the material world and the next life**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن نافع عن ابن عمر قال: سمعت رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) يقول: أيها الناس، هذه دار ترح لا دار فرح، التواء لا دار استواء، فمن عرفها لم يفرح لرجاء و لم يحزن لشقاء، ألا وإن الله خلق الدنيا دار بلوي و الآخرة دار عقبي، فجعل بلوي الدنيا لثواب الآخرة سبياً

#### **TRANSLATION:**

It has been narrated from Nafi` from Ibn `Umar that he said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (s.a.) say: O people! This (the world in which we are in) is the abode of grief and sorrow and is not the adobe of happiness and pleasure; it is the abode mixed with intricacies and difficulties. This transient world is not one in which all things are constant and smooth (and easy). So then the person who has a cognizance of it (this transient world) will not be happy with what it grants him and will not be saddened by the loss he entails. Surely Allah has created the world as a place of trials and tribulations and has created the Next Life as the abode of rest and stay and in this way, the difficulties and tribulations of the transient world are the means through which the reward and recompense of the next life are earned.(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this hadith, two views have been expressed in relation to the transient world and the next life:

1. The transient world is the abode of sorrow and grief and is an abode of difficulties, not a place in which all things are simple and easy.

In reality, this is something which we can truly see with our own two eyes. With our own eyes we see that everything is in a state of transformation and change and there is nothing in this transient world which is constant or unvarying.

From the point of view of science it has also been proved that this world too is going through a (physical) decline and even the sun, with all of its greatness will also one day cease to give us light just as it is mentioned in the Noble Quran:

إذا الشمس كورت

When the sun is covered over (and darkened).(2)

The entire universe of existence is, day by day, going towards decay and erosion and this is something which sometimes the people refer to as Entropy - meaning indolence, depreciation and decay.

Therefore, we must not consider this transient world as the abode of happiness and pleasure. If we were to understand the essence of the world in this way (as has been explained) then we would never be happy or elated with victories, nor would we become grief struck with sorrows. This is the correct viewpoint and this is the outcome from the world view of the Muslims in relation to this transient world - and in reality, is the essence of the verse of the Noble Quran which states:

لكيلا تأسوا علي ما فاتكم ولا تفرحوا بما آتاكم

So that you may not grieve for what has escaped you, nor be exultant at what He has given you(3)

We know that everyday, the sun rises and neither do we show our displeasure at the rising of the sun nor at its setting in the evening and if a person were to have the certainty within him that this transient world is also something which is not constant or faithful, then he would have been able to instil within himself two lessons on upbringing just as Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) has mentioned in Nahjul Balagha where he has summarized the entire meaning of Zuhd (asceticism) in this one sentence:

الزهد كله بين كلمتين من القرآن قال الله سبحانه: لكيلا تأسوا علي ما فاتكم ولا تفرحوا بما

آتاكم

The entire essence of Zuhd (asceticism) is contained within two words from the Quran where Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) has said, So that you may not grieve for what has escaped you, nor be exultant at what He has given you. (4)

Thus, Zuhd or asceticism means deliverance and freedom from the binds and shackles of this material, transient world.

2. The second point of view in relation to this transient world is contained in the continuation of the words of the Noble Prophet (s.a.) where he states that, The material world is the place of trials and tribulations, meaning that this transient world is the womb or training ground for the fetus which comes into it in preparation for the life of the next world - just as when the fetus grows in the womb of its mother and is made complete and is ready to be born into this world (so too, our growth in this world is to prepare ourselves for the next life in the Hereafter.).

In summary, this transient world is a school of learning and training. If the fetal and infancy stages are completed properly, then after birth (in the Next Life), we will be able to make the best use of the blessings of that next life. However, if the fetus is brought into (either this or the next) world with deformities, then there will be nothing for it except difficulties and trials to go through and of course there is no way for it to return back to its original home!

This transient world is the abode of difficulties and pains. The reality is this that in the nature of the life of this world, there is not a single stage which we pass through which is void of difficulties, problems and troubles whether these difficulties take the form of physical trials or spiritual trials and difficulties or both of them and we do not see a single person who is free from experiencing these.

In many expressive ahadith from Imam `Ali ibn al-Husain (s.a.) we read that, Ease and comfort do not exist in this world and for those who live in this world. Ease and comfort is only limited to those in Paradise and the people who are in Paradise. Difficulties and tribulations have been created for the world and the people of the world.

It is because of this fact that if anyone is given a measure of this world in his hands, then he will instantly desire and wish to have double that which

he is given, and the person who is given more in this material world is actually more poor and needy than others since when he gets more wealth, he is then in need of someone to help him to protect his wealth and he will always be in need of countless instruments and tools to protect his wealth.

Therefore, there is actually no ease and comfort in possessing wealth in this material world!

Then, the Imam (a.s.) states the following:

ما تعب أولياء الله في الدنيا ل نيا، بل تعبوا في الدنيا للآخرة

Never would the intimate friends of Allah struggle in the world for the material world, rather, they would strive and struggle in the transient world for the next life.(5)

### Notes

- 1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 187
- 2 Suratul Taqwir, Verse 1
- 3 Suratul Hadid, Verse 23
- 4 Nahjul Balagha, Short Sayings #439
- 5 Tasfsir-e-Namuna, Volume 27, Page 203

### **.035: The Description of the Material World and a comparison between it's Past and the time remained**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) في خطبته: لا تكونوا ممن خدعته العاجلة، وغرته الامنية فاستهوته الخدعة فركن الي دار السوء سريعة الزوال، وشيكة الانتقال. انه لم يبق من دنياكم هذه في جنب ما م الا كاناخة راكب او حالب، فعلي ما تعرجون و ماذا تنتظرون؟

#### **TRANSLATION:**

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) say the following in a speech, Do not be like that person who was fooled by the material world and who was deluded or tricked by the long desires and wishes (which this material world contains) so then these things kept him busy and pre-occupied. Thus, this person pinned his hopes and desires on this material world which is full of evils and shall pass by quickly. You should all know all that remains of this world (its time span) - in comparison to that which has already passed, is like the amount of time which a camel lies down on the ground (when a person goes to mount it or place some load on it) and (its worth) is the amount of that thing which a person uses to tie the udders of an animal (to prevent the child from taking milk from its mother and so that this milk is not wasted in other ways). Therefore upon what thing do you raise yourselves upon (where do you live and build your dwellings) and what are you in anticipation of ?(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this speech, the Noble Prophet has brought forth some very important issues.(2)

The first issue which he has alluded to is: The gold and glitter of the material world is all an illusion which a person is tricked by both from the internal and external aspects of this material world - and these have been referred to in this hadith as خدعة or an imposter and cheater and as غرور or delusion and trickery just as it is stated:

خدعته العاجلة و غرته الامنية

The fast ending material world has cheated the person, and the long desires and wishes which this material world contains have deluded and tricked him.

) and خدعة In reality, these two characteristics of cheating ( ) are one and the same and are very close to one غرور delusion ( ) another in meaning, however in this hadith, the term imposter or cheater is in relation to the internal illusions of this material world, while delusion or trickery is in relation to the outer illusions of this material world.

A person sees the gold, glitter, status and lofty positions of this material world and sees a person who possesses these blessings and other good

things from this material world and it is these things which end up keeping him busy (and negligent of Allah). It is through this that he becomes completely negligent of Allah the Next Life and the spiritual attractions (of the faith). Thus, the Noble Prophet (s.a.) has stated that we must not be like such a person who is sometimes cheated by the outer forces (of this material world), while at other times he is tricked by the inner forces.(3)

The second thing which has been mentioned in this hadith is the instability of the material world.

In reality, the person who is deluded by either the inner or outer aspects of this material world has placed his trust on **دار السوء** or The Wicked Abode and that too, a locality which shall very quickly become destroyed such that as we know, the person shall move from this abode to the Next Life, and at any time, the bell shall toll (and it will be announced) that you lazy people must now move on.

At this point, we see that two words have been used in the hadith namely **الزوال** and **الانتقال**. By bringing up these two words, there is an important point to be made which is that by using the term **الزوال** this means that the person will have to give up whatever he has in his possession, while the term **الانتقال** means that a person will be transferred to another area (the Next Life) in which he must give account for his actions (performed in the world). Thus, the blessings of the material world are not only given very quickly to us, but they are also quick to be lost and taken away from us.

Of course, the Quran also emphasizes this issue and in relation to the delusion of this material world, it has been referred to as the glitter and attraction. Sometimes this attraction is attributed to Allah Himself; sometimes to the person himself; and in other times to Shaitan and all of these from one point of view are correct:

1. Attributing this (the glitter and attraction of the material world) to Allah is in reference to Allah L being the **Musabbbal Asbab** or the Causer of all Causes (all things which occur in the universe are through His permission).
2. Attributing this act to Shaitan is due to the evil whisperings which he is known for which affect a person both from his outside surroundings and also from his inner self.
3. Attributing this act to the person himself is in reference to the person following the lower desires and his inner characteristics.

In the view of the common people who only look at things from a very rudimentary level, the material world is definitely one of gold and glitter. However the person who has delved deep into the material world knows that there is no gold and glitter to this world. The gold and glitter of the material world is only there so that the person is able to see these things from far away and then judge (the true worth of the beauties of this world) and can be summarized in the famous saying, From far away it (the material world) is on fire.

However, when he gets close to it and falls into its trap, then his entire life is engulfed in flames and through this, his ears are also deafened (to the

realities). Since for a majority of the people, their intelligence is in their eyes and what they see and perceive (with their senses) and they do not seek to go deeper in issues which come up in their lives, they are thus plagued with these foolish and silly things (of the material world).

With this said, when we look deep into the inner and private lives of those people who have achieved status, wealth and position and who hold a great rank in the material world and whose entire presence have been filled with these things, we see such their lives are not even worth porridge in the mouth.

In summary, from a far, this material world is attractive and beautiful, however when a person enters into it, he would then realize that there is nothing there!

There is a very beautiful phrase given by Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib:

كل شيء من الدنيا سماعه أعظم من عيانه، وكل شيء من الآخرة عيانه أعظم من سماعه

Hearing about everything that is from the material world is greater (in a person's estimation) than actually seeing it, and seeing everything from the material world (in a person's estimation) is greater than actually hearing about it.(4)

We are not able to describe the next life with words, and especially keeping in mind the words of Imam `Ali عليه السلام (mentioned above), it is possible that someone may state, This material world is all a delusion. The material world has announced to us with 100 tongues which do not speak that it has no loyalty and is not going to last.

has also stated that, Are these عليه السلام In addition, he destroyed graves of your fore-fathers the thing which have deluded you? Are the remains and effects of the people who have passed away already the things which are deluding you? It is these sick people whom you were sitting beside from morning till night and whom you were looking after the thing which is deluding you ? In summary, if we look carefully at this, then without doubt we will realize that it is actually us ourselves who are trying to delude our own selves!

In continuing his speech, the Noble Prophet (s.a.) then brings forth a phrase which is used very less in the verses of the Noble Quran and the ahadith. Usually the phrases used (for the material world) are things such as disloyalty, or lack of foundation or that the material world is something which can not be trusted, however here, the following comparison is given.

The Prophet (s.a.) tells us that all which remains from this material world, in relation to that which has already passed, is something trivial and insignificant and in this, he has given us two parables:

or the camel which lies إناخة ركب 1. The phrase which is used is down. In order for a person to mount on top of the camel, the

camel is forced to lie down since it is not possible to dismount a camel when it is standing up nor is it possible to mount it!

One of the amazing qualities of the camel is that while it is lying down and if a person puts some heavy load on top of it, or he himself mounts on top of the camel, it is easy for the camel it to stand up, whereas we see that for other animals, this is not something they can do! It is this point about the camel that some of the exegetes of the Noble Quran have mentioned may be the explanation of the verse of the Quran which reads:

أفلا ينتظرون إلى الإبل كيف خلقت

What then, do they not look at the camel and how it has been created ?  
(5)

A great deal of this ability lies in the special characteristics of the head and the neck of the camel; its head works like a lever or crow bar and it is through the rocking and special movements that it makes that it is able to lift up heavy loads which are upon it and is able to stand up.

The time period of this lying on the ground of the camel is very short and this material word too, just as this period of lying on the ground of the camel is also not something which shall last a long time.

- meaning that (2) صر حالب The second parable given is that of at the time when the udders of the animal are full of milk, sometimes if the person does not want the child of the animal to drink the milk of its mother, it would be covered up with a bag, and a string would be tied in a knot around it so that time is not wasted (in the milking of the animal). That thing with which the and the ار udder is tied with is referred to in `Arabic as choosing of these two parables is an interesting way to compare or look at this material world.

, this means that we must إناخة راكب Thus, when it was stated now lie down since we are at the end of our journey and thus, must get down from here. Comparing this to leaving this material world is completely in order and it just as the example where you dismount your ride when you reach to the end of your journey and at this point, then camel would be made to lie down and the person is then told to dismount

this means that just as حالب In addition, when it is stated baby of an animal is given the opportunity to drink its mother's milk however after this, the child is then prevented from drinking any more, thus in the same vein, we see that every human being is given a specific length of time to live, and then death will come to him to cut these roots (from this life) from him.

These examples have been carefully thought out and are completely in line with the topic which has been chosen to elucidate upon. The Prophet



(s.a.) has stated that, From this material world of which nothing remains except in the amount of the lying down of a camel and the mounting and dismounting from that animal which is such a short time span, or in the amount of the string which is used to tie the udders of the animal so that its child can not drink its milk your share of this material world is nothing more than these two similitude!

At this point the question comes forth that what is the meaning of: The time remaining of the life of this world, in relation the time of the world what has already passed is something very small? Is the life of the entire world like this or is it only the life of every person (which is measured in this way)?

If the meaning of this is the life of the physical world, meaning that the time remaining in the life of this world, in comparison that which has already passed by is something very small, then it could be stated that since in the life of this world, millions of years have already gone by; however if the meaning of this is the life of humanity, then it means that mankind has been living on this earth for countless number of years however it is unknown if this is relation to the children of Adam (or others) then the life of humanity which has passed, compared to that which is remaining is something very small.

and the amount of **عليه السلام** It is possible that the life of Adam time he spend here was not a lot, however humanity is not alone and we have proof that **عليه السلام** limited to Prophet Adam there were other human beings on this **عليه السلام** before Adam Earth and that this Earth existed. It is also possible that the meaning of this phrase is the life of each one of us which has passed and that which is remaining in our lives and the difference between these two is very little .By this we mean that a person should have any certainty in regards to his life as it is possible that there may only be one hour left in his life and thus, he should remove this thought from his head that there a long life awaiting him.

Thus, when our life is like this, what can we truly have trust and reliance upon? What can we use to gain this advancement and ascension in life? There is not even a moment left in our lives and thus, even this one moment which remains must be valued if you wish to turn back to Allah, then turn back to Him now and do not lose this valuable opportunity!

In our own time and age, we see that the events which are occurring are much more than what occurred in the past and that too they are happening much faster and quicker and we are having to face many things things that a person would not even be able to imagine while he is sleeping (are now happening). Thus, the life right now - in relation to the life of the past has become very untrustworthy.

## Notes

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 183

2 It is important to mention that between the speeches and the general ahadith, there is a great difference (of content), since normally, the speeches were given in a gathering setting. These were delivered in an open gathering or Majlis, in the presence of a large number of people. In addition, the people who were listening to these talks were mostly present to hear the principle and foundational issues being discussed.

3 People are of various groups: There are some people who are so spiritually weak and feeble that by merely seeing the gold and glitter of the material world, this is enough to delude and deceive them. However there are others whose spiritual strength is much stronger and thus, in addition to the gold and glitter of the material world, if they are to be deluded and tricked, they are also in need of the evil whispering of Shaitan. For such people, the internal and external Shaiatin must both work hand and hand to try and deceive them.

Without doubt, a great majority of the apparent aspects of the material life are aimed at deceiving us and putting us in a state of negligence, and sometimes it can be seen that such a person would even be busy with his family and in this, he would become negligent of all other things around him.

It is because of this proof that in the Islamic narrations given to us from Amirul Mominin `Ali (a.s.) we read that when the was asked: **عليه السلام** Imam

أي الناس أثبت رأياً

Which person is the most firm in his thoughts and reflections?

He replied:

من لم يغيره الناس من نفسه ولم تغره الدنيا بتشويقها

However even with this said, in the various scenes and views of this deluding world, there are also scenes which speak volumes and through which we can clearly understand that this material world is (spiritually) hollow inside and is only an outward and apparent gold and glitter and this itself can spiritually wake up any person who is intelligent - rather, even the unintelligent people can also be awaked to this aspect of the material world.

(Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 18, Page 95)

4 Nahjul Balagha, Lecture 114

5 Suratul Ghashiyah, Verse 18

### **.036: The description of the material world and our responsibility while living in**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم): ألا إن الدنيا قد ارتحلت مدبرة، و الآخرة قد احتملت مقبلة ألا وإنكم في يوم عمل لأحساب فيه، و يوشك أن تكونوا في يوم حساب ليس فيه عمل. و إن الله يعطي الدنيا من يحب و يبغض، و لا يعطي الآخرة إلا لمن يحب، و إن ل نيا أبناء و للآخرة أبناء. فكونوا من الآخرة، و لا تكونوا من أبناء الدنيا إن ما أتخوف عليكم: أتباع الهوي و طول الأمل: يصرف هممكم إلي الدنيا، و ما بعدهما لأحد من خير يرجاه في دنيا و لا آخرة.

#### **TRANSLATION:**

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) say, Surely the material world has ceased to exist and has been left aside and is now gone and the next life is inexhaustible and is in front (of you). Surely you are all living in a day and age in which there is only the performing of deeds while there is no accountability (for your deeds at this juncture), however indubitably in the future, it will be a time in which there will be the accountability and no time to perform deeds. Most certainly Allah grants the (benefits) of this material world to those whom He loves and those whom He hates (both the believer and the disbeliever), however, He will not grant the Next Life to anyone except those whom He loves. Unquestionably this material world has its own offspring and the next life too has its own progeny and offspring, however you should be the offspring of the Next Life and not be the progeny of this life. Surely the most frightful of things which I am afraid for you all is the following of your lower desires and long dreams and aspirations. So then as for the following of your lower desires, this act shall divert your hearts from The Truth; and as for the long desires and aspirations, this act shall divert all of your thoughts to only about the material world and for the person who possesses these two traits in him, there is absolutely nothing good for him from either the material world or the Next Life.(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

This hadith has been divided up into various sections (by the Prophet of Islam (s.a.)) and it is in this manner of discussing it section by section through which we shall proceed forward to elucidate upon its meaning.

and at this **1. ألا إن الدنيا**. The first section of this hadith reads, introductory stage, we see that there are two sentences which the Prophet (s.a.) has related: Surely the material world has ceased to exist and has been left aside and is now gone, while the next life is inexhaustible and is in front (of you). It is possible that the two statements which have been used in even though the life of **احتمال** and **ارتحال** this part of the hadith of this world has not yet passed us by and the life of the next world

has not yet come) may have been mentioned in this fashion in the hadith since in the language of the `Arabs, anything which is imminent and is bound to occur is sometimes mentioned in the past tense (in `Arabic) just as it is said in this hadith that this world is finished and the life of the next world (already) came. Through such an expression, it is meant that the opportunity to perform good deeds in this world is very short, while the coming of the life of the next world is something certain.

2. The second portion of this hadith reads, **ألا وإنكم في يوم عمل لأحساب فيه**, which means that We are all living in a day and age which is solely for performing deeds while there is no accountability for our deeds at this juncture.

This is a very important issue which is brought forth that the nature of this material world and the nature of the life of the next world are completely different from one another. Here in this world, we can only perform actions and plant the seeds (of deeds), while it is in the next world that we shall reap our harvest and see the fruits of our labour.

Sometimes, a person sees the retribution of his deeds in this world however this is something insignificant, a minor issue and something unique (that may not always occur) and is in no way a general rule or a universal issue and this is the most important difference between this world and the next world. We know that in this world, there is no issue of accountability or reckoning (for the deeds which we perform) and thus we see that people do not give much attention to the outcome of the acts which are performed in this world since they do not see the outcome or product of their deeds. However, when they see the definite outcome of their deeds in the next life, then they will definitely reach to the conclusion and would hope that they could make up for the deeds done in the world, however at that time, they would have lost the opportunity and there is no way to return back to this world!

From the verses of the Noble Quran, we can deduce that one of the most regretful states of those who commit sins is when they realize that they had actually done a bad act and at that time they would wish they could offer some recompense for that act of theirs. At this time, they would let out a scream, however no one would pay any attention to their screams:

**رب ارجعون**

O my Lord! Return me back (to the world)!

They will ask for the right to return back so that they may be able to make amends for their deeds, however the call will come to them that this is not possible. once again, their cry shall be:

**ما فرطت في جنب الله**

Alas my grief that I was unmindful of Allah!

Sometimes while in this world, the following issue would come up for a person that for example the teacher would say to one of his students, While you are still young and have the ability and free time and since you are not

busy with a wife and children and the difficulties of life are not chasing after you, you should focus on your studies. However many times, the student would not listen to such advice. Later on, when that student's life has passed him by, he would realize that he does not have the physical strength to study, nor is his soul in a state to take in the information. At this point in time, he realizes that no matter what job he wishes to get into, he must be educated, and since he has no education, thus, he is compelled to a life of being either being worthless to society or he must go forth and perform jobs which are of a low status! At this time would he become regretful and wish to himself that while he was young if he had only listened to his elders! He would wish that he was once again a youth such that he would, this time, study properly! However as we know, it is not possible for his youth to return back to him again. The next life is just the same!

Talib has stated the following Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi in a speech in Nahjul Balagha where he has stated that: These dead people that you are now carrying upon your shoulders (to the graveyard) and that you are carrying every day to the graveyard are the best preachers for you:

فكفي واعظا بموتي

So then sufficient is it as a preacher (for you) the deceased one's

When those who are dead are being brought to the graveyard, they would think to themselves, It is as if we were never even living in this world.

We just need to take a cursory glance at the ceremony of burying a person and how the dirt is thrown over the dead person; how the Suratul Fatiha is read over them and then how we say farewell to the deceased. When we look back at the entire episode, it is as if that person has been in that graveyard for the past one hundred years and that the life of the next world has been his abode for eternity!

We see that as soon as a person dies, others rush to quickly perform the rites of the burial and to bury him so that the smell of the body does not start to come out and annoy others! They carry the deceased person to the graveyard, however if when he was alive, if that same person was told to go to the graveyard for even one minute, he would not have gone since he was terrified of that place!

3. The third point states that, *وإن الله يعطي الدنيا من يحب و يبغض* or that Surely Allah grants the (benefits) of this world to those whom He loves and those whom He hates both the believer and the disbeliever, however, the next life is strictly reserved for the true believers.

This part of the hadith shows us that in the presence of Allah this material world has absolutely no value to it since if it were not like this, then He would have reserved this material world for only those whom He loves.

In other ahadith, something similar to this has also been mentioned and these hadith state that if this material world had even the worth of the wing of a fly to it, then Allah would not have permitted the disbeliever even one drink from it!

As we know, this material world is the place of test and examination. In no way is possessing material gain from this world a sign of a person possessing some character, nor is giving it all up a sign that a person has no character, however since the Next Life is the one with value, it (the Next Life) will only be given to His friends.

The same theme which is contained in this sentence of the hadith can more or less be seen in the verses of the Noble Quran in which the general meaning is that if you see that a person is well taken care of in relation to this material world, then you should realize that sometimes this influence and authority which he has in this material world is actually a source of punishment from Allah:

إنما يريد الله أن يعذبهم بها

Surely Allah only intends to punish them through this.

Thus, we must not become upset or saddened and if one day we see that Allah K takes away the bounties of the material world from us and we should not say to ourselves that we have been expelled from the spiritual presence of Allah! At the same time, we should also not be happy at the good fortune and luck that the material world brings us just as how we should we be upset at the adversity and hardships which come to us.

If we truly look at the world with this type of an outlook, then definitely this material world would look very low and insignificant to us and we would no longer pay any attention to these things which possess no value. Rather, the person must stick firmly to his own faith and belief (in Allah) and must not sacrifice this on the path of this material world.

4. The fourth point reads, **إن لنياً أبناء**, or that Surely both this material world and the next life have children and offspring. There are some people who are children of the next life, while others are the offspring of this material world.

This is a very remarkable expression used here since we know that a child inherits certain characteristics and traits from his father. Not only do the rules of inheritance have an aspect in the rules laid down by the Creator, but they also have a share from the point of view of the natural world around us and this law of inheritance also plays a role in our children since we know that he child definitely inherits the characteristics and traits of his father.

The material world has both the apparent aspect to it, as well as a hidden or inner aspect and the people of the world are the same. The world can, all of a sudden either day or night - overturn, and the people of the world are just the same. The inner aspect of the material world is empty, ruined and continuously changing and those who are offspring of the world are the same they are empty inside (spiritually), corrupt and destroyed. Today they may be your friend, but tomorrow they may be your enemy. one day, the person may help and assist you and another day, he will come and kick your gravestone.

However the children of the next life are much better than the children of the children of the material world in all aspects.

next life are those who are faithful, firm and resolute, and are a pleasure to be with their outer characteristics and inner-self are one.

This hadith tells us that we must be children of the next life. Of course this sentence may also point to other issues such as the fact that the relationship and love between a child and his father is one which is very strong and firm in other words, the child is always under the support and protection of his father. Similarly, the children of these two (both the material world and the next life) are, in relation to their father (either the material world or the next life), children possessing a very close relationship and bond.

5. The fifth point is that **ما الخوف عليكم أن** or that Surely the most frightful of things which I am afraid for you all is

This phrase and way of speaking can also be seen in many other ahadith from the Noble Prophet (s.a.) and Amir al- Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) however the most important thing is the contents of that which comes after this phrase. In any case, in this hadith, the Prophet (s.a.) has advised us to be aware of and keep away from two things:

- 1) Following of our lower desires.
- 2) Having long wishes or aspirations.

The Noble Prophet (s.a.) has then gone ahead and explained each of these in detail:

1)Following our lower desires leads a person to becoming misled from the path of the truth since sometimes it is possible that what is the truth would not be what is in the advantage of that person. If he comes to a point in his life where that which is the truth is not in his advantage or profit, then he would place himself and his wishes in front of the religion. Thus, in this instance, it is clear that he is a person who only wishes what he himself wants and not one who wishes what Allah K wants. Such a person would be a perfect example of:

**نؤمن ببعض و نكفر ببعض**

You believe in some of it while you disbelieve in some of it.

And this is the meaning of showing bias or partiality in relation to the religion.

Wanting only what one personally desires and worshipping the lower self result in veils being placed in front of the sight of the person and result in that person only liking and wanting those things which he himself wants (as opposed to that which Allah wants for him) and leaving everything else. Thus, the worshipping of the lower soul is actually a barrier in the face of the truth.

The worshipping of the lower soul not only results in not acting (properly), rather, it prevents one from having a clear perception of things around him meaning that a person who worships his lower self can no longer comprehend what is bad. Worshipping of the lower soul actually takes the intelligence away from a person and prevents him from being able to perceive the realities around him and through this he is not able to come to a suitable outcome in decision making.



However in this issue, we see that there is a difference between the people who possess knowledge and the common people (who do not have a deep knowledge of the religion). When it comes to those issues which go along with the person's soul and what he wants (but contradict what Allah has ordered) the common people would say that, It is true that Allah has said so and so, however, I am a sinner and thus, I will do what I want

However, those who (apparently) possess knowledge of Islam (but still commit sins) would try to rationalize and explain the performance of that bad deed by saying that, This issue is one of those related to the Hukumul Thanawiyah<sup>2</sup> issue, or that in this instance, one is compelled to do it out of necessity (thus, it is permissible).

It is possible that such people might also state, The Islamic proofs in relation to the prohibited nature of that act are weak or they would state that There is absolutely no proof evidence to support that issue as being forbidden. Thus, such a person would try to bring forth thousands of religious excuses so that he would be excused from the sin of that particular act.

Therefore, in order to have a complete understanding of the laws of Allah we must first seek to purify and cleanse our soul.

2) The long desires keep a person's thoughts pre-occupied with the material world and when he becomes like this, he would naturally forget the next life. When a person possesses these long desires in relation to the material world, then he has no time for the next life.

Thus in summary, if a person was to possess these two characteristics, then he would definitely not have any share of goodness of either this world or the next life. He would be tirelessly working day and night, however he would not see any rest or tranquility.

### Notes

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 188

2 The term Hukm -e- Thanawiyah is a term used in Islamic Jurisprudence which can be translated as the secondary ruling which basically means the exception to the rule or a ruling that can for various reasons overrule the primary ruling. In such issues, if the leader of the Islamic nation decides that due to a particular reason such as if the needs of the society dictate that an Islamic legislation is temporarily put on hold, he has the power to do so. (Tr.)



### **.037: Being spiritually awake and ready**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن ذنس بن مالك قال: سمعت رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم) يقول: يا معشر المسلمين، شمروا فإن الأمر جد و تأهبوا في أي الرحيل قريب، و تزودوا فإن السفر بعيد، و خففوا أثقالكم فذن و راءكم عقبة كؤودا، و لا يقطعها إلا المخفون. أيها الناس، إن بين يدي الساعة أموراً شدادا، و أهوالا عظاما، و زمانا يملك فيه الظلمة، و يتصدر فيه الفسقة، و الجاوا إلى العمل الصالح، و أكرهوا عليه النفوس تفضوا إلى النعيم الدائم.

#### **TRANSLATION:**

It has been narrated by Anas ibne Malik that he said, I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) say, O assembly of Muslims! Prepare yourselves (and pull up your sleeves) since the issue of the Day of Resurrection is a serious one; and prepare for death since the time for this is near; and prepare the provisions for the journey since it is a long trip and make sure your provisions (for this trip) are light since the journey ahead of you is a very difficult expedition and except for those people who have a light load, no one else shall be able to withstand this trip. O people! Surely the events which shall occur near to the time of the day of Judgment and the end of the world are great (significant), and there are munificent situations (which shall come about), and there are hard times (ahead). During that time, the oppressors will be the rulers while the open sinners will be the ones at the forefront of the activities (of the world), while those people who command others to good deeds (who perform Amr bil Ma`ru) will be subjugated, and those who prevent others from wicked deeds (who perform Nahi `Anil Munkar) will be under extreme pressure. So then it is through the true faith that one must prepare for that day and one must clench his teeth and must struggle to perform righteous deeds even if the soul dislikes this and (thus, he must) go towards the perpetual and blessed paradise.(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this hadith, the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has spoken in regards to mankind being spiritually awake, aware and ready (of what is to come).

The First Commandment: Be Prepared!

, according to the lexical meaning refers to **شمر** The word getting ready, and it is possible that originally it was used by the `Arabs just as when they used to say:

شمر عن ساقيه

He rolled up his garments (in preparation of some work) upto his shin.

Normally, the `Arabs (men) wear long flowing clothing, however when doing any job or important task, this clothing would not be suitable to be worn, and thus, when they wished to do any form of physical labour, they would pull up their clothing (and hold it there), or they would pull the clothing up and then they would tie a long piece of cloth around the waist as a belt and in this way they would tie their long gown around their waist. In

this way, this long gown would either reach halfway up their leg or to the knees and thus, in the words:

شمر عن ساقيه

We see that this is a figure of speech used that one should get ready to work and do some laborious task.

At this point, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, prepare yourselves since this is a very serious issue which concerns the fire of hell and the accountability and reckoning (of your deeds).

The Second Commandment: Prepare the Things which you Shall Need (for this Journey).

is in the meaning of the provisions (close to the أهيةThe word meaning of the word in the first commandment as mentioned and شمرواabove). Thus, what is the difference between the words

since we see that both are closely related to getting ready?? تأهبوا

شمرواThe difference between these two words as that where as means that the person himself gets ready and prepared, however means that a person prepares the necessary tools تأهبواthe word and items which are needed.

Of course we know that for any journey which a person undertakes of which the journey of the Next Life is one of them the person himself must be prepared and as well, he must also prepare the necessary items which are needed.

The Third Commandment: Provisions for the Journey must be Gathered

Other than the items needed such as the stead or ride, one's cargo and baggage, the person also needs other things since the departure time is close and the trip is a long one.

These two statements do not go against one another since the meaning of the departure time refers to when the journey shall start and this journey shall start very quickly however at same time, the journey is a very long one. It is just as it is said that, Get ready as tomorrow we are starting our journey however you should know that the trip we are taking is going to last one year and thus, you need to take all of the things which you will need for this whole year journey.

Thus in summary, there is no divergence between close and far as mentioned in this hadith since one word refers to the beginning of the journey while the other refers to the end or culmination of the trip since it is possible that at any time, the trip shall start and as we know, the time distance between the life and death of a person is very small.

In the throat of the person, there is a very small tongue which can be called or referred to as the tongue of life and being, or the tongue which keeps a person between life and death. When a person proceeds to eat some food, this tongue goes over and covers the wind pipe and seals it shut very tightly and thus, it guides the food to go down the food pipe into the stomach. When a person eats some food and has swallowed it, the tongue

then moves out of the way and the wind pipe is one again opened while the food pipe is then closed. However if while a person was eating food, if the tongue was to move a bit late or not move at all and the wind pipe was not to close or be covered and even a small grain of the food was to go down the wind pipe, this would prove to be fatal! Even in our present day and age, to have an operation to reverse this is not possible and thus, we see that we can not rely on this life of ours.

The journey of the Next Life is a very long trip. According to some of the verses of the Quran, this trip shall last for 1,000 years and according to other verses of the Quran, it is a trip of 50,000 years and the way that the Commentators of the Quran have combined and explained this difference is that on the day of Judgment, there are fifty stations which one must cross meaning that there are 50 customs offices which a person must go through, and each station if the meaning of these verses is that there is indeed 50 different stops would take 1,000 years to pass through. However, if we take this number is simply being metaphorical in the meaning of numerous or many, then we state that this review and accountability would take thousands of years to complete.

The Forth Commandment: Lighten Your Load !

You must lighten your load since that which is in front of you and awaiting you is a very difficult road to traverse and other than those who are traveling light, no one else will be able to make this journey.

When a person wants to take a trip, we see that he would naturally not take those heavy things with him and he would definitely not place a heavy load on himself. If a person were to have a very heavy load, then he would definitely not make it past the first station, however as for those people who have prepared and trained, are quick and agile, they shall be able to quickly pass through the stations.

How good it would be if a person were to ensure that his load was light and if he were to develop his asceticism such that he would be able to, just as a swift horse, pass through the stages!

In the past, people used to travel in groups and caravans and if anyone was to be left behind from the group, then he would definitely have fallen into great difficulty and would have remained helpless since it is not possible for the entire caravan to stop and wait for one person. Thus people tried to ensure that they did not separate from the rest of the caravan.

However with this said, we see that there is a line in the hadith under discussion which states:

ايها الناس! ان بين يدي الساعة امورا شدادا واهوالا عظاما

This part of the hadith calls for a lengthy and extensive discussion, however in our condensed ethical discourses we shall present a very short and comprehensive discussion on this line.

We can deduce from the ahadith that at the end of the World before the advent of Waliul `Asr (may Allah hasten his return), there are some very severe and difficult conditions and situations which await the physical world and also the situations and conditions of the society of humanity and the life of the people on the Earth. Since both of these states are at the threshold of

the life of this World, we are able to link both of them together and as seen here, we can connect them with one another.

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has stated, At the end of the World, there will be difficult situations and great frightful events which shall take place which will turn the entire universe upside down: The mountains shall become as fine wool; the rivers shall come to a boil; the sun shall be darkened and in summary, such a state will come about that mankind will forget everything! Not only this, but also the societal life of the people will also be filled with great fearful events.

At this point, we specifically point to some of these issues: This will be a time with the oppressions and sinful people will rule over the entire world and those people who enjoin others to perform righteous deeds and refrain people from enacting wicked deeds will be placed under extreme pressures.

After this statement, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has given certain commandments however it should be pointed out that it is not necessary that what is mentioned in this hadith should take over the entire Universe, rather, it is possible that it may only appear in a part of the world and that a part of the world may still be ruled by righteousness, however the entire world will come face to face with this issue and we can see an example of this situation in our own day in which we are living in today.

When the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) explains and elucidates upon the corruptions of the world, we see that he points to two very precise issues:

1. The issue of government and rulership.
2. The issue of commanding others to perform righteous deeds and preventing others from enacting wicked deeds.

The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has stated that this world shall be destroyed since the government or leadership of it will fall into the hands of people who are oppressors and open sinners.

The issue of government within the Islamic teachings is something very important and we must ensure and strive to establish Islamic Government. This is something which is a part of reality that if there was no oppressive or corrupt governments then without doubt, not a single place on the Earth would have corruption in it and if the government becomes corrupt then everything else will also become corrupt and it is because of this that it is said:

الناس علي دين ملوكهم

People are on (or follow) the religion of their rulers.

And thus, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has not relied on anything else in this discussion, rather, he has put his finger on the issue of the government and leadership since it is the government which is the foundation and pillar of righteousness and corruption.

Another very sensitive issue is that of commanding others to perform righteous deeds and preventing others from enacting wicked deeds and these are two obligatory acts which if there are implemented, then all other obligatory acts would be maintained and upheld. It has been mentioned in

the ahadith that commanding others to perform righteous deeds and preventing others from enacting wicked deeds compared to all other obligatory acts is as the water in the stormy seas to the water in the mouth.

Final point: What must we do in the face of corruption?

The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has recommended us to take up two weapons:

1. True faith - the weapon of faith as this is the most important weapon for protection.

2. Perseverance when a person becomes upset, we see that he becomes firm and resolute on performing a specific task and when this occurs, naturally, he forces his teeth together.

When he applies a great amount of pressure on his jaws and teeth, his back teeth also force together and thus, in this hadith we are told that:

عضوا عليه بالنواجذ

And this part of the hadith points to the firm decision that a person takes which ultimately leads in the progress of his task.

Thus, the meaning of the second weapon which follows true faith which is perseverance means that through being slack, lazy and lethargic a person will never reach to any station.

If you simply look at the lives of the great people who lived in the past you would see how much struggle and effort they put in their lives. It was in the heat of the summers in the city of Najaf that the late author of the book Jawahirul Kalam (may Allah be pleased with him), while sitting at the head of the grave of his son who has died before that he was able to write a book such as Jawahirul Kalam not only him and this work, but also the lives of many others

#### Note

1 Biharal-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 186

### **.038: Good of this world and the next life**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال صدق (عليه السلام): حدثني أبي عن أبيه (عليه السلام) أن رجلا من أهل الكوفة كتب إلي الحسين بن علي (عليه السلام): يا سيدي أخبرني بـير الدنيا و الآخرة. فكتب (عليه السلام): بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم أما بعد فإن من طلب رضي الله بسخط الناس كفاه الله أمور الناس ومن طلب رضي الناس بسخط الله وكله الله إلي الناس، و السلام.

#### **TRANSLATION:**

Imam Ja`far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) has said, My father had narrated to me from his father (peace be upon him) that a man from amongst the people of Kufah wrote a letter to Husain ibne `Ali (peace be upon him) which stated: O My master! Inform me of a program which would contain the goodness of the world and the next life. So the Imam (peace be upon him) wrote back to the man, In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. So then whoever seeks to please Allah by displeasing the people, surely Allah will be sufficient for him in his affairs with the people, and the person who seeks to please the people through displeasing Allah, Allah will leave him to the whims of the people, was Salam(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In many instances, we see that the pleasure of the Creator and the Creations are at opposite ends of the spectrum of one another if we seek to earn the pleasure of the creations, then we end up distancing ourselves from the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) - and if we seek the pleasure of The Creator (Glory and Greatness be to Him), then we must distance ourselves from the pleasure of the creations. In this instance, what must we do ?

The Imam (peace be upon him) has stated that, Hasten towards the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and do not sell the anger of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) for the mere price of earning the pleasure of the people since if you truly seek the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), then Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) will pull the attraction in the hearts of the people towards you and He will repair the problems that the people may encounter with you. However, if you seek the pleasure of the creations, then Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) will leave you to be at the whims of the people such that whatever you need, you will have to ask from them. You will need to ask from people who:

لا يمكنون لأنفسهم نفعاً ولا ضراً

The neither possess the ability to bring any profit nor harm to their own selves. (2)

And thus, they neither have any power to do anything in this world of the next life.

This issue which has just been stated above can sometimes be seen within the life of person and sometimes within the scope of the countries of this world. For example, sometimes there are two people who are friends of one another and one of these friends requests his other friend to bear false

testimony in his behalf or claim that something which is the right of another person is not actually his right and in this instance, we see that a person is placed in this circle of either pleasing the Creator or pleasing the creation. In this instance, we are told that we must place the pleasure of the Creator above all else.

إن الذين آمنوا و عملوا الصالحات سيجعل لهم الرحمن ودا

Surely those people who possess true faith and who also perform righteous deeds, shortly shall The All Merciful (Al-Rahman) place amongst them, true love.(3)

In the words of that great personality, when a person's old and long-time friend requests him to do something which goes against the laws, the person should reply that, I am your friend right up until the brink of the pit of Hell fire however I am not going to follow you into that path !

When `Aqil, the brother of Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him) requested him for something more than his share from the public treasury, we see that at that point in time, Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him), was busy seeking the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and this well-known event is a long-taught story which acts as a lesson for us all.

Sometimes this act (of trying to please the people) is committed at the level of the society. Sometimes, the leader of the people is the faith by this we mean that fulfilling the needs of the people is done under the guidance of the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him). However the world today does not accept this rather, they say that the only thing which is important is the desires and needs of the people such that even things such as homosexual relations are now being made legal !

Leadership of the people in this meaning has brought us many wars in this world why? As an example, we see that the leadership of the people in America revolves around the desires of the nation of America while in England, it is based on the needs and desires of the people who live there and sometimes we see that the desires of these two nations may differ from one another since naturally, the material benefits and goals of people do differ from one another and these people (American and England) would never stop to examine and investigate the needs of the people over the entire world.

Sometimes in a country, the leadership of the people also contrasts with one another since sometimes within an election, the interests of 25% of the population would take precedence over 75% of the population and even in some instances we see that 51% of the population would be on one side while 49% of the population would be on the other side however the desires and wishes of that 49% are neglected! However, if humanity permitted religion to lead them, then we can state that not only would the needs and requirements of the people of the country be met, but rather, even the needs of all of the neighbouring countries of the world would also be looked after.

We are all for leadership of the people, and even in Nahjul Balagha, we read in various instances that the masses of people have been encouraged to lead the society such as the letter issued to Maslik al-Ashtar in which the

Imam (peace be upon him) wrote to Malik that the majority of the people are supporters of Islam and are his defenders.

Thus, if the world today wishes not to become engulfed in wars, then leadership of the people of faith must take control and only the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) must be kept in one's sight.

The Imam (peace be upon him) is clear and eloquent in this Hadith and has observed the necessities of the time. In this Hadith, the Imam (peace be upon him) has witnessed that the person asking the question is one of the people of Kufah and these are people who had definitely placed the pleasure of the creations above the pleasure of the Creator (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and thus, the Imam (peace be upon him) has said to him that, If you had not left the side of `Ali (peace be upon him) and the side of Imam al-Hasan (peace be upon him), then you would have achieved greatness in this world and the next world. However since you did not observe their rights upon you, thus you are now trapped in the clutches of the Bani Umayyah.

Thus, anytime we are given any advice, we must look it over and keep it in mind and look and see what Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) would want and expect.

#### Notes

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 75, Page 126

2 Surah Ar-Ra`d (13), Verse 16

3 Surah Mariam (19), Verse 96



## CERTAINTY & DOUBTS

### .039: The levels of certainty

#### Text of the Hadith:

عن انس بن مالك قال، قال رسول الله: ان من ضعف اليقين ان ترضي الناس بسخط الله تعالى، وان تحمدهم علي رزق الله تعال وان تدمهم علي ما لم يؤتك الله... انك ان تدع شيئا الا اتاك الله خيرا منه، وان تأتي شيئا تقربا الي الله تعالي الا اجزل الله لك الثواب عنه. فاجعلوا همتمكم الاخرة لا ينفد فيها ثواب المرضي عنه، ولا ينقطع فيها عقاب المسخوط عليه.

#### TRANSLATION:

Anas ibne Malik has narrated that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.) has said, Surely the weakness in certainty is due to the trading of the pleasure of the people for the anger of Allah, the Most High and praising the people for the sustenance which Allah, the Most High has conferred upon you and for blaming other people for that which Allah has not given to you Surely you do not refrain from anything only for Allah (and His pleasure) except that Allah will give you even better than that (which you have refrained from) and you do not perform anything which would bring you closer to Allah, the Most High, except that Allah gives you a reward greater than what is expected so then expend your energies for the next life since the reward for the servant who has done good deeds whom Allah is pleased with and the punishment for that person who performs bad deeds and earns the anger of Allah shall never end.(1)

#### Commentary of Hadith:

In this hadith, the Messenger of Allah (s.a.) has expressed six points, which we discuss below:

1. one of the signs of having weakness in one's certainty (Yaqin) is that a person substitutes the pleasure of the people for the anger of Allah. By this we mean that in relation to that which shall happen to a person, he considers the people around him to be more effective than Allah, the Most High.

A person must have firm conviction and strong faith in the Lordship of Allah and that Allah is the Lord and Cherisher of the Entire Universe and that all which exists comes from Him. In relation to this, the Quran has told us that:

توتي الملك من شاء وتزع الملك ممن شاء وتغز من شاء وتذل من شاء

He gives of (His) Kingdom to whom He pleases and he prevents (His) Kingdom to reach to whom He pleases, and He grants honour and respect to whom so ever He pleases and He abases whom so ever He pleases.(2)

Since I know that the one who provides me with sustenance is Allah alone, thus, I do not fear anyone other than Him and I will not lower my head (in need) in front of anyone. If He is to help and assist me and even if the entire universe was to be against me, still they could do nothing against me to harm me.

Therefore, if sometimes we see some people humble and lower themselves while in the presence of others, then this stems from a weak sense of certainty within them which has taken them over. Of course

however, certainty has various degrees and levels to it and these various levels have an effect on the way a person acts in his life since actions are a reflection of our inner belief and the more a person's inner beliefs are made stronger, the more pure his actions will be.

Most of the time, the contamination in our actions is due to a contamination in our theological beliefs. It has been said that: All things, even the ethical teachings and the branches of the religion (Furu`ud Din) must be made correct through our principal beliefs (Usulud Din) and this is because of this reason mentioned above.

Certainty has three well-known levels to it:

1. `Ilmul Yaqin
2. `Ainul Yaqin
3. Haqqul Yaqin

As an example (to better explain these three levels), sometimes a person sees smoke and through this, concludes that there must be a fire somewhere - and this is referred to as `Ilmul Yaqin; sometimes he would see the fire itself - and this is referred to as `Ainul Yaqin; and sometimes he would experience the fire with all of his presence and senses - and this is referred to as Haqqul Yaqin. In other words, sometimes the proofs are logical; other times, the proofs are that what a person sees with his own eyes (through employing his senses) and sometimes the proofs are through trial and experiment.<sup>3</sup>

If in relation to the wealth of the orphan for example there are such levels (of certainty) such that the Quran states:

ان الذين ياكلون اموال اليتامى ظلما انما ياكلون في بطونهم نارا

Surely those people who take the wealth of the orphan in a form of oppression are only eating fire in their stomachs(4)

Or if we were to have true faith that by giving in charity, the wealth of a person does not actually diminish, rather, even more wealth is added to his wealth just as it is mentioned in the Quran:

مثل الذين ينفقون في سبيل الله كمثل حبه انبتت سبع سنابل في كل سنبله مائة حبه والله

يضاعف لمن يشاء

The example of the person who spends his wealth in the way of Allah is similar to the seed which grows seven ears and in every ear there are one hundred sees and Allah adds (the blessings) to whomever He pleases.(5)

If our level of certainty was at this level for all things, then we would never even come close to sinning!

The higher level of certainty can be described as such (keeping in mind the verse dealing with orphans that was quoted above) that if even the best fruits were to be placed beside a person while fire was to be placed on the other side of a person, both of them in the person's estimation would be equal and just as he would keep himself away from the fire which is comparable to the wealth of the orphan, so too he would keep away from that good fruits too!

It is here that we must seek to make the foundations of true belief strong and some portion of this must be sought from by Allah through prayer and

supplication and we must request complete certainty through showing humility in the middle of the night (in prayer) and say:

يا واهب اليقين! رزقي اليقين، علم اليقين وعين اليقين وحق اليقين

O the Granter of Certainty! Grant me certainty; `Ilmul Yaqin and `Ainul Yaqin and Haqqul Yaqin.

If He gave these levels of certainty to a person and was also to take away all of the allures of the transient world from him, it would be a very easy life, and the opposite is true too, that if all of the transient world was to be given to the person and a person was not blessed to have these (levels of certainty) things then he would have nothing but pain, suffering and misfortune.

Thus, the reality of this discussion is that of certainty which must be achieved through learning and action (according to what one has learnt) since true faith and actions have reciprocating effects upon one another and thus in the Quran, along side true faith (man), righteous actions have also been mentioned. In summary, if a person was to reach to the level of Haqqul Yaqin then this would be a form of insurance for him.

2. Another sign of possessing a weak level of certainty is when the person thinks that the people (around him) are those who provide his sustenance and thus, he thanks them and compliments them. There are some people who say, If such and such person was not there, I would have been unable to do anything or If such and such person was not there, I would have died of hunger. Sometimes these sorts of statements take on the contamination of polytheism when people say things like, First Allah, then you and they put another person along side Allah in that order - however the truth is that there truly is no comparison which can be done like this where is the servant and where is the Master!?

من لم يشكر المخلوق لم يشكر الخالق

The one who does not thank the creations has not thanked the Creator.

However when a person says something like when he places a person alongside Allah in the help he receives, then this is polytheism!

3. The opposite of this is also true when a person says, Such and such a person took my daily bread. This means that a person who took something away from you which Allah had given to you is insulted and degraded. Allah has actually taken your sustenance away from you for His own known reason or as a proof over your or as a punishment to you and that person was simply the means through which this was done.

In continuation, the Prophet (s.a.) then states three issues:

1. If a person leaves something for the pleasure of Allah, then Allah will give him something even better than that thing which he left. God forbid a person things that he has suffered a loss due to whatever he has given to Allah - not only has he not suffered a loss, rather, he will actually gain a benefit from it.

2. If you perform all of your actions for Allah, then Allah will grant you an even greater reward.

3. Your struggles and endeavors should be for the next life whose Divine reward and Punishment are permanent and ever lasting.

The Quran tells us:

الشيطان يعدكم الفقر و يامرکم بالفحشاء و الله يعدکم مغفره منه و فضلا و الله واسع  
عليم

Shaitan threatens you with poverty and enjoins you to be miserly, and Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and abundance; and Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing.(6)

When a person wants to give something in charity, Shaitan takes his hand and threatens him with poverty, however the complete opposite also happens Allah gives the promise of forgiveness and more in return for what was given.

In another verse of the Quran we read the following that:

يمحق الله الربوا و يربي الصدقات

Allah does not bless usury, and He causes charitable deeds to prosper(7)

In addition, in yet another place in the Quran we read the following:

يعلمون ظاهرا من الحيوه الدنيا و هم عن الآخرة هم غافلون

They know the outward of this world's life, but of the hereafter they are absolutely heedless.(8)

People always look at the material aspects of this transient world, however Islam looks at the inner aspects and tells us, Giving in charity does not result in you having less. For example in our own reckoning, the Martyrs (Shuhada) are classified as being dead, however the Quran tell us, Greater than your own reckoning is that of others. If we weigh our own reckonings with that of the Quran, the outcomes would truly be reverse of what we thing things to be where we think that destruction and nothingness is, existence is actually there and the place where we think death is, permanent life is actually there - however thinking in this mode is not something easy except with the vision of true faith.

In the world which we live in, the apparent view of some of the benefits which quickly pass us actually have detriments to us which last a long time and the opposite of this too is the case. All rational people will say that, If a long term gain is only possible to be achieved through short term action, then that difficult short term action must be performed.

If you were to be completely cure from a sickness in the future by going through an operation right now, you would definitely accept to have the operation done. Sometimes, in the face of a very pleasing and fat filled food a person would say, I have a cold right now and thus, I will pass up this good tasting food whose taste shall only last for one hour for my own good health which will shall remain for hundreds of hours. Thus, why is it that in relation to the next life we not act in such a logical manner?

Is that, may Allah forbid we do not have the same level of certainty in the next life as we do from going forth for that operation which may protect and save us?

Do we accept what has been mentioned in Du`a Kumayl where it has been mentioned in regards to the punishment of the next life that:

تطول مدته و يدوم مقامه و لا يخفف عن اهله

The period of punishment in the hell fire is a long and perpetual one and for the people who are in that punishment, there shall never be any reduction in its chastisement.

Or do we accept that which has been mentioned in the Quran that:

أن زلزله الساعة شيء عظيم يوم ترونها تذهل كل مرضعه عما أرضعت وتضع كل ذات حمل حملها وترى الناس سكارى وما هم بسكارى ولكن عذاب الله شديد

O people! guard against (the punishment from) your Lord; surely the violence of the hour is a grievous thing. On the day when you shall see it, every woman giving suck shall quit in confusion what she suckled, and every pregnant woman shall lay down her burden, and you shall see men intoxicated, and they shall not be intoxicated but the chastisement of Allah will be severe.(9)

Thus, why do we not put up with the difficulties of a few days to be able to enjoy the perpetual and everlasting Divine Reward? Why is it that in relation to the next life we do not use this same logic as is employed for matters of this material world for that

life which is:

These are all issues that when a person sits down to study and review them, he would sometimes become frightened and think to himself that God Forbid I do not have faith in these things!

1 Biharul Anwar, Volume 74, Page 185

2 Surah Aale Imran (3), Verse 26

3 The late Ayatullah Dastghaib has written the following on page 49 of his work, Amazing Stories:

A person who was sincere in the wilayah of the Ahlul Bait, Aqa Mirza Abl Qasim `Attar Tehrani, has narrated from the great scholar, the Late Hajj Shaykh `Abdul-Nabi Nuri who was one of the students of the great Divine thinkers in the person of the late Hajj Mullah Hadi Sabzwari that in the last years of the life of the late Hajj Mullah Hadi Sabzwari, a person once came into one of his classes and informed him that a person was found in the graveyard with half of his body in the grave while the other half of his body was outside of the grave and this person was continuously staring towards the sky and however much the children (who were playing around there) tried to bug and pester him, he would not pay any attention to them.

Hajj Mullah Hadi Sabzwari said, I myself must go and see what is happening. When Hajj Mullah Hadi Sabzwari went to the graveyard and saw the sight, he was amazed! He went closer to the person and saw that the person was not even paying attention to him.

Hajj Mullah Hadi Sabzwari says, Who are you and what are you doing? I don't that you are crazy, however the way you are acting is not the way of an intelligent person. In reply, the man said to him, I do not have knowledge (of Islam and the world) and am an unformed person, however I have certainty and firm belief on two things. The first is that I myself know that there is a grand Creator who has created me and this entire world of existence and I must not be negligent in recognizing Him and worshipping

Him. The second thing is that I know that I will not remain in this transient world for ever and that I must go to the other world and I do not know what my state shall be in that world.

O Hajj Mullah! I am in a state of total desolation and confusion such that the people think I have gone insane. Since the people consider you as a scholar for the entire Muslim community and since you possess all of this knowledge, please tell me why do these people not possess even an atom's weight of pain and grief (in relation to the next life) and are not thinking about these things ?

This admonition was like an arrow piercing the heart of Hajj Mullah Hadi Sabzwari and it has been narrated that Hajj Mullah returned back in a completely changed state and whatever amount of his life which remained was spent in the pondering of the travel of the next life and how to acquire the goods needed for that journey which is full of dangers and he continued in this way until he left this mortal world.

Whatever station or rank a person is in, he is still in need of hearing council and advice since if we already know what it is we are hearing, then these words of wisdom would be a reminder for us - meaning that they would be something to bring back our memories since mankind is prone to forget things and is always in need of someone to remind him; and if the person was ignorant of the thing which he is hearing, then this admonition would be a way for him to acquire knowledge and cognizance.

#### Notes

- 4 Suratul Nisa (4), Verse 10
- 5 Suratul Baqarah (2), Verse 261
- 6 Suratul Baqarah (2), Verse 268
- 7 Suratul Baqarah (2), Verse 276
- 8 Suratul Rum (30), Verse 7
- 9 Suratul Hajj (22), Verses 1 and 2

## **.040: The way to keep away from doubtful things and the lower desires of the Soul**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم): إنما يؤتى الناس عن إحدى من ثلاث: إما من شبه في الدين ارتكبوها، أو شهوه آتروها، أو عصبية لحمه

### **English translation:**

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, Surely when the Day of Judgment comes about, everyone will be grouped according to one of three deeds (and put into the hell fire): It may be due to the doubtful things of the faith which they performed; or it may be due to the desires of the lower self which had an effect or it may be due to the prejudice which had been acted upon<sup>1</sup>. So then if any confusions or doubts come to you in matters of your religion, then remove them through certainty (of faith) and if your lower desires come upon you then stand up to them through asceticism and if anger takes over you, then remove it through forgiveness. Surely the Caller will call out on the Day of Judgment that whoever has any rights upon Allah should stand up and take them back from Him. So then none except those who forgave others (in the world) will stand up have you not heard the words of Allah, the Most High, So then he who forgives and makes correct the relations, so then his reward is with Allah.(2)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this Hadith, the Noble Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has explained to us the way to flee from the lower desires of the soul and doubtful things and has stated that the doubtful affairs are made clear through possessing certainty of the heart. In addition, the lower desires of the soul can be cut off through observing self-discipline. However as for the fire of discrimination any form of discrimination that it may be this must be cooled with the power of forgiveness and it is due to the deeds which have been mentioned in this Hadith that people will enter into the Hell Fire.

However, there are a group of people who are protected when in the presence of sins and are not dragged towards these sorts of deeds. For example, it is impossible to think that a true religious Scholar would may Allah protect us drink alcohol or gamble, however, that young individual who has been placed in a polluted environment in which these sins take place would very quickly be attracted to these things.

In addition, those who are knowledgeable of the religion would not be pulled very easily into doubtful issues whereas this does not hold true for the common people. Sometimes, when the person would want to justify something, he would search through the verses of the Quran and the ahadith and would try and find some ambiguous issue and then would hold firm onto that he would pre-judge something and would bring forth proofs which are weaker than the a spider's web.

However, we must first see what Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) have said and must consider ourselves as students of the Quran not teachers of the Quran!



Thus, it is for this reason that the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said that the source of people going to the hell fire are three things: following doubts, discrimination and following the lower desires of the soul.

In continuation of the Hadith, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has mentioned, On the Day of Resurrection, a caller will proclaim that anyone who has any reward to claim from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) should stand up. At this point, only those people will stand up who during the time of anger had chosen the path of forgiveness and pardoned his brother in religion.

After this, the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) himself answers the question which was posed that, Why do these people have a right on Allah ? The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) states that, Have you not heard this verse of the Quran which states:

فمن عفا وأصلح فأجره على الله

So then he who forgives and makes correct the relations, so then his reward is with Allah.

Therefore, we too must strive to establish love between the Muslims.

O Allah! You have ordered us to forgive one another, however You are much more worthy of forgiveness than we are we have committed oppression upon our own souls please forgive us!

1 The word **تعصب** and the word **عصبيت** comes from the root word **عصب** in the meaning of tape or some connector which joins things which are separated together and then later on, the words Ta`asub and `Asabiyyah were used for any sort of interaction or relation between people, however this word is usually used in the meaning of excessiveness in relations and is not a good term or word to use.

In the Islamic narrations, Ta`asub has been introduced as a despicable ethical trait and has been severely discouraged to such a point that in a Hadith from the Noble Prophet of Islam (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family), we are told that:

من كان في قلبه حبه من خردل من عصبية، بعثه الله يوم القيامة مع اعراب الجاهلية

The person who has even the weight of a mustard-seed of nationalism in his heart, Allah will raise him up on the Day of Judgment with the pre-Islamic desert `Arabs.

In another Hadith, this time from Imam Ja`far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) we read that:

من تعصب و تعصب له، فقد خلع ريقه الإيمان من عنقه

The person who shows discrimination or is discriminated against, surely has severed true faith from himself.

From the Islamic narrations, we can deduce that it was Iblis who was the first creation to show discrimination. In the Khutbah known as Al-Qasi`iah (Khutbah number 192), Amir al-Mominin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (prayers be upon him) has mentioned in detail and in complete clarity the issue of nationalism and discrimination of which we quote just an excerpt:



اما إبليس، فتعصب على آدم لاصله و طعن عليه في خلقته، فقال: أنا نارى و انت طينى

As for Iblis, so then he showed bigotry over Adam due to his origin and challenged him in relation to his creation and had said, I am of fire and you are of the Earth.

The Imam (peace be upon him) then continues and states:

فان كان لا بى من العصبية، فليكن تعصبكم لمكارم الخصال و محامد الأفعال و محاسن

الأموار

So then if you are compelled to show discrimination, then let your discrimination be due to righteous etiquette, characteristics and beautified (good) deeds.

In addition, in this Hadith we can clearly see that firmly standing for that which is the truth is something very good, and not only is this act not considered as discrimination, rather, it is through this act that the soul of the person is actually emptied from all the incorrect actions of the ignorant and filled with true faith. And thus, we read in a Hadith from Imam `Ali ibn al-Husain (peace be upon him) that when this Imam was asked about bigotry, he replied:

العصبية التي يَأثم عليها صاحبها، أن يرى الرجل ارقومه خيرا من خيار قوم آخرين، و

ليس من العصبية أن يحب الرجل قومه، و لكن من العصبية أن يعين قومه على الظلم.

That form of discrimination for which a person is considered as a sinner is when a person sees the worst of people of his nation as being better than the best people of another nation. And discrimination is not that a person loves those of his own nation, rather, discrimination is when he helps and assists his own people to commit oppression.

#### Notes

1- Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 15, Page 354

2 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 180

## **.041: Five life giving lessons and refraining from doubtful things**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله): ايها الناس! لا تعطوا الحكمة غير أهلها فتظلموها، ولا تمنعوها أهلها فتظلموهم، و لا تعاقبوا ظالما فيبطل فضلكم، ولا تراؤوا الناس فيحبط عملكم، ولا تمنعوا الموجود فيقل خيركم، ايها الناس! ان الاشياء ثلاثة:أمر استبان غيه فاجتنبوه،أمر اختلف عليكم فردوه الي الله

### **English Translation:**

O Mankind! Do not convey wisdom to those people who are not worthy (of receiving such teachings) as you would have done oppression to the wisdom and do not deprive those people who are worthy of receiving such teachings as then you would have done Oppression to them (those people), and do not seek revenge from the person who has oppressed (you) as if you do, you would make your own personal worth and value null and void and do not perform (good) acts for other people to see as through this you would eliminate (the good) of such acts and do not prevent from giving charity as you would reduce the good that is to come to you. O Mankind! Verily things are of three types: some of which whose correctness is apparent for you (to see) so then follow these (and perform them); (the second) are those actions whose incorrectness is apparent for you (to see) so then avoid performing these acts and (the third) are those actions whose performance is of question so then refer the ruling on these to Allah(1)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

This hadith is comprised of two sections. In the first section, the Prophet of Islam (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has given us five commandments:

1. We must not convey wisdom and knowledge to those people who are not worthy of such teachings as we would have done oppression to knowledge.

2. We must not deprive those people who are worthy of knowledge from our knowledge since if we did this, we would have done oppression to those people.

From the wordings of this part of the hadith, we can deduce that for the student of knowledge, there are specific conditions which must be met - of which the most important is that he must have the ability to accept such knowledge and if this is not within the person, then he is not worthy of acquiring knowledge that knowledge whose attainment has been promised a great reward.

The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has stated that, If there is a person who is not worthy of gaining a (particular) knowledge, then you must not teach him that knowledge since when it falls into his hands, he will use it in the wrong ways and will lead the world towards destruction. The person who is ignorant and lacks knowledge neither has the power to destroy a land nor to make it habitable.

In the present time, those people who are leading the world to corruption are the ones who are at the head of the governments and who are busy with colonization of the entire world namely their scholars and intellectuals.

When we look at the Quran, we see that it contains very many different expressions such as:

هدي للمتقين

A guidance for those who have consciousness (of Allah)(2)

ان في ذلك لايت لقوم يسمعون

Surely in that (the day and the night) are signs for a people who listen.(3)

And it is phrases such as these that clearly show us that knowledge without spiritual purification bears absolutely no (positive) results.

Thus, it is clear that true guidance is specifically for those people whose groundwork has been previously laid down (that of spiritual purification). It is based on this that we see that in the past, the true Scholars did not give permission to just any student to come and sit in on their classes rather, they tested them in relation to their ethical morals and through this, they wanted to see at what level of piety the students were at.

However, this does not mean that one has the right to hoard his knowledge - rather, one must only teach such knowledge to those who are worthy of receiving it and it is through the knowledge that one possesses that he must seek to cure the ailments of the people. It does not make a difference if the ailments of the people are in relation to their material life or their spiritual being although we do believe that the spiritual ailments and diseases are much worse than the material or physical sicknesses. We believe this since we accept as truth that Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) will hold a person responsible for his spiritual illnesses just as it has been mentioned in the ahadith that:

ما أخذ الله علي أهل الجهل أن يتعلموا، حتي أخذ علي أهل العلم ان يعلموا

Allah has not taken a covenant from the ignorant people to learn until he has taken a covenant from the Scholars to teach (the ignorant people)(4)

In the religion of Islam, learning as well as teaching are both obligatory (wajib) and these two obligatory acts are not separate from one another since they are the prerequisite and necessity of one another.

3. If a tyrant commits oppression upon you and you take revenge upon him, then your spiritual worth will be removed since you would end up being just like him. Of course this is only applicable in that instance when the oppressor does not take the wrong advantage by you forgiving him and his actions against you nor would it lead to leaving a bad impression on the community on a whole (that oppression should be tolerated).

4. You must perform all of your actions sincerely for Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and must not entertain the slightest amount of showing off in any of them.

This is a very difficult task to accomplish since showing off in one's actions is only one of the springs that one can corrupt his good deeds. There are many other things such as: pride, one's own inner passions and desires, etc that may come into play in harming one's good deeds, thus spoiling the

good work one has performed. For example, sometimes we perform the Salat so that we ourselves become pleased with our own selves and we are not thinking about showing off to other people and this in itself is a form of corrupting our good deeds. Or for example we perform the Salat out of habit or we perform the Salaul Lail just so we can become (spiritually) better than other people or and it is these and other things that can lead to the corruption of our good deeds.

5. If a person wants something from you, then do not be stingy in relation to it since if you do not give it to the person (if you possess that thing), then Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) will cut off the bounties that would come to you since:

### كمال الجود بذل الموجود

The perfection in a person is when he gives what he has.

If the host does not offer his guests whatever he has at home (when they come over to his house), then he has done oppression to them and in the same vein, if the guests ask the host for an excess of things (that he has), then they would be counted as oppressors!

The second part of this Hadith is divided up into three sections:

1. Those actions whose correctness is apparent for all to see.
2. Those actions in which the inappropriateness and incorrectness is apparent for all to see.
3. Those actions which are obscure from the point of view of:
  - a. The subject matter.
  - b. The Islamic ruling.

This Hadith is in relation to those actions in which the Islamic ruling is one of doubt or obscurity.

In some ahadith, in place of the phrase

### ردوه الي الله

Return the (ruling of that particular act) back to Allah.

It has been stated that: In those types of actions where we have a doubt as to its ruling, we must exercise precaution since the questionable actions are the precursor to the forbidden acts.

However there are some people who are habituated in saying:

### كل مكروه جايز

All the makruh (reprehensible) acts are permitted to be performed.

To the people who state this, we say to them that: Yes, it is true that we are permitted to act upon the apparent ruling on a particular issue, however when there is clearly a doubt on a particular ruling, and if a person pollutes himself with performing that doubtful action, then slowly the indecency of that particular act would become less in his estimation and thus, he would fall into performing the prohibited acts as well!

When Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) has told us to be [ ], one of the **خطوات الشيطان** careful of the evil footsteps of Shaitan [ most clear examples of following the footsteps of the Shaitan is to perform the acts in which there is a doubt.

Shaitan (the Devil) misleads the holy salat Lail performing people in his own special way. He does not come to them and tell them, Go out and drink alcohol. Rather, he starts out by saying, Salat Lail is not one of the obligatory Balat, go ahead, stop performing it. once the person leaves this Salat, then slowly, Shaitan would approach him in relation to performing the obligatory Balat right when the time sets in and would say to him, It is not a condition of the Balat that you perform it right when the time sets in and he would continue in this way until the person becomes completely detached from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

If a person truly wishes to develop a deep spiritual insight and spiritual pleasure in acts of worship, then he must keep away from doubtful foods, gatherings, and speech and without doubt, in relation to all of the acts that he performs, he must exercise the utmost of precaution in all areas of his life.

### Notes

- 1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 179
- 2 Surah 2 (Al-Baqarah), Verse 2
- 3 Surah 10 (Yunus), Verse 67
- 4 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 2, Page 80

## DEATH: AN UNACCEPTABLE TRUTH

### .042: Fleeing from death

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم: من عد غداً من اجله، فقد اساء صحبة الموت

#### **English translation:**

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, The person who considers tomorrow as being a part of his life shows that he is definitely not pleased with dying.(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

A person must not consider the next day (tomorrow) as being a part of his life and must not sit down and chart out a program (for his future), since this sort of a desire means that he is not pleased with dying and it is this act of not being pleased with death which results in the negligence in the life of this world.<sup>2</sup>

Of the very important issues which separates those who worship Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) from those who worship the material world is their understanding in relation to the issue of death.

Those who believe in the oneness of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) recognize death as being a second birth and consider it as being the beginning of a new life and in their point of view, death is nothing but a transfer from one house to another house such that they are then freed from the impediments of this world and are brought into a wide, spacious next world.

However the materialists consider death as being the end of all things and it is because of this fact that they are not ready to sacrifice their lives for the greater worths and purposes or to offer a sacrifice except if it is done under duress and pressure.

However those who sincerely worship Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) have no problem with killing and being killed in the path of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) as a sacrifice and are ready to offer their life and wealth and only fear Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him).

It is from this point that we can understand that to what extent does faith in the Resurrection play a role in the perfection of mankind. After the belief in the Resurrection, there is no other belief and conviction other than the belief in Tawhid which can play a role in the building of the character of a person and we see that all of the Prophets were sent to invite people to these two issues and this constant reminder of the next life was done for a purpose.

Maybe you have heard this anecdote which people have narrated in relation to Ayatullah al-Udhma Burujerdi (may Allah be pleased with him) where it has been stated that someone once said about him that, This man had firm belief in the Day of Resurrection. When you first hear these words, they may make you laugh as if it is possible that a Muslim such as Ayatullah al-Udhma Burujerdi (may Allah be pleased with him) would not have faith in the Day of Resurrection! However we must look deeper into this lofty statement since the meaning of firm belief is one which plays a role in the life of a person it is a firm belief whose beginnings launch a person to work

and perform deeds only to attain the pleasure of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and is not the sort of belief that does not have any impact or effect on the soul and life of a person.

In relation to the Day of Resurrection, there are many very important issues and thus because of this, in lectures, writings and classes held in self-building, this issue of the Day of Resurrection must be emphasized. The Muslim who has a firm and deep faith in the faith considers the life of this world as simply being a bridge and introductory place to make his way to the Next Life will rely heavily on the topic of the Day of Resurrection in his own words and thoughts. It may be possible that one of the proofs why we recite the following line ten times per day (a minimum) is so that we do not forget this event.

### مالك يوم الدين

Once we keep this event in mind and do not forget it, then our entire presence will becoming enlivened.

Thus, that which we wish to mention is that there are many people who in relation to their theological beliefs are believers in Tawhid and the oneness of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), however in relation to the Next life, they are materialists.

In other words, they have firm belief in the beginning and end of all of creations however when it comes to their actions, we see that they are actually afraid of death. It can be said that they feel that death is actually the end of all things and that there is nothing after death. This variance between belief and actions is definitely a great calamity.

When we practically do not believe in the Day of Resurrection, we then do not practice self-sacrifice. It is through our deeds and actions that we show that we do not believe in the following verse of the Quran which states:

### ولا تحسبن الذين قتلوا في سبيل الله أمواتا بل أحياء عند ربهم يرزقون

And do not consider those who have been slain in the way of Allah as being dead, nay, rather, they are alive in the presence of their Lord receiving sustenance.(3)

We are so attached to the life of this material world and are so fond of and attached to the lower desires and passions that we have become negligent of the Day of Resurrection. According to the Hadith we started with, that person who has firm belief in the Day of Resurrection is always ready (for death). He does not consider tomorrow as definitely being a part of his life, rather, it is the opposite of this, he supposes that tomorrow his death will come and thus, he makes sure that his accountability and deed of records is clean (of bad deeds) and is prepared and ready to meet death.(4)

In very many verses of the Quran it has been mentioned that on the Day of Resurrection or at the time of giving up one's life, at this time will a person call out his last request:

### حتى اذا جاء أحفهم الموت قال رب ارجعون لعلي أعمل صالحا فيما تركت انها كلمة هو قائمها

### ومن ورائهم برزخ إلى يوم يبعثون

Until that time when death comes to one of them the he says, O Lord return me back to the world so that I may work righteous deeds which I left behind in the world. But by no means! These are only words which they say and thus behind them is a partition (Barzakh) until the day when all are raised up.(5)

In all of these instances, the Quran either clearly and explicitly, or through the use of a metaphor or allegorically, answers these protests by one word: which means But by no means.

The rule of perfection does not permit a person to return back to this world and just as the fetus which comes out of its mother, is it possible for it to return back into its mother's womb!? From the point of view of this spiritual voyage of perfection which mankind is on, it is impossible to return back whether it leaves this world and is born into the next world perfect or with deficiencies.

When we see that this is how the issue is, then should we not pay extra careful attention to the life of this world?

While traversing this path, should we not be strict with ourselves and think more about this issue?

It is because of this that we must think much about the Day of Resurrection and we should not let even a single day pass us by that we do not ponder on death and the Resurrection and if we are able to correctly ponder on this issue and clothe our actions with these thoughts (of the next life), then we would see that our entire presence would be draped in the divine light and purity.

1 Tuhaf al-Uqul

2 Normally, most people are afraid of death and there is only a small group of individuals who laugh in the face of death and eagerly and earnestly welcome it with open arms they trade-in the coarse ornate garment of this life and in exchange, take the perpetual and ever lasting life of the next world. However we should look at why death, its manifestation and even the mention of this word immediately causes trouble to some people:

1. Lack of belief in the life after death: The principal proof which we mention is that these people do not have faith in the life after death - and if they have faith in this, then we see that their faith is not something firmly rooted deep within them and this belief has not taken charge of their thoughts and emotions.

The fear that man feels from destruction and non-existence is natural we see that people are afraid of the darkness at night why? This is so because darkness is the non-existence of light. Sometimes, they fear death why? Since they think that they are traversing the same path of non-existence and annihilation.

However if mankind was to have complete faith and conviction that this material world which we are living in is a prison for the true believer and a paradise for the disbeliever just as the Hadith tells us:

The world is a prison for the believer and a place of paradise for the disbeliever.

الدنيا سجن المومن وجنة الكافر



then he would not have this fear of death.

If mankind was to truly believe that this physical body is actually a receptacle for the soul and when this receptacle is broken, it is only then that the soul will be freed and at that time he will be able to fly and soar with his friends and acquaintances, and if he were to truly believe that The Hijab which covers over the life and realities of a person are due to the dust which makes up his body, the without doubt he would truly wish to be freed and released from this covering!

If one was truly to believe that death is a garden of the higher spiritual realms and is not one for the spiritual beings and that this vessel that he is currently contained within is only good for the proverbial two or three days - truly if the person was to believe these things about death, then he would never fear dying - rather, he would take this world as the path to travel towards perfection.

Thus, in the Hadith of Ashura we read that, As the circle of the enemies grew in force and their pressure intensified around Imam al-Husain (peace be upon him) and his companions, their faces grew more and more illuminated and brighter and even those old men who made up the companions of the Imam (peace be upon him) were seen smiling and laughing on the day of Ashura. When these people were asked why they are acting as they are, they replied,

We are in this mood as in a few hours we shall be blessed to drink from the cup of martyrdom and we will be taking the Hurul `Ain in our arms !

2. Love and attraction to this material world: Another reason why people fear death is that they have an unreasonable love for this material world. They fear that death will bring a separation between themselves and that which they truly love and would cause their hearts to be separated from the beloved and from all of those things which have made their material life easy and full of pleasures and luxuries - and this is something which they can not handle.

3. No good deeds: Since their tray of good deeds is empty and the tray of evil deeds is full, they fear death. We read in the Hadith that, A person once came into the presence of the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) and asked him, O Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family)!

Why do I not have love for death within me ? The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) replied, Do you have any wealth ? The man replied, Yes I do. The Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) said to him, Have you sent any good for yourself? The man replied, No. The Prophet then said to him, It is because of this reason that you do not like death (since your book of good deeds is empty).

Another person went to see Abu Dharr and asked him the exact same question as the Prophet (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) was asked above that why does he feel hatred for death to which Abu Dharr replied, You have a hatred for death since you have made this life habitable and have destroyed your next life. It is natural that a person does not like that he should be transferred from a place which is habitable to a place which has been destroyed.

## Notes

Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 24, Page 121

3 Surah Aale Imran (3), Verse 169

4 The following poem describes this:

مرگ اگر مرد است گو نزد من آی تا در آغوشش بگیرم تنگ تنگ  
من از او جانی ستانم جاودان او ز من دلی ستاند رنگ رنگ

### **.043: Paying attention to those who came before us**

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال رسول الله (صلي الله عليه و آله وسلم): إنما أنتم خلف ماضيين، و بقية متقدمين كانوا أكبر منكم بسطة، و أعظم سطوة، فازعجوا عنها أسكن ما كانوا إليها (و غدرت بهم) و أخرجوا منها أوثق ما كانوا بها، فلم يمنعهم قوة عشيرة، و لا قبل منهم بذل فدية، فإرحلوا أنفسكم بزاد مبلغ قبل أن تأخذوا علي فجأة و قد غفلتم عن لإستعداد

#### **English translation:**

The Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, Surely all of you are the remainders of those who have come before you and the remnants of those who have already passed. Surely those before you were much greater in power and superior in strength and greater in authority and thus even though they were at the pinnacle of luxury and comforts and even though they had complete reliance on this world, He (Allah) still took them to the next life (where as) the most powerful people of their group and their tribe were not able to prevent them from leaving (this world) and not even offering all the money that they had in ransom prevented them from being taken from this world. So then before you leave this world without any sort of preparation and while you are in a state of negligence, make sure that you prepare something in great amount (that you will be able to use in that world).(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

This hadith is in relation to paying attention to the history of those who have already passed away and this is also an issue which the Noble Quran has placed emphasis upon and has been alluded to in various verses of the Quran.

This hadith tells us that there were nations in the past who were much greater than us in relation to their wealth, children and power and although they had all of this, it still did not stop the Angel `Izrail (peace be upon him) the Angel of Death - from sparing them, or giving them any respite. Thus, you should fear that you too are not dragged into this same outcome that they were put into and you should fear that you too are not caused to spiritually fall!

History is one of the six sources of knowledge, since first off, we are not the first nation of human beings to inhabit this Earth and who have lived on this planet. Before us human beings were on this Earth in addition, there were other nations that lived here and their remains and effects have stayed behind for us to examine. These effects of theirs which have remained behind are of two types:

1. The physical remnants they left behind.
2. Their historical remains.

1. The physical remnants which they left behind include their historical narratives and works. When a person studies these effects of theirs and sees their eventual outcome, then he would very easily learn lessons from them.

2. Their historical remnants include things such as the cities which they lived in which were destroyed which the Quran has alluded to and in which we are told for example, On your journeys to Sham (present day Syria), you

will find the remnants of the destroyed cities of the people of Lut, Ad, Thamud and others such as these nations.

Why is it that we do not hear the message that these destroyed nations are trying to convey to us? Why do we not learn lessons from them? When we walk by a cemetery, why is it that we do not pay attention to the screams and cries of the dead? Look at the palaces and castles that the kings and leaders had which are now ruins. Just look at the remnants that Firawn has left behind those pyramids which were built with millions of stones and which took ten to twenty years to build and in which thousands of workers had a hand in constructing. Till today, not a single person has been able to explain how these huge rocks were gathered and put into place to construct such buildings! In addition, it has been stated that in that part of the world where the pyramids were built there were no large mountains for thousands of kilometres such that it would be possible that they would have been able to procure rocks to make such monuments. And as it is known these huge buildings were built there to act as graves for the Firawn.

All of these things are a lesson for us. With all of the power, supremacy and magic that they possessed, were they able to keep alive for eternity and stand up in the face of death?

These examples are all lessons that we can learn from-and there are many. Even this evil Shah (that ruled Iran) Muhammad Rida it is narrated that upon the roof of his mansion, there were two machines installed that if at night, he wanted to see the sky, he would simply turn a key and the roof would open up (so that he could see the stars) and at that time, this was one of the newest pieces of technology that was available at that time. However in the end where did the Shah reach to with all of his pomp and fanfare? Is it not that at the end, he too was buried under the ground?

The Messengers and Intimate friends of Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) who were as a bouquet of beautiful flowers of creation were not attached to the material pleasures of this life thus, what can be said about others ?

It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said, You should fear that you are travelling towards the next world where as you have not yet prepared yourselves for death.

The preparation for death is to turn back towards Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) Tawbah meaning that one must sincerely purify his heart and soul of his sins so that he may be ready to meet death.

#### Note

1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 181

## **.044: The final journey and the remembrance of death**

### **Text of the Hadith:**

عن سالم بن عبد الله، عن ابن عمر قال، قال لي رسول الله (صلي الله عليه وآله وسلم):  
(كن في الدنيا كأنك غريب و عابر سبيل، و اعدد نفسك في الموتى، وإذا أصبحت لا تحدث  
نفسك بالسماء و إذا أمسيت فلا تحدث نفسك بالصباح، و خذ من صحتك لسقمك و من  
شبابك لهرمك و من حياتك لوفاتك . فإنك لا تدري ما اسمك غدا

### **English translation:**

It has been narrated from Salim ibn `Abdullah from Ibn `Umar that he said that the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) said to me, Live in the world as if you are a stranger and just passing through (consider this world as a temporary abode) and consider yourself as one of those who is already deceased. When you wake up in the morning, do not desire that you shall live until the evening and when the evening comes do not think that you shall be alive until the morning. Make use of your health before you fall ill, and make use of your youth before you turn old, and make use of your life before you die, since surely you do not know tomorrow (on the Day of Resurrection) what group of people you will be gathered with.(1)

### **Commentary of Hadith:**

This hadith discusses the most important issue of training (of the human soul) and that is the remembrance of death. In the ahadith, we see that it is been constantly mentioned that we must not have trust or reliance upon this passing world, just as it has been mentioned in Biharul Anwar:

حب الدنيا رأس كل خطيئة

Love of the (material) world is the source of all sins.(2)

It is the love of this world which is also brought about when a person is negligent of the transient nature of the world and when he thinks that this world shall remain forever. When the person engages in such a transaction (with this material world), then he would naturally develop a love and affection for the world, and when this occurs, it is very difficult to separate his soul from the material world.

It is for this reason that one of the best ways of training a person and to combat against the performance of sins is to pay attention to death.(3)

A person must be such that when he wakes up in the morning, he does not consider that he will remain alive until the evening - and when he enters upon the evening, he does not consider that he will remain alive until the following morning.

We all should live in that same state that we used to during the time of the bombing that Saddam - the disbeliever - and his army inflicted upon us when we truly thought that we would not survive for another moment. It is this same issue meaning the focus upon Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and turning away from the material world which leaves a deep effect upon own soul.

The person must know that at any moment, he is in the grips of danger.

For example, pay attention to this same heart which makes the blood reach to all the parts of the body. The heart is the centre from which the blood is distributed, however it does not take its own food from the blood which is inside itself and in reality, the heart considers itself as equal to all the other parts of the body.

Sometimes the walls of the secondary blood veins become very narrow or develop a clot of blood within them and as it is known, blood can clot very easily. As soon as the blood comes out of the veins, we see that there is something inside it which makes it clot and sometimes it can also be seen that the agents which make up the blood can become contaminated and thus the blood clots right there in the veins and this clotting of the blood is so small maybe one millimeter in size however it takes over the channels in the blood vessels and thus, the blood can no longer reach to the heart. When this occurs, then after a few minutes the heart would stop working and this is known as a heart attack.

When the doctor who is a specialist in the field of the various body parts (Physiologist) explains this to a person, that individual would develop fear and fright in himself since he then knows that it is possible that he could die at any instant. Sometimes he may even plunge himself into doubts and the evil whisperings may take over him.

The vessels that pass through the brain are much thinner than those which are contained in the petals of a flower and if there was to be any pressure on one of these such that the person could not handle it, and if one of these blood veins was to burst, then with that blood spilling inside the brain, it is very well possible that the person could die.

In addition, it is possible that a person due to having one bite of food to eat could also die. When a person is eating, if a small piece of food or something else was to enter into the pipe which controls the breathing, then the only way that this can out is through coughing it out. However if the morsel of food or thing that went down that pipe was something large, then it would stay in the pipe and there is not a thing that could bring it out except for death.

Thus in summary, dieing is something that is very simple and can come about easily and even in these trips that we all take we see that there are many dangers associated with them and even something like driving the car even if we ourselves obey all the rules and regulations it is possible that the other person would not be following the rules and thus, due to him, the harm would reach to you.

When a person knows that there is absolutely no guarantee in life and living, then why does he still go towards various types of sins? It is from this point that we must remember death and use this remembrance as the very powerful breaks on our lives (just as the breaks on a car) to prevent ourselves from committing sins.

When the blood is being transferred through the veins, we see that the small veins are right beside the large veins which come out of the heart and which return back to the heart and which feed the heart. Therefore, the heart is just like any other body part which is nourished through the tributary blood veins.

Thus it has been mentioned in the ahadith that the most skilful person is the one who remembers death the most.

In addition, in the ahadith it has been mentioned that when Imam as-Sajjad (peace be upon him) used to recite Surah al-Hamd and reached to the line:

مالك يوم الدين

he would continuously repeat this line in order to remind himself of the meaning of this verse. We see that the Imam (peace be upon him) who possessed such a level of humility and infallibility acted in this way and thus, how should we who are polluted with sins act? Thus, it is good that a person reminds himself daily of this issue of death.

### Notes

1 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 74, Page 181

2 Bihar al-Anwar, Volume 48, Page 258

3 From the point of view of the Quran, death is something which exists and is present and is simply a transfer and passing from one world to another world, and thus in many of the verses of the Quran, death has been defined or explained as being *توفي* in the meaning of taking something back - the taking of the soul from the body through the Angels. In addition, in the Islamic traditions, there are also various words and expressions used in relation to the reality and certainty of death.

It was once asked from Imam `Ali ibn al-Husain as-Sajjad (peace be upon him) what death was to which he replied, For the true believer, death is similar to a person removing dirty, filthy clothing from his body and the removal of heavy chains from around a person and in their place, putting on the most beautiful of clothing and the most sweet of perfumes and mounting upon the nicest of steeds and reaching to the most appropriate of stations. As for the disbeliever, death is similar to removing his beautiful clothes and being clothed with the roughest clothing and being transferred from a place which he loves to a place which is dirty and filthy and being brought to a station which is full of fright and fear and which houses the greatest of punishments.

In addition, when Imam Muhammad ibn `Ali (peace be upon him) was asked this same question, he replied, Death is that same sleep that comes after you every night except that its time period of lasting is very long and the person will not wake up from this sleep until the Day of Resurrection.

Also in Karbala - on the day of Ashura when the battle had gotten intense, Imam Husain ibn `Ali (peace be upon him), spoke some very beautiful words in relation to death when he said to his companions:

Be proud O you sons of noble men! Death is simply a bridge which will transfer you from a valley full of difficulties and troubles into a wide, spacious garden of paradise full of perpetual blessings. Which one of you would be upset at being transferred from a prison to a castle? However as for your enemies it is as if they being moved from a palace to a prison full of punishment. My father the Messenger of Allah (blessings of Allah be upon him and his family) has said that the world is a prison for the true believer and paradise for the disbeliever and that death is a bridge for the true believer towards paradise while death is a bridge for the disbeliever towards the hell fire.

4- Tafsir-e-Namuna, Volume 22, Page 362

### .045: A Noble End

According to some of the ahadith, today is the death anniversary of Sayyidah Fatimah Masumah binte Musa ibne Ja`far (blessings be upon her). At the end of her Ziyarat which we read, we ask this noble woman:

وَأَسْتَلِكُ أَنْ تَحْتَمَ لِي بِالسَّعَادَةِ فَلَا نَسْلُبُ مِنِّي مَا أَنَا فِيهِ

O Allah! Please grant me a noble end (to my life) and do not take away the true faith, security and consciousness of You which I possess.

And it is due to this occasion which we are commemorating that we bring forth a hadith which speaks about having a noble end (to this life) which is a very important issue as sometimes we see that a person may live a life while traversing on the path of the truth, however an issue may then come forth and as such, the end of his life would be one filled with that of disbelief, sins and open rebellion.

Sometimes it may be that a person lives a life of total sin, however, the opportunity is made available to him such that at the end of his life, he completely changes and turns out to be a person such as Hur ibne Yazid Riyahi such that within the course of a few hours, he changed and today, people stand in front of his grave and proclaim:

بِأَبِي أَنْتُمْ وَأُمِّي

May my father and mother be sacrificed for your sake!

And even those who are Masum (peace be upon all of them) also stand in front of the graves of all of the Shuhada and say this line! Thus, having a good end to this life has various causes and there is a hadith in the book, Mizanul Hikmah which has been narrated from the work, `Uyunul Akhbar al-Rida in which this issue has been alluded to:

#### **Text of the Hadith:**

قال الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) لبعض الناس: إن أردت أن يحتتم ير عملك حتى تقبض و أنت في افضل الأعمال فعظم لله حقه أن تبذل نعمائه في معاصيه و أن تغتر بحمله عنك و أكرم كل من وجدته يذكر منا أو ينتحل مودتنا.

#### **TRANSLATION:**

Imam Ja`far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) has said, If you wish that you have a good ending and that your soul is taken from you in the best of states, then do not use the blessings of Allah to commit transgressions. And if you have performed a sin and Allah has not yet punished you for it, then do not be proud or haughty at the forbearance of Allah, and consider as noble any person who speaks (narrates) the words of us, the Ahlul Bait and who accepts and has intense love for us.(1)

#### **Commentary of Hadith:**

In this hadith, the Imam (peace be upon him) has stated, You should perform these three tasks so that your end (in this life) will be a righteous one first off, whatever blessings Allah has given to you must not be used in the way of transgressing against His laws.

In reality, this part of the hadith points to this issue that we are told that, O you who are incessantly transgressing - wake up! Why are you taking the blessings of Allah and using them in disobedience your life, wealth, body



parts, etc. are all blessings from Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and yet you still make use of these in the way of sins! This is something despicable !

The second thing mentioned is that, When you commit a sin, and Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him), through His patience and forbearance gives you the opportunity to repent and turn back to Him, you use this opportunity to feel proud and arrogant and think to yourself that what you have done is nothing bad.

The third thing mentioned in this hadith is that, Those people who have a strong love and affection for the Ahlul Bait (peace be upon all of them) and who are their Shia, true followers and who are continuously speaking about them, must be respected and esteemed.

It is in observing these commandments that you shall have a righteous end.

A person does not know at what time he shall leave this world, and how good it would be if a person were to leave this mortal world while in a state of performing righteous deeds within the Masjidul Haram or one of the sanctuaries of the Aimmah (blessings be upon all of them); and how bad it would be if he were to leave this world in a state of open disobedience to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) !

All of the great scholars always feared their end and the actions that they would be performing at that time and thus, they always asked Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) for a good end to come to them when they die.

The reason why this is so important is that which is the most important thing is the final page of our deed of records and thus, we must always entrust ourselves to Allah (Glory and Greatness be to Him) and if we fall prey to committing sins, then we must immediately ask forgiveness for them.

#### **Note**

1 Mizanul Hikmah, Hadith 4621

## **The ultimate Question & Answer section**

**answered by: Grand Ayatollah Nasir Makarem Shirazi**

## QUESTION 01

Did Ameer-al-momeneen Ali (a.s.) desired for caliphate?

### Reply:

On the contrary of what is said, `Ali `ibn `Abi-Talib (a.s.) never looked for caliphate in his life, since if `Ali (a.s.) had sought for caliphate, he should have left the body of Prophet (s.a.w.) without Ghusl and Kafan(shroud) and hurried covered porch (Saqifah) as others did, especially because his claims were supported with more reasoned argument and many of Companions had the same opinion as he and after death of `Abu Bakr ,we saw that `Umar became caliph and `Ali(a.s.) waited patiently. But after death of `Umar, caliphate looked for him itself, however, he refused it again because it had been set some conditions which restricted him.

If he really desired caliphate, what did it matter if he became caliph under the condition that he accepted Two Scholars' sunnah in that session and then did whatever he pleased as `Uthman did. But greatness and magnanimity of `Ali (a.s.) become obvious in such situations, for he never told a lie in his life and didn't ever break a promise, because of these human qualities `Ali (a.s.) didn't attain caliphate and others overcame him, since they made every possible effort for reaching that.

All the historians have said that `Abu Sufyan, chief of Quraysh , went to `Ali (a.s.) and encouraged him in caliphate and promised him that would give him both money and armed soldiers for fighting against `Abu Bakr and his army, but His Holiness pushed him and said:"I'm aware of what is in your heart." so, if he had searched for caliphate ,he would have risked his life for attaining it and accepted the offer immediately ,but he sacrificed everything just for Islam and Muslims ,had patience with and tolerated the situation. He was who that said to `ibn `Abbas as patching his shoes "I swear to Allah that these torn shoes are more pleasing to me than being your caliph and I don't like caliphate except for setting up a right or punishing a wrong." So, history and the reality of matter disproves claim that `Ali (a.s.) sought for caliphate all his life.

### Note

1- With truthful persons, page 181.

## **QUESTION 02**

While God is single and unique, and is aware that He is single, why He applies plural pronoun (We) in the Holy Quran?

### **Reply:**

Application of the pronoun “We” is the code of magnificence and an indication of greatness of the speaker, and God is the most appropriate for this explanation. The learned people say that application of plural pronoun is the code of magnificence because usually the great individuals are not alone, that is, servants are always attempting for their objectives and so they form a society. This is the reason why application of this pronoun is an indication of magnificence.

Thus, when plural pronoun is applied in the words of God, it reminds us His magnificence and greatness and the visible and invisible powers of world of existence which are all submitting to His commands. Therefore, our monotheism becomes more perfect and our attention to His sacred essence increases.

### QUESTION 03

Why some verses in Quran have been repeated and also why some stories are mentioned in several parts?

#### Reply

We shall consider that the Holy Quran has been revealed during 23 years on different occasions and events. Quran is not a legal and or classic book stating classified rules and scientific issues. Quran is the book of guidance, propagation and guidance, and it aims at mentioning realities of human life and necessary instructions for attainment to the human perfection, and forming a society having material and spiritual perfection through penetration into the people's souls and minds and legislation of proper social rules. For achieving this objective, the Holy Quran has discussed all required subjects. Quran has been revealed gradually and on various occasions and for fulfillment of various requirements during 23 years.

We find two types of repetition in Quran:

- 1- Repetition of some parts of history
- 2- Repetition of some verses referring to a particular reality

For historical stories, you shall note that the main purpose of Quran for mentioning the history of predecessors has been to draw people's attention to the certain rules in life prevailing life of former humans.

Quran intends to familiarize people with these rules and let them know what have been the causes of development, progress and or downfall of precedent societies and nations; what have been the dangerous consequences of their refrain from accepting prophets' invitation; what have been the result of spreading cruelty and injustice; what factor has led them to overthrowing and fall; and finally what have been their positive and weak points!

Quran has let people come to know these rules and realities through the stories, and also has shown them the consequence of disobedience by the cruel and disobedient.

This necessitates that Quran investigate the destiny of the previous societies and display its various aspects. Therefore, when Quran is referring to various subjects such as, "Children of Israel", and or "Creation of Man", it refers to a particular part and point of the subject, and draws people's attention to a particular point not mentioned before.

This reality is understood through reflection on the Quranic stories.

In other cases, where some Quranic verses have been repeated, like the verse:

«فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ»

in the All-Merciful sura. We shall note that such repetition is aimed at having a particular psychological impression on the mentality of the Quran readers and hearers. Sometimes God stresses on and repeats the subjects with a particular psychological and emotional aspect when speaking for awakening the mentality and thinking of a population. For instance, in the All-Merciful sura, God is numerating the critical favors having a fundamental role in creation of man and formation of society and human civilization and its continuation. Reference is also made in this sura to the

great blessings provided for man in the life in the other world. When referring to these blessings, God repeats the phrase, **فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ**, during referral to these blessings and favors to awaken sense of gratitude in man, make him to submit to the truth, and provoke his conscience and sentiments. Therefore, such repetition is necessary for guidance, and does not hurt the eloquence and fluency of Quran. Rather, it is deemed as an advantage, because results in more emphasis and effect.

There are many similar repetitions in the Persian and Arabic literature, and there are many instances in the Arabic poetry where a phrase, couplet or verse is repeated.

For example, in the lament composed by Odai Ebne Rabie, the uncle of Emrael Gheys for his brother Kolaib, the phrase, **لَيْسَ عِدْلًا مِنْ كَلِيبٍ**, has been repeated for twenty times. There are many similar instances in the poems by the great Persian poets.

## Question 04

A book has been composed in which after explanations about accuracy of “Transformism” theory, the writer has tried to compare and confirm it with Quranic verses, and according to him, to prove that Quran too supports gradual transformation of living creatures from one species to another, and he has argued two following verses:

1- **أَوَلَا يَذْكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَمْ يَكْ شَيْئاً**

Does not man remember that We created him before, when he was nothing?[1]

, that **لم يك شيئا** and, **من قبل** The writer induces from the phrases, man has been something before perfection, but has been living in various forms of animals, including unicellular beings to anthropoid monkeys, and finally he has not had any corporeal or spiritual sign of present human perfections!

2- **هَلْ أَتَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئاً مَّذْكُوراً**

There surely came over man a period of time when he was a thing not worth mentioning.[2]

The writer has also inferred from the phrase, **لم يكن شيئاً مذكوراً**, that before finding the capability of mentioning its name in the divine books, it has been something, and finally, due to not having human perfection and being among animals, it was not worthy of mentioning its name and position in the divine books (books of Abraham, Torah, Gospel and Quran)!

Do the above verses really indicate man’s gradual perfection from one species to another? If they do not relate to “Transformism” theory, then what do they imply?!

## Reply:

We believe that above verses have nothing to do with “Transformism Theory”, and gradual perfection of creatures. The said verses have other concepts which will be explained hereunder.

Commentary of first verse: One of the issues difficult to believe for man has been resurrection, that is, revival of people in the other world.

Therefore, many verses have been revealed in the Holy Quran for refutation of deniers of resurrection.

God describes the position of deniers and replies them:

**وَيَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَإِذَا مَاتَ لَسَوْفَ أُخْرَجُ حَيًّا أَوْ لَا يَذْكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَمْ يَكْ شَيْئاً فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ**

And man says: What! when I am dead shall I truly be brought forth alive? Does not man remember that We created him before, when he was nothing? So by your Lord! We will most certainly gather them together and the Shaitans.[3]

As you can see, the verse argued by the writer replies to those denying man’s resurrection after death! It continues: Have they forgotten their initial

creation? Do they not know that we have brought them from non-existence to existence!

Knowing our power, how do they question about revival of the dead?! Is the Lord, who has brought man from non-existence to existence, not able to gather its scattered components?!

Therefore, above verse does never imply that man has existed before perfection in various forms of other living creatures! Rather, the above verse is one of numerous verses concerned with proving resurrection and reply to the deniers.

Commentary of second verse: When parents of a new born child divorce, the infant will soon be destroyed. When a righteous person finds and supports him, and then he ignores all of his favors, and even opposes with him for his own personal interests, the righteous person has right to remind him when he was feeble and unable, and reproach him for his ingratitude.

In Man sura, God is reminding man the beginning of creation for awakening the rebellious men:

There surely came over man a period of time when he was a thing not worth mentioning!

Therefore, the said verse too has nothing to do with the gradual perfection of living creatures.

#### Notes

- 1- Quran, Mary: 67
- 2- Quran, Man: 1
- 3- Quran, Mary: 66-68



## QUESTION 05

In the Bee sura, after referring to the creation of beasts for riding and carrying used by man, God says:

وَيَخْلُقُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

and He creates what you do not know.(1)

Does “what you do not know” refer to the modern vehicles?

### Reply:

Our commentators have considered two probability in interpretation of this verse:

One: Creation of what we do not know means the modern vehicles which have been unknown to man at that time. The phrase, **التركيبها**, too confirms this.

Second: It means the creatures and living beings created in the depth of seas and forests and other far areas unknown to man at that time.

According to the both probabilities, the said verse is among the miraculous verses of Quran, because it informs of the creatures unknown to man at that time, and discovered later by progress and development of sciences.

### Note

(1) Quran: The Bee:8

## QUESTION 06

How have the children of Adam and Eve? Have the sisters and brothers married or somehow else?

### Reply:

There are two different views among the Islamic scientists, and each group have reasoned based on Quran and narrations. We narrate hereunder these two views in brief:

1- At that time, the law of forbiddance for marriage of sister and brother was not instructed and legislated by God, and since there was not any other alternative for continuation of human generation, they married with each other. It goes without saying that legislation is made by God: **ان الحكم الا لله**, Commandment rests with Allah only. (Quran, Joseph: 40). What is the problem if such married is allowed temporarily for a group of people in case of necessity, and then to be forbidden for public eternally?

The advocators of this idea reason the text of Quran with the verse: **وبث** **منهما رجالاً كثيراً ونساءً**, From the couple scattered many men and women. (Quran, Women:1)

The verse apparently says that human generation has been reproduced only by these two.

Moreover, a narration narrated from Imam Sajjad (a.s.) by the Late Tabarsi in Ehtejaj, confirms this idea.

2- The other view is that: Since it was not possible for Adam's children to marry with each other, and it was an abominable deed, Adam's sons married with girls from another race and generation. This is also confirmed by some narrations, because Adam's generation was not the first mankind on the earth, and some other humans were living on the earth before him.

It could be concluded: We may hold this idea that Adam's sons married with the other humans living before creation of Adam and Eve on the earth. It is also inferred from the talks of God with the angels about Adam's creation that humans were living on the earth before Adam and Eve. Narrations too approve this idea.

## QUESTION 07

If Islam abrogates other religions, why some of Quranic verses call anyone including Moslem, Jewish, Christian, ..., who believes in God and performs righteous deed as saved, and says: There is no grief and sorrow for such people on the Day of Resurrection. Do these verses not imply that all people could be among the saved even after appearance of Islam, and their religions are still valid and legitimate, and not abrogated?

### Reply:

First, it is necessary to mention the said verses, and then discuss about it:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

1- Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئُونَ وَالنَّصَارَى مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

2- Surely those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabians and the Christians whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good; they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئِينَ وَالنَّصَارَى وَالْمَجُوسَ وَالَّذِينَ أَذْكُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْصَلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

3- Surely those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabians and the Christians and the Magians and those who associate (others with Allah); surely Allah will decide between them on the day of resurrection; surely Allah is a witness over all things.

It may be assumed at first that such verses imply that: followers of any of above religions are saved if perform righteous deeds while believing in God and Day of Resurrection, and consequently, the other religions are not abrogated yet, and appearance of Islam does not result in abrogation of other religions. Rather, any of preceding religions are a path towards God, and a man could reach this destination from any path he selects. He shall not necessarily follow a special religion like Islam.

This has been repeatedly propounded by those who have a surface study on Quran.

However, it shall be noted that we can not interpret a verse regardless of other verses and their relation with it. Rather, we shall take into account the occasion of revelation, previous and next verses and other Quranic verses when thinking of and finding concept of one verse.

Should the other religions were still recognized after appearance of Islam, not only there was no need for legislation of a new religion called Islam, but also it was never proper for the Islam Prophet (s.a.) to write letters to the leaders and authorities of all nations in the world to invite them

to his religion, and introduce his religion as a global religion, and the seal of religions.

Prophet's letters and his continuous invitations and the strenuous Jihad by Moslems with the People of Book at Prophet's (s.a.) time and after him, and the phrases narrated from the great leaders all indicate that the mission of preceding prophets have been expired after appearance of Islam, and there is no mission save Islam, and no prophethood save that of Hazrat Mohammad(s.a.).

Now we shall find what does the verse indicate?

The said verses express two realities, one in brief and one in details.

1- If the Jews and Christians really believe in God and Day of Resurrection, and do not pretend to it, they should believe in Islam Prophet (s.a.) according to Torah, Gospel and other divine books, because Torah and Gospel have give the good tiding of appearance of Islam Prophet (s.a.), and have numerated his signs so much that they knew him like their children.

It is remarkable that Quran refers to this reality before above verses in The Table sura and says:

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ تُتَيَّمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ رَبِّكُمْ

Say: O followers of the Book! you follow no good till you keep up the Torah and the Gospel and that which is revealed to you from your Lord.

It goes without saying that following these divine books refers to following their contents, one of which is prophethood of Prophet (s.a.) and his global mission, which has been stated in these books and Quran has repeatedly referred to it.

Should they really believe in God and Day of Resurrection, they would also believe in the global mission of Islam Prophet which is among divine instructions in the books of Old and New Testament. In this case, they will be deemed among Moslems and will certainly be rewarded.

In brief: Belief in God and Day of Resurrection includes belief in the divine books and their instructions including prophethood of seal of prophets, and such person would not be called a Christian anymore. Rather, he would be a Moslem.

2- Considering the preceding verses in The Cow sura, it is clarified that it refers to those of People of Book who really believed in God and Day of Resurrection at the time of preceding prophets, and observed their religious instruction at that time. In contrast to them, some deviated from the path of monotheism, and worshipped calf and even explicitly told Moses: We do never worship God unless we see him with our eyes. Children of Israel were liable to divine wrath for such improper deeds so that Quran says:

وَضَرَبْتَ عَلَيْهِمُ الدَّلَّةَ وَالْمَسْكَنَةَ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ

And abasement and humiliation were brought down upon them, and they became deserving of Allah's wrath; this was so because they disbelieved in the communications of Allah and killed the prophets unjustly.

Here, God distinguishes those who really believed in God, and Day of Resurrection, and performed righteous deeds from the others, declares that there would be no grief and sorrow for them on the Day of Resurrection.

In this case, the verse allocates to those of People of Book who lived in the previous ages, and had passed away before mission of Islam Prophet (s.a.), and has nothing to do with the time of Prophet's mission.

Occasion of revelation of verse too testifies that after revelation of Quran and mission of Islam Prophet (s.a.), some Moslems were thinking that the only path of salvation is Islam. Then, what about our forefathers and ancestors who believed in other religions.

The above verse was then revealed and declared officially that all of those who believed in God, Day of Resurrection and their time prophet and performed righteous deeds are among the saved people, and there would be no fear and concern for them.

In his first meeting with Prophet (s.a.), Salman talked of his friends and votaries in the convent, and said: All votaries in the convent were looking forward your mission, but unfortunately, they died before visiting you.

One of people told Salman,: They are all among the people of Fire. Salman was distressed. Then, the above verse was revealed and declared that those really believing in the precedent rightful religions would be saved although they may not succeed to visit Islam Prophet (s.a.).

In brief: Those who firmly believed in the real religion of their time before Islam Prophet (s.a.), will be among the saved people on the Day of Resurrection.

In this case, the verse has no relation with the improper ideas such as "The followers of all religion are saved", and such interpretation indicates unawareness from the contents of the verse and related verses.

Moreover, Pilgrimage sura, verse 17 has no relation with their claim, and it indicates that God judges among the various nations in the world on the Day of Resurrection. This never implies that followers of all religions will be saved on the Day of Resurrection, and all of them are truth-seekers.

## QUESTION 08

Are there evidences in Quran and narrations indicating that earth is spherical?

### Reply:

One of the mysteries of existence to which has been referred to in Quran, is the spherical shape of earth, and it is induced from the following verses:

1- وَأَوْزَنَّا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُسْتَضْعَفُونَ مَشَارِقَ الْأَرْضِ وَمَعَارِبَهَا

And We made the people who were deemed weak to inherit the eastern lands and the western ones which We had blessed.[1]

2- رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ الْمَشَارِقِ

The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, and Lord of the east.[2]

3- فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِرَبِّ الْمَشَارِقِ وَالْمَغَارِبِ إِنَّا لَقَادِرُونَ

But nay! I swear by the Lord of the Easts and the Wests that We are certainly able.[3]

It is remarkable: As it was explained in the previous discussion, all of these verses indicate the plurality of easts and wests and sun rise and set points, the requisite of which is spherical form of earth. Certainly, if earth was flat, there is only one east and west. It is only when the earth is spherical that based on the curve form of earth, any point would have a special east and west. Therefore, the plurality of east and west is a clear evidence for spherical form of earth.

Narrations and spherical form of earth

According to the narrations narrated from our infallible Imams, including following one narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.), we can well understand that earth is spherical.

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: I had a companion in one of my trip. He said his Evening in the darkness of night, and morning prayer in the full darkness (end of night). I was praying in contrary to him, that is, I said my evening prayer at sunset, and morning prayer at sunrise. He asked me to follow him, and justified, before rising in our location, sun rises for the others, and when it sets in our location, it is still shining for the others.

Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says: It is our duty to say our evening prayer whenever sun disappeared from our horizon, and we shall not wait for sun set in the other parts, and whenever it rises, we shall say our morning prayer, although it may be shining in other parts at the same time.[4]

In another narration, Imam has said: انما عليك مشرقك و مغربك

You shall act based on your area's east and west!

This indicates spherical form of the earth.

### Notes

1- Quran, The Heights:137

2- Quran, Those who Set the Ranks:5

3- Quran, The Ascending Stairways:40

4- Vassaeloshiite: Vol1:237

## QUESTION 09

God says in The Cave sura:86 when narrating the story of Dhul-Qarneyn:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ

Until when he reached the place where the sun sets, he found it going down into a black and muddy sea.

What is meant by the black sea and how it is possible for the sun to go down into a black sea? Isn't this in contradiction with the spherical form of earth and its motion around sun and the contents of new astronomy?

### Reply:

According to the latest researches by Islamic scholars and honorable Quran commentators regarding the story of Dhul-Qarneyn, the above verse implies: Dhul-Qarneyn was proceeding westward until reaching near the sea (There is dissidence among commentators if the sea has been Atlantic ocean, Mediterranean sea or Maqreb in Morocco or Izmir in Turkey). At sunset, he was standing on the seashore, and was looking at the wonderful seascape. Since when one stands on the seashore, due to the spherical form of earth, it seems to him at sunset that sun is slowly going down into the sea at the end of horizon, Quran says: "he found it going down into a black".

This is completely compatible with the spherical form of earth refers to the sea into which sun sets at the end of its **عين حمئة** and horizon.

There are several reasons for why Quran has referred to sea waters as dark water:

1- Water seems muddy at seashore due to the muddy waters of rivers joining the sea.

2- When sun shines into the sea water at sunset, sea waters looks dark. So, Quran has resembled it to the muddy water.

3- The deeper water, the darker it seems, and since the sea water seen by Dhul-Qarneyn was a big one, it looked dark.[1]

### Note

1- Maraghi, Vol.16, P. 17, Majmaol-Bayan commentary, Vol. 7, P. 49, Tavatavi, Vol. 9, P. 200, Almonjed, under the word, **عين-حمئة**, Mofradat Ragheb, Stories of Quran, under the word, Dhul-Qarneyn

## QUESTION 10

God says in Quran:

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ

Surely your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods.[1]

There was not any day and night at that time, and moreover, why he did not create all of them in one instant?

### Reply:

The above question includes two parts: First, what is meant by six days, while there was not any day and night at that time?

, which means اليوم It could be replied that basically, the term, day in English has several shades of meaning in various contexts. Usually, it is applied for day opposite to night, and this concept has been applied in Quran in many cases. Sometimes, the same term is applied for “period”, so that in case of existence of different periods, day is applied for referring to each period.

For instance, an old man says: One day I was a child, one day a youth, and today I am old. Since these periods are related to each other like rings of a chain, like three succeeding days. On this account, day is applied for the three various periods of life.

Imam Ali (a.s.) says:

الدهر يومان، يوم لك ويوم عليك

There are two days in the world; one is with you and one is against you.

It implies that there are two different periods in man’s life. One in the peak of power, and one involved in problems.

On this account, six days during which heavens and earth are created refer to the six periods for establishment of heavens and earth in the present form. In other words, the present situation in the earth and heavenly bodies is the result of a series of succeeding changes in them. Every period may have been ten million or billion years.

The second part of question, that is, why all of them have not been created in one instant, and they have been created gradually?

It could be replied that: We live in a material world, and evolution is one of the inseparable effects of a material being. Naturally, the material affairs change from one form to another, and pass some periods, and consequently, they change into a perfect event. Heaven and earth too are not excepted from this law.

Consider any of the material events. You will see that all of them proceed in the ladder of perfection gradually, like plants, trees, minerals, animal, man. This law governs everything in the material world.

### Note

1- Quran Jonah:3



## QUESTION 11

It has been narrated among the judgments by Ali (a.s.) that once three people differed for dividing 17 camels between themselves. They wanted to distribute them in such a way that one could own  $\frac{1}{2}$ , one  $\frac{1}{3}$  and the other  $\frac{1}{9}$ . They could not do it and referred to Ali (a.s.) for solving their problem.

In order to solve the issue, Ali (a.s.) added one of his camels to the 17. Then, he gave half of it (9) to the first person, and third to the second (6) and ninth to the third (2), and one remained in excess which belonged to Imam (a.s.). That is, Imam in fact gave them in excess of what they were claiming, because they wanted their share of 17 camels, and Imam gave it from 18 camels. They were satisfied with the judgment and one extra camel remained!

There is a problem, that: Whereof the extra share was provided and to whom it belonged, which was given to them by Imam?

### Reply:

It is noteworthy that the share they were looking for was less than the total, that is, if we add the real half with third and ninth, the result would be less than one. Therefore, we shall say that they were not claiming for the total 17 camels, because  $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{9}$  is less than the total.

It is remarkable: The total of shares of one property is always equal to one. For instance, if the shares of one company is “one hundred shares”, the total of shares would be certainly one hundred.

In the above question, the shareholders were not going to distribute 17 camels in the proportions of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$  and  $\frac{1}{9}$ . rather, the first claimed for  $\frac{1}{2}$ , and second for  $\frac{1}{3}$ , and third for  $\frac{1}{9}$ , while the total does not equal with 17. however, Imam distributed the remaining among them according to the same proportion, and this is the reason why they received a little more than their own share.

There is a question that how Imam distributed the remaining share among them while they were not claiming for it?

It could be replied that: In view of Islamic rules, when a property is under possession of one or more, it belongs to them, unless there is a contrary proof. Therefore, the remaining share too belonged to them, but they did not notice that their share is less than total. In other words, they assumed the 17 camels belonging to themselves, and there was no fourth shareholder. They were going to distribute it among themselves with the proportions of  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$  and  $\frac{1}{9}$ , but they did not notice that it is less than the total. Here, with an interesting innovation (addition of one camel and creating a distributable share to the requested shares), Imam Ali (a.s.) solved their dispute easily and interestingly.

## QUESTION 12

Is it permissible to prostrate on the Imams' tombs?

### Reply:

As it was already mentioned, prostration allocates to God, and it is not permissible for anyone save Him. If some do it, it is for their ignorance of fundamentals of religion, and they shall be notified that prostration for Imam (a.s.) is not permissible.

However, prostration on the clay discs (Mohr) made of the clay of the sacred locations does not imply prostration for the owner of those locations. Rather, according to the traditions narrated from the Islamic leaders, in order to achieve more submission for prostration of God, we shall put our forehead on the earth or what is taken from the earth (save what is edible, wearable and mineral). Hossein clay too is the clean clay which is honored for rise of Imam Hossein (a.s.) for restoration of religion of God and monotheism.

Particularly, prostration on the clay of Karbala reminds the memory of self-sacrifice of master of martyrs, Hossein Ebne Ali (a.s.) in the hearts of the prayers, and invites the pure spirits and awake hearts to follow the high doctrine, and supports the spirit of self-devotion and sacrifice.

### QUESTION 13

What is meant by Tawalla and Tabarra as two Islamic instructions? Is it possible to observe these two instructions in the present world?

#### Reply:

Usually, Islam is resembled to a strong tree. The belief tents form its roots, and the extensive practical programs form its branches, and usually, ten subjects are mentioned for its branches. However, the Islamic practical programs are too extensive to be summarized in ten subjects, but the importance of these ten instructions has caused to give them more priority. Otherwise, certainly, they are not restricted to ten. Three of these ten instructions are concerned with worship and invocation of God (prayer, fasting and Haj), and two for economical issues and relation with people (Zikat, Khoms), and five for social, political and military issues (Jihad, bid to good, forbid of wrong, Tawalla and Tabarra). Here, we are discussing about two recent instructions meaning “befriending” and “hate”. Whom we shall befriend and whom we shall hate?

We shall befriend and associate with the friends of God, the truth seeking people, valuable men and the advocators of truth and justice, and hate and dissociate with the unjust, enemies of God and people.

Why we shall not like all? Why we shall not befriend with all people? Is it possible to neglect the principle of peaceful life with everyone and everywhere in the present world?

The advocators of thesis of friendship with all and under all conditions shall be questioned: Shall we befriend with all in the world where there are oppressor and oppressed, the colonizer and usurper and colonized, clean and unclean?! Shall we be happy with all?! Shall we help all?! Does any human intellect authorized us to do so? Is the live affection of any nation compatible with this wrong compromise?

These two principles are included in the fundamental principles of Islamic practical programs in order to unite the advocators of truth, justice, freedom, sincerity and purity, and leave the unclean and unjust alone in a social and moral blockage by the positive and valuable men.

Does your body accept any food? Isn't man's taste a means of Tawalla and Tabarra for distinguishing the useful foods from harmful? Does your body compromise after eating poisonous foods and suffering food poisoning, and submit one to death or uses its power for throwing out the poisonous food through vomiting?

Isn't balance between the powers of attraction and repulsion the code of survival of world? How survival of human society could be excluded from balance between these two forces in the form of Tawalla and Tabarra?

If the spirit of compromise with everyone and every doctrine and indifference to everything and every event replaces these two instructions, and the positive factors are not attracted and the disturbing and negative factors are not repelled, the society will be destroyed soon. On this account, we read in a narration from Prophet (s.a.):

أَوْثَقُ عُرَى الْإِيمَانِ الْحُبُّ فِي اللَّهِ وَالْبُغْضُ فِي اللَّهِ

One of the strongest handles of faith is befriending for God, and hating for God.<sup>1</sup>

**Note**

1- Safinatol Behar, vol. 1

## QUESTION 14

We know that Jerusalem was Qiblah for Moslems at the beginning of appearance of Islam. What was the reason for change of the said Qiblah to Kaaba?

### Reply:

As it is inferred from the Quranic verses, Kaaba has been Moslems' Qiblah from the beginning, but for some reasons (which will be mentioned later), Jerusalem was selected as the "temporary Qiblah" for Moslems.

The verse: *قد نرى تقلب وجهك في السماء فلنولينك قبلة ترضاها*

We do see you turning your face in the sky. (Expecting Our final commandment of Qiblah), Then We turn you to a Qiblah that shall please you. (Quran, The Cow:144)

testifies that Prophet (s.a.) was upset for hearing the Jews talks about Jerusalem as Qiblah, and was looking for end of duration of this temporary Qiblah, and declaration of Moslems' permanent Qiblah by God.

Let us see why the permanent Qiblah, that is, Kaaba, was not introduced to Moslems from the beginning, and rather, they were instructed to pray towards Jerusalem for a period?

As it is induced from the verse:

*وما جعلنا القبلة التي كنت عليها الا لنعلم من يتبع الرسول ممن ينقلب على عقبيه*

And We appointed not the Qiblah to which you were used, except, that we might know who would follow the Messenger from him who turn on his heels. (Quran, The Cow:143)

This has aimed just for training Moslems and strengthening the spirit of obedience in the newly converted Moslems and progress of the sacred objective of Islam.

Arabs in Hijaz, specially Meccan, were very fond of their territory. Then, at the beginning, it was necessary for them to leave Kaaba for a period against their sensual desire and local zeal, and pray towards Jerusalem to extinguish bigotry and strengthen the spirit of obedience and submission in them.

Moreover, Moslems should care Jerusalem, the center and capital of Jews, for a period and take lesson, because Jerusalem is the museum of lesson for the world as the location of honor and abjection of Children of Israel. The reasons of degeneration and progress of this tribe is visible in Jerusalem. Children of Israel immigrated from Egypt to there abjectly, and achieved there honor through warfare and self-sacrifice, and then, became subject to fall as a result of negligence of divine instructions.

Their biography was a good lesson for the recently converted Moslems. Moslems should come to know that Kaaba is selected as their permanent Qiblah not for being a local and racial center for them. Rather, the reason is it is the oldest center of monotheism and theology which has been constructed and repaired by the great champion of monotheism.

## QUESTION 15

Discussing with some materialists and non-Moslems, we are asked that how Islam is a universal religion while its instructions are only applicable in the areas like ours? For instance, it is not possible to perform five daily prayers and fasting during the blessed month of Ramadan in the areas near to the North and South poles where nights and days are very long (in some parts, there is six month of day and six month of night)!

### Reply:

Indeed, all of such issues have been anticipated in the Islamic instructions and there is a ruling for them. Islamic programs are applicable at all times and in all places.

It is remarkable that: Our great Faqihs have mentioned this issue in their Fiqh books where discussing about the details of Islamic practical rules.

For instance, the late Ayatollah Sayed Mohammad Kazem Yazdi, one of the greatest Faqih, in his book, «عروة الوثقى»<sup>1</sup>, has referred to this point and approved that: Such people shall perform their prayer and fasting in accordance with the Temperate Zones. In other words, they shall find the length of night and day in the same season (average) in the temperate zones, and fast and say their prayers accordingly.

It could be also explained in other words removing any ambiguity and objection: In the Pole zones with long nights and days sometimes lasting for six months, it revolves every 24 hours around the horizon. In such areas, the rotation of sun around the horizon is not always the same, that is, once it is in the highest level, and so, it becomes lighter.

This is repeated every 24 hours, and if you look at the photos taken from the rotation of sun around the horizon in these areas, this could be found well.

When sun rises in the sky, the residents of Pole Zones 2 call it day and work, and when it falls and the sun has less light and approaches horizon, they call it night and rest.

It shall be noted that when sun falls in the horizon there, it is the real night in the Temperate Zones located on the same meridian.

On this account, it is easy to recognize night and day there: If we put an index on the earth, when the shade is minimum, it is noon, and when it is maximum, it is midnight, and in this way, the problem of finding noon and midnight there is solved.

Then, if we know the length of night and day in the Temperate Zones at that time, and for instance know that the average length of days in the beginning of summer is 14 hours and 10 hours for nights, we could easily decide about the time of five daily prayers and fasting. (pay attention)

Therefore, the situation of prayer and fasting during the long days is clear now. For the long nights, we shall note that the weather is not the same during the 24 hours. Once it becomes dark and once somehow light, because sun approaches the horizon or it becomes far and it becomes dark. 3

During these nights, it is possible to distinguish midnight and noon through the position of movement of stars and their distance with horizon as well as darkness and lightness of weather, and considering the average

length of night and day in the Temperate Zones, it is possible to perform legal obligations.

Taking into account the above explanation, it is now clarified that Islamic rules, including the obligations of prayer and fasting do not allocate to a particular environment and are applicable in all parts.

**Notes:**

, Ways of proving moon, issue 10 صوم 1- The book,

2- The poles refer to the points higher than the 67 degree circuit. A part of these points are habitable and another part is inhabitable.

3- The scientific reason for such change in the position of long polar nights and days is that the axis of earth is not vertical to its circuit, and it has a trend of about 23 degrees.

## Question 16

Is masturbation harmful?

### Reply:

Although some of the “uninformed physicians” and “non-researcher psychologists” are trying to show “masturbation” harmless for the youth, but we have received numerous letters from those suffering from it, and the sensible and external observations all approve that actually, this is a sort of denial of sensible realities and definite delusion of youths.

Here, we narrate a documentary and research article extracted from the article of a popular psychologist (Dr. Chehrazi) published in the issue 13 of Daneshmand magazine as a live answer to this question.

The teenagers and youths are facing with complicated problems one of which is “sexual problem”. In fact, at this age, when sexual tendencies are formed, and after a period of curiosity, the teenager finds the reality of this instinct, any encouragement and sexual temptation kindles the fire of lust in the teenager.

In the past, the youth were principled thanks to “religious training and social customs”, and when facing with the sexual instinct, they showed self-control and inhibited temptation.

However, today, sexy scenes in the street, home, advertisements, and observation of bare photos, magazines, dailies, cinema and TV film and romantic stories are very influential in provocation of this instinct, and consequently, the youth are engaged and entangled with strong and rebellious sexual desires.

Here, ejaculation or wet dream happens to the teenager after guidance of his friends, or during sleep, and such like, and since he enjoys it, he decides to repeat its causes, gradually ending to masturbation as a big problem in the youth’s life.

Some physicians and psychologists believe that masturbation is a natural affair and assume it normal for man and animals.

They neglect that if it is repeated for several times per week, it would have many bodily and mental harms for the youth (unfortunately, these habits are strengthened gradually, and since its means are available for the youth easily, they are addicted to it soon, ending to several times per short intervals).

Ill-consequences of this obscene habit and impotence

According to the recent studies, particularly with our studies and researches on more than thousand of youths, it was found certain that masturbation shall not be considered simply and carelessly. (Pay attention).

For clarification, first it is necessary to explain about the physiology of sexual glands:

One of the symptoms of puberty is excretion of sperm from the cells of gonads. Each drop of sperm contains millions of spermatozoid and a special viscous liquid excreted from gonads, entering sperm sac through the sperm duct.



The sperm sac is filled gradually, and a part of it is absorbed by body and is effective in growing of teenager's body, and stimulates sexual desires. However, its major part shall be evacuated and used for reproduction.

The youth who are less subject to sexual temptations, and their religious and sanitary beliefs prevents them from inappropriate temptations, when, sperm sac is filled, it is evacuated during sleep as nocturnal emission, and biological balance is established. In this way, there is no concern for them.

However, the youth for whom the numerous causes of sexual temptation are accessible, assume masturbation as the only way of ease, and since they find their ease after every temptation through masturbation, the action is often repeated. When it is repeated for several times (or more) per week, the youth will be in an abnormal mental and sexual situation, and will be affected by disorder in their sexual system, the important symptom of which is impotence.

It should be explained that during natural satisfaction of sexual instinct and marriage, the youth's sexual instinct center in his brain is tempted through observation, touching and other senses, and physiologically the impressions transmitted to the brain centers through eye, touching and such like, result in sexual reflection, and sexual intercourse is performed naturally.

It is completely different for masturbation, when fancy and imagination of particular views and local touch replaces the natural temptation factors, and in this way, a sort of altered reflection occurs in the sexual system.

When it is repeated, and the 'altered reflection' is stabilized in the youth's nature, it results in his impotence in natural satisfaction of his sexual instinct. On this account, they found themselves impotence after marriage. This quality disturbs and outrages him, and its repetition appears in the form of a sort of mental problem, later affecting his character and psyche (of course, the youth's fear, worry and scare will worsen the case, while it is curable if he stop his obscene habit, and keep cool and replace it with a good habit).

Corporeal disorders in the afflicted with masturbation

The other important point is that as we already referred, a part of excreted sexual materials (sperm) is absorbed by body and results in the growth of the teenager, both corporeally and mentally.

When, these materials are evacuated after repeated masturbation, in addition to disorder in the complete sexual growth, it results in slimness, weak personality, weak will, little power, too much shame and reduction of mental power.

For more clarification, it is better to review some samples of the utterances of the afflicted who have failed after marriage, do not enjoy their wife or are suffering from impotence.

A married young man said: I love too much my wife, but unfortunately, do not enjoy sexual intercourse with her, and this bothers me.

A lady said: It is three months that I have married, but I do not know why I do not have any sexual feeling with my husband.

A young man stated: I did this obscene action after puberty repeatedly. Now, I fail in sexual intercourse with my wife, but when I am alone, I am tempted.

Other two young men said: Due to repetition of this obscene action, we fail in sexual intercourse with our wives and we are really discountenanced for it.

A young man expressed: I have made marriage contract with my wife six months ago, but unfortunately, due to affliction with this obscene habit, I have not succeeded in sexual intercourse with her.

It is remarkable that the secluded and isolated youths are subject to this obscene habit more, and on this account, they shall avoid unreasonable seclusion and eliminate this factor through selection of good and faithful friends.

Weak personality and obsession

The other harm of this obscene habit for the youth is that most of them become repentant and feel sorry after doing it, and promise themselves not to repeat it anymore. Unfortunately, when the causes are provided, they repeat it.

The repetition and continuation of repentance and action hurts their psyche and causes the youth to feel weak personality, weak will, doubt and suspicion, obsession and impotence.

In brief: Masturbation disturbs the feeling of pleasure and ability through deviating the mental reflection system in the sexual issues, and results in inferiority complex, contempt and abnormality of personality. Moreover, it hurts the bodily growth of youths. (End of narration from Dr. Chehrazi)

Essential remark: For prevention from occurrence of these risks, the teenagers and youth shall challenge with this obscene habit hopefully and seriously, and at the meantime avoid fear and embarrassment.

First, they shall try to avoid watching bare photos and cinema deviating films and or reading romantic books and cheap presses.

They shall fill their leisure time through selection of good friends and avoiding seclusion and even sleeping alone in a room, selection of useful sport activities and right hobbies.

They shall avoid association with the perverted individuals, and avoid this obscene habit through replacing it with a series of good habits.

They shall never be deceived by some poisonous writings and utterances of the uninformed physicians and unaware psychologists who probably guide the youth to this obscene action!

For prevention of those who have not afflicted yet, and also for withdrawal of those addicted, you can refer to our detailed discussion in the book, "Sexual problems of the youth" besides what was mentioned here above.

#### Note

1- We mean before Islamic Revolution.

## Question 17

Why Islam has forbidden (Haram) music and what is the philosophy and reason for it?

### Reply

Although, the popular use of music prevents many people to think properly and logically about it, and by virtue of the improper idea hold strongly by some people (popularity of something could be a proof for its harmlessness), they do not accept to study about the harmful and ill-effects of music.

However, the realistic people never suffice with this, and for finding the realities, they always attempt and study despite of their popularity.

Music could be discussed from several aspects

In view of corporeal harms and its ill-effects on man's nervous system: Dr. Wolf Adler, a professor of Colombian university says:

The best music songs have the worst effects on man's nervous system, especially when the weather is warm; its undesirable effects are more!

Dr. Alexis Carl, the well-known French physiologist and biologist writes:

The ferocious satisfaction of lusts may attract some significance, but nothing is more illogical than spending life for recreation. The general decrease of intellect and mind power is caused by Alcohol, and finally irregularity in habit. Undoubtedly, cinema and radio share in this mental crisis.

In general, music shall be counted as narcotic, because its narcotic effects are never deniable. There are different types of narcotic and man could narcotize its nervous system through several ways. Sometimes it is achieved through drinking, like alcoholic beverages with a strong narcotic effect on the nervous system which inactivate man's power of perception and wisdom.

Once it is achieved through smelling via nose, like Heroin dust which is smelled by nose and inactivates nervous system for some time. Many of the patients apply it through intravenous injection.

Once it is achieved through ear duct, and listening music and concert has a narcotic effect on the hearer.

Considering above, you will approve that music is just a narcotic, and has all and or many of narcotic faults and harms.

Basically, the extreme pleasure achieved by people for listening it, is for its narcotic effect. Sometimes, the narcotic effect is so strong that man loses his intellect and wisdom and performs abnormal movements and actions.

For instance, when the narcotic effect of music is strengthened, man loses the power of proper judgment. He could not perceive good and bad properly. When he is affected by the mysterious factors of audio attraction and his power of intellect, thinking and distinguish is dominated by the presto tones of music, he may commit any inappropriate action.

I do not think we need to mention an example for this, because everybody knows that the dances of men and women with each other are always done by presto tones of music, and the vibration of its tones covers individuals' intellect and perception in such a way that they do any action even inappropriate with his humanity rank.

It goes without saying that alcohol and music have been the means of lustfulness for the luxurious men and women, and they resort it for narcotizing their nervous system in particular situations. It is true that Islam never prohibits man from the natural pleasures, but it prohibits him from the transient pleasures appearing through narcotization of nervous system and temptation of sexual instincts.

Moral borders of music

There is no doubt that these songs and music are one of the causes of moral degeneration. The tempting music spreads immorality.

Moreover, the heart filled with tempting songs and romantic poems does not have any place for remembrance of God!; and or thinking of the poor and deprived!

Is it possible to call Halal in a divine religion what could cause such ill-effects?!

It is concluded that music songs are both narcotic to the nervous system, and revive a series of lusts in man.

In sanitary point of view, it has been proved that there are numerous factors and reasons for increase of sudden death rate, one of which is contagion of music, because it is the cause of excitement, that is, disorder in balance of nervous system. Those, whose nervous system is bombed day and night by various music songs are subject to infarct and apoplexy.

## Question 18

How we can distinguish capital and lesser sins?

### Reply:

Dividing sins to capital and lesser originates from the verses of Holy Quran, as:

«إِن تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ»;

If you avoid the heinous sins that are forbidden you, We will acquit you of your evil deeds.<sup>1</sup>

Now, we shall see what is the criterion for being a capital or lesser sin?

Our Faqih's say: Any sin, either capital or lesser, is essentially a great sin because it is disobedience to divine order.

However, the criterion for being capital or lesser is not comparing sin and disobedience with the Sacred Presence of God, because on this basis, all sins are capital. Rather, the classification is based on the comparing one group of sins with the other. In this comparison, there are two groups of sin: capital and lesser.

Now, we shall see what is the criterion for recognition of capital and lesser?

There are many ways for recognition of these two groups, the most popular of which among the scholars is that any sin for which chastisement has been promised in Quran and narrations, is a capital one, like, murder where Quran says:

«وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا»;

And who slays a believer willfully, his recompense is Gehenna, therein dwelling forever.<sup>2</sup>

Some other scholars have added another term and say: A capital sin is one for which chastisement has been promised for committing it, or at least, it has been strictly prohibited. There are many sins for committing of which chastisement is not promised in the Quranic verses, but are strictly and or with repeated prohibited from committing them.

For instance, when we assume that just the following phrase has been mentioned about usury:

«فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ»;

If you do not do so, God and His Messenger will fight with you!

The phrase could not imply that usury is a capital sin. If chastisement of usurers was not promised in the other narrations and traditions, the strict prohibition was deemed as the sign of calling usury a capital sin. On this account, calling a sin capital or lesser is not a relative affair. Each of them has a distinct border, and it is not possible for a sin to be both capital and lesser. It is a capital sin if chastisement has been promised for committing it or it has been strictly prohibited. Otherwise, it would be a lesser one.

### Notes

- 1- Quran, Women:31
- 2- Quran, Women:93

## Question 19

How many are the capital sins?

### Reply:

There are numerous ways for diagnosis of capital sins, and we here refer to two of them:

1- Any action which God has threatened the committers to punishment and chastisement, either explicitly, implicitly, emphatic and repeated prohibition is called a capital sin.

2- According to the sound and reliable traditions narrated from the great Islamic leaders numerating clearly the capital sins. For instance, Imam Ali Ebne Mousal Reza (a.s.) has stated a number of them in a letter to Abbaside caliph, Maemoun. In another tradition narrated by Aemes from Imam Sadiq (a.s.), many of capital sins have been stated. Hereunder, we refer to the major part of the capital sins mentioned in the verses and traditions, and pray God to let us succeed in avoiding all of them:

1- Murder, 2- Adultery, 3- Drinking alcohol, 4- Not praying, 5- Transgression to an orphan's property, 6- Escape from battle field, 7- Usury, 8- Gambling, 9- Any sort of oppression, 10- Pederasty, 11- Contribution to the oppressors, 12- Reliance on the oppressor, 13- Negligence in fulfilling people's rights, 14- Lie, 15- Treachery, 16- Warfare with divine Saints, 17- Misbehavior with parents, 18- False accusation of the chaste, 19- Backbiting, 20- Disregard to divine wrath and punishment, 21- Disregard to Haj obligation, 22- Pride, 23- Extravagance and prodigality, 24- Eating pork, 25- Eating blood, 26- Eating a dead flesh, 27- Eating the flesh of any animal slaughtered in a name other than God, 28- Despair from divine mercy, 29- Short weighing, 30- Insistence on the lesser sin, 31- Not paying Zikat, 32- Cut of family relations, 33- Non fulfillment of promise, 34- Hiding witness, 35- False oath

Above is a major part of capital sins, but many of scientists believe that their number is not restricted to these.

## Question 20

Why we shall stand towards Qiblah when praying, while God is omnipresent and not in a particular direction?

### Reply:

Praying towards Qiblah does not account for a particular location or direction for God, as Quran has clarified this reality in the verses related to Qiblah in two cases:

ولله المشرق والمغرب فاينما تولوا فثم وجه الله

To God belong the East and the West; whithersoever you turn, there is the Face of God.1

قل لله المشرق والمغرب

To God belong the East and the West.2

Rather, man is a body and shall inevitably turn to somewhere when praying. Islam has benefited this issue in the best way and for perfection of the worship (prayer), because we know that Kabba' is the oldest center of monotheism. The House which has been reconstructed by the champion of monotheism, Abraham (a.s.), and has been noticed by all leaders of monotheism and divine prophets.

Turning to the center of monotheism equals with turning to God. One who stands before such center is nearer to God from many aspects and finds himself present before Him.

In addition, all Moslems throughout the world turning to this sacred center five times everyday fosters the spirit of unity and singleness in their heart and soul and helps Islamic unity and solidarity among world Moslems. It connects various Islamic gatherings from the west and east and displays their magnificence and splendor. Finally, it shows the essence of universal instructions of Islam as "Unity of Objective and Belief" to the world.

### Notes

1- Quran, The Cow:115

2- Quran, The Cow:142

## Question 21

Why we say “Noon and Afternoon” prayers and or “Evening and Night” prayers together and at one time, while each of these prayers has a special time, and Islamic leaders said each of them at its special time, that is, in five times?

### Reply:

There is no doubt that saying prayer at five times and its appropriate time is the procedure of prophet, other leaders and most of Moslems at the beginning of Islam. They often said their five prayers at five times. However, there is the question that is “separation” and “gap” between prayers obligatory as many of Sunnite Faqihs believe or it is recommended (Mustahab), and like other recommended acts, man is free to do or not to do them and there is no obligation, although doing them separately is preferable and better?

According to the traditions narrated about Prophet and those from the great Islamic leaders and following the appearance of the Quranic verses, Shiite scholars in all Islamic ages believe that separation between prayers is Mustahab, and told people that separation and gap between prayers and performing each of them at its appropriate time is Mustahab and better, but at the meantime, you are allowed not to do it, and this is the concept of Mustahab.

Of course, saying two prayers successively does not mean that we say one of them in an inappropriate time. For instance, when we say Evening and Night prayers at the beginning of night, it does not indicate that we have not said Night prayer at its appropriate time. Rather, we have said both prayers at their common time, because evening sunset to midnight is appropriate time for both prayers (but as long as three Rakats from the beginning of sunset allocates to the Evening prayer, and as long as four Rakats before midnight allocates to the Night prayer and the remaining time is common for both prayers). However, it is recommended (Mustahab) to say Evening prayer at the beginning of night and Night prayer after twilight. If one does not observe this, he has only not done a Mustahab act.

Why it is permissible to say to prayers successively?

Our proofs for permissibility of saying two prayers successively is the traditions narrated from our sixth leader, Imam Sadiq (a.s.), and the late Sheikh Horr Ameli has composed these traditions in his book (1).

However, we shall notice that not only the Shiite but also Sunnite narrators have narrated the traditions from the Islam Prophet (s.a.) related to saying prayers successively, even when there is no excuse. They have mentioned about ten traditions in their authentic books from Ebne Abbas, Moaz Ebne Jabal, Abdollah Ebne Massoud, and Abdollah Ebne Omar, to some of which we refer hereunder:

1- The well-known Sunnite narrator, Ahmad Hanbal in his popular book narrates from Ebne Abbas:

صَدَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَدَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) الظَّهْرَ وَالْعَصْرَ جَمِيعًا، وَالْمَغْرِبَ وَالْعِشَاءَ جَمِيعًا مِنْ غَيْرِ خَوْفٍ وَلَا سَفَرٍ



Prophet (s.a.) performed “Noon and Afternoon” prayers and “Evening and Night” prayers successively without having any excuse like fear of enemy or travel.<sup>2</sup>

2- The same narrator narrates through Jabar Ebne Zeid from Ebne Abbas:

I and Prophet (s.a.) said eight Rakats of Noon and Afternoon prayers and seven Rakats of Evening and Night prayers successively. This tradition has been narrated from Ebne Abbas with different phrases.

3- Abdollah Shaqiq narrates in his book: Once Ebne Abbas was lecturing for the people, and it lasted till the stars were observed in the sky. A man from “Bani Tamim” stood up, and objected: Prayer, Prayer; it is Evening Prayer’s time. He answered: I am more familiar with the practice of Prophet (s.a.) than you. I witnessed that Prophet said Noon and Afternoon prayers or Evening and Night prayers successively. The narrator says: I doubted and said the issue to Abou Harireh. He too confirmed Ebne Abbas.<sup>3</sup>

4- The famous narrator, Moslem Ebne Hajjaj Qashiri, died on 261 A.H., has composed one chapter in his Sahih titled “Successive Prayer”, and has narrated four traditions in this regards, three of which ends to Ebne Abbas and one to Moaz Ebne Jabal.<sup>4</sup> The context of these four traditions is similar to what we have narrated, but there is a new point in these traditions, that is, when the narrator is asked about the reason, he replies:

«اراد ان لا يخرج امته»

He wanted his nation not to be in trouble.

This has been also mentioned in the Shiite traditions, and it is observed in the traditions narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) in this regard.<sup>5</sup>

5- The narrators of the issue of “saying two prayers successively” are not restricted to Ebne Abbas and Moaz. Rather, Tabarani narrates from Abdollah Ebne Massoud that Prophet said the Noon and Afternoon prayers or Evening and Night prayers successively to avoid trouble for his nation.<sup>6</sup>

The same has been narrated from Abdollah Ebne Omar. He says: Prophet said two prayers successively even when he was not in travel to avoid trouble for his nation.<sup>7</sup>

These are parts of traditions narrated by the Sunnite narrators in their tradition and commentary books, all indicating that separation between two prayers is a recommended act, and if we see that observance of this recommended act may hurt fulfillment of the obligation, we can ignore it upon Prophet’s instruction, that is, we can say both of them successively.<sup>7</sup>

Nowadays, in many parts, the situation is in such a way that observance of this recommended act causes trouble and even causes a group to avoid saying prayer. Now, being inspired by the prophet’s guidance, we can ignore the issue of separation for observance of a more important issue. Many of Sunnite Faqihs hold the same idea, but avoid commenting in this regard for some considerations.<sup>8</sup>

### Notes

1- Vassaeloshhite, Prayer book, chapters related to prayer time (chapters 32 & 33)

2- Masnad Ahmad Ebne Hanbal, volume 1:221

- 3- Masnad Ahmad Ebne Hanbal, volume 1:251, and the similar content has been registered by Zarqani, the expositor of [موطا مالك](#), in his exposition, volume 1:263.
- 4- Sahih Moslem, volume 2:151
- 5- Vassaeloshhite, Prayer book, chapters related to prayer time, chapter 32, traditions 2, 3, 4, 7.
- 6- Zarqani Mota' Exposition, page 263
- 7- Kenzol Ommal, page 242
- 8- Resalatel Eslam, seventh year, issue 20, page 156

## Question 22

It has been narrated from the Holy Prophet (s.a.):

نبيه المؤمن خير من علمه ونبيه الكافر من عمله

A believer's intention is better than his action, and an unbeliever's intention is worse than his action.

What is meant by this tradition, and how one's intention is better or worse than his action?

### Reply:

The above tradition is one of the popular Islamic traditions narrated by the Sunnite and Shiite narrators from the Holy Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

The scholars have interpreted the said tradition in various forms. We remark one of the clearest interpretations hereunder.

A believer's intention and endeavor is always higher than what he performs. He may succeed to do only one tenth of what he has decided and desired, but this (high endeavor and higher intention comparing with action) is the direct effect of belief in God. As a result of belief in the other worldly rewards and punishments on the Day of Resurrection, a believer's existence is the focus of pure and benevolent ideas and high endeavor for doing good deeds, although he may succeed to realize a minor part of his intentions.

In contrast, as a result of disbelief in God and not fearing His punishments, an unbeliever's existence is the focus of vicious thoughts, and he always decides to accomplish an evil deed, while he may not succeed to realize what he has decided due to a series of social obstacles and or lacking required means. In this case, his intention for the obscene deeds is much more than what he performs. On this account, the Holy Prophet (s.a.) says: An unbeliever's intention is worse than his deed.

What was mentioned above is the content of a tradition narrated from Imam Baqir (a.s.) regarding this narration.<sup>2</sup>

### Notes

1- Please refer to Kafi, vol. 2:82, Mohajjatol Beisae, page 109, Ehyael Olum Ghazali, and Jameol Saghir Soyouti.

2- The text of Imam Baqir (a.s.) tradition in Mohajjatol Beisae, vol. 8:110 is:

«نبيّة المؤمن خير من عمله لانه ينوي من الخير مالا يدركه ونبيّة الكافر من علمه وذلك

لان الكافر ينوي الشر ويأمل من الشر مالا يدركه»

### Question 23

A group of historians and narrators have attributed so many wives to Hazrat Imam Hassan (a.s.), and have written that he has married with many wives, and divorced them after a short period, and married with some others, and on this account, he was known among people for having many wives. It is correct ?

#### Reply:

Considering that investigation on different aspects of life and personality of each individual clarifies the ambiguous parts of his life, first we have better to study the morality of Imam Hassan (a.s.) in brief, and reveal his real personality.

Our second leader was born in the noblest and most eminent family and was grown up by Amirmomenin (a.s.) and Fatima Zahra (a.s.).

Hazrat Imam Hassan (a.s.) was a distinguished personality from various aspects. He was a pious man who utilized all of his facilities not for more enjoyment from life, but for attraction of God's satisfaction and helping the poor and deprived in the society.

He went to Haj for twenty five times during his life, and despite of having a horse, he traveled on foot and sometimes with bare foot to show more courtesy and submission to God.<sup>1</sup>

At his time, no one could peer him in view of immense worship and servitude and attention to God. He was touched so greatly when remembering God and the Day of Resurrection, and the Other World. A special spiritual state and deep attraction was observed in him when making Wudhu and worshipping similar to the pious and divine men. He never neglected God.<sup>2</sup>

This is a brief description about the greatness and purity of our second leader, which has been explained in details in the related books.

Considering these realities, it is not acceptable to assume such a person, with such qualification and behavior engaged in servitude and attempt in the path of God, to show such extravagant attention and desire to marriage and matrimony as exaggerated by some historians.

#### Imam's Children:

One of the good evidences for our idea is the number of his children. If he had many spouses as claimed by the historians, he should have many children too. While it is not so! The highest number of his children is 23 mentioned by Ebne Jozi (a.s.).<sup>3</sup>

Yaeqoubi has mentioned the number of eight for his children<sup>4</sup>, Ebne Shahr Ashoub, thirteen sons and one daughter<sup>5</sup>, Ebne Khashab, eleven sons and one daughter<sup>6</sup>, and Tabarsi, sixteen sons and one daughter<sup>7</sup>, and the Late Sheikh Mofid who is very precise and careful in such issues assumes the number of his children as totally fifteen (boy and girl).<sup>8</sup>

The writer of book, "Aladad", narrating from the Late Allameh Majlessi, has written many wives for Imam Hassan (a.s.), but has not mentioned the number of his children more than fifteen.<sup>9</sup>

In this way, as per the historians, Imam Mojtaba (a.s.) has not have maximum more than 23 children, and this proves the issue of numerous number of his wives observed in some books to be completely baseless.

At our time too, there could find some people having so many children, without having many wives. The possibility of having many wives but some infertile, and or not giving birth to any child is very weak.

Taking into account the number of his children, the falsehood of attributing hundreds wives to Imam Hassan (a.s.) is revealed. Shouldn't we say that such false news have been fabricated by Umayyids, who have numerous records in fabrication of news? We shall not narrate willingly or unwillingly such fabricated news and help the enemies of Prophet's House (a.s.) in this way!

Moreover, the historians mentioning many wives for Imam Hassan Mojtaba (a.s.) has failed to state their names and or the name of their tribes, and only some scholars have sufficed with stating the names of some wives, and hereunder, we will refer to the way of their marriage.

It is funny that some narrators have exaggeratedly attributed tens of wives to him, have written that after his martyrdom, all of those women participated with bare foot in his funeral ceremonies.<sup>10</sup>

If such an event happened in Medina, didn't the Sunnite Faqihs who were always looking for a pretext against the Household of Prophet, criticize them?

Moreover, the divorced women do not like their ex-husbands. Then, how is it acceptable to think that the women who had already divorced to participate in the funeral ceremonies.

#### Solution

If we suppose that such big figures have been right, we shall say that Moslems at that age liked Prophet (s.a.) too much, and wanted to achieve the honor of kinship with him, and since the second leader was his elder grandson and the elder son of Amiralmomenin (a.s.), they requested voluntarily for marriage of their daughters with Hazrat Mojtaba (a.s.), and sometimes only sufficed with the formalities of legal marriage sermon. Therefore, they were honorific wives of the second leader.

Most probably, a number of the women registered in the history as his wives, were poor women and Imam Hassan (a.s.) had undertaken to support them, and has apparently married with them.<sup>11</sup>

One evidence is the event narrated by Ebne Jouzi, the well known Sunnite scholar, the brief of which follows:

One of the Moslems, called Abdollah Ebne Amer, divorced his wife, and after the waiting period, Imam Mojtaba (a.s.) married with him.

Later, Abdollah referred to his ex-wife to receive something trusted with her, Imam (a.s.) told: I married with your divorced wife to remove the enmity between you during this period. Now, I am ready to divorce her so that you can resume your marital life!<sup>12</sup>

#### Notes

1- Manaqib, 4:14, Kashfolghammeh, 2:124, History of Kholafa Albedayat Va Alnahayat- Taking into account the distance between Medina and Mecca, signifies the importance of issues.

2- Aeyan Shiite, volume 4, part 1, page 12

3- Tazkareh, 214

4- Historyaeqoubi History, 2:216

5- Manaqib, 4:29

- 6- As per narration of Shablanchi in Nourol Absar, 124
- 7- Aelamel Vari, 212
- 8- Ershad, old version
- 9- Behar, 44:173
- 10- Ramesh Afzai, by Abdollah Mohaddes (narrated from Manaqeb by Ebne Shahr Ashoub, volume 4, page 30)
- 11- Solhol Hassan, page 26 Tazkareh Ebne Jouzi, page 210

### Question 24

We know that our religious leaders and Imams have instructed us to defend our right as far as we can, and do not submit to the unjust, and live freely, as Hazrat Imam Hossein (a.s.) says in one of his sermons: O People! Be ware that an ignoble person has made me to choose freely between warfare (and being killed) and submission to abasement, but we are free from abasement, and never accept abasement.

Evidently, by "We" he referred to the practice and attitude of all members of Prophet's Household (a.s.). Then, why his honorable brother was patient against the actions of Moawieh while he was not less ignoble than Yazid ?

### Reply:

We shall consider all historical aspects, situations and conditions of their time for the rise of Imam Hossein (a.s.) and peace of his honorable brother, Imam Hassan (a.s.) to clarify the mysteries behind the Peace and the Warfare. Although Moawieh was not different with his son, Yazid, in view of morality and practices, but as all history books testify, Moawieh was a conservative and sly man, and attempted to display his improper actions in a deceptive way. The story of putting Qurans on the tip of swords in the Saffein warfare and preventing the definite defeat in this war is an example of his behavior.

However, his verdant and inexperienced successor, Yazid, not only did not believe in the Islamic principles, but also did not know anything about the basics and procedures of government and politics. In this way, he did not pretend as Moawieh did, and violated the Islamic rules openly, and opposed with the sacred things in Islam carelessly.

In such conditions, the Moslems were ready for rising against the Umayyids. On these conditions, the rise of Imam Hossein (a.s.) was very effective, and revealed clearly the nature of this family, the result of which was the victory of Islam, and real defeat of Umayyids. It was not so at the time of Moawieh.

As per one of the scholars, if Imam Hassan lived at the time Yazid, he rose against him, and if Imam Hossein (a.s.) lived at the time of Moawieh, he settled with him.

The proof is that Imam Hossein (a.s.) waited for about ten years after his brother, Imam Hassan (a.s.), and did not involve in warfare and battle. Upon hearing of death of Moawieh, and succession of Yazid, he started opposition, and from the beginning, refrained to pay allegiance, and did not stop opposition until his martyrdom.

Moreover, it is understood from above that keeping silent before Moawieh who had not transgressed openly for protection of bloods of innocent Moslems, has not been abasement for Hazrat Imam Hassan and Imam Hossein (a.s.) during ten years of his Imamate.

The other important issue is that as per history, the situation of foreign politics of Moslems at the time of Moawieh necessitated peace and settlement, because the Eastern Rome Empire who was tracing the internal wars of Moslems carefully, was ready to attack to the territories of Islamic countries in case of occurrence of another war between Imam Hassan (a.s.)

and Moawieh, and compensate its previous defeats, and this was a hard strike to Islam and Moslems. Such conditions necessitated peace by Imam Hassan (a.s.).



## Question 25

We read in some books that Amiral-momenin (a.s.) traveled from Medina to Madaen in one night through land when Salman passed away, and performed Ghusl for Salman, and buried him, and returned to Medina till morning. Is it possible while we know that the distance of Medina and Madaen is more than 600km?

### Reply:

We know that the movement and speed of moving is not equal for all mobile bodies. For instance, a horse's speed is much less than a car and train, and the speed of train and car is not comparable with the airplane. On the other hands, the speed of airplane is too little comparing the earth's rotation around the sun which is 30km per second, and finally, the speed of earth is much less than that of light which traverses 300,000km per second, and could rotate around the earth seven times per second.

Of course, before invention of plane, train and automobile, the people assumed impossible the travel speed of tens and hundreds of kilometers in one hour, and it is evident that it has been a usual impossibility but not an intellectual impossibility. Some systems may be invented in the future which could have a travel speed similar to rotation of earth around the sun and or electron around the nucleus of atom.

When, it is proved that such speed is not an intellectual impossibility, then, the Great God has surely power to take and return someone cared by Him in one night from Medina to Madaen, the distance of which is more than 600km. Rather, according to the definite religious evidences, we believe in corporeal ascension of Islam Prophet (s.a.), and relying on indefinite Power of the Great God, we completely accept this belief.

In the Holy Quran, our sacred divine book, there are some subjects which are acceptable for us on this basis (God's Power). For instance, before visit of Queen of Sheba with Solomon (a.s.), he said:

ايكم يأتيني بعرشها.

"O Council, which one of you will bring me her throne, before they come to me in surrender?" An efreit of the Jinn's said, "I will bring it to there, before thou risest from thy place; I have strength for it and I am trusty."

Said he who possessed knowledge of the Book, "I will bring it to thee, before ever thy glance returns to thee."

Then, when he saw it settled before him, he said, "This is of my Lord's bounty".<sup>1</sup>

Basically, one shall not consider material metrics and man's limited facilities in analysis of miracles and bounties. Miracle is something extraordinary and originates from God's unlimited Power.

## Question 26

The Shiite and many of Sunnite scholars believe that the verse:

اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم واتممت عليكم نعمتي ورضيت لكم الاسلام ديناً

Today, I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completely My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam for your religion.(1) has been revealed on Eid-ul-Ghadir, while the beginning and end of verse is concerned with the Halal and Haram fleshes. Then, how is it possible to bring a phrase in the middle of a paragraph with the least relation with the previous and next verse?

### Reply:

Many of traditionists and historians like, Tabari, Ebne Mardouyeh, Abou Naeim Esfahani, Khatib Baghdadi, Abou Saeid Sajestani, Abol Hassan Almaghazeli, Abol Qassem Alhake Alhasakani, Ebne Assaker Dameshqi, Khatib Kharazmi, Ebne Jozi, Sheikhol Islam Hamouyeni, Ebne Kassir Shami, most of which are among the first rank Sunnite scholars, have approved revelation of the verse on Eid-ul-Ghadir. When the narrations from the Prophet's Household (s.a.) are added to them, revelation of the verse on Eid-ul-Ghadir is definite.

However, the order of verses which has caused problem in many subjects for the interpreters is not so complicated, because the order of revelation of suras and verses in Quran completely differs with its present order. For instance, the verses revealed in Medina should normally be placed after the suras revealed in Mecca, but the contrary is observed. Even some of the verses of a sura are revealed in Mecca and some in Medina, and there is a gap of several years between revelation of two verses in one sura.

There is no need to further explanation if we read the occasion of revelation of verses carefully, and or at least, pay attention to what is written on the top of Quranic suras. There are some suras which are called Medinite, but some of their verses are revealed in Mecca, like the Spoils sura, all verses of which are Medinite, save the verses 20-26 which have been revealed in Mecca, and the contrary is observed in the suras like the Poets and The Cave, and such like.

Therefore, the order of verses and their relations could never be a strong proof against the definite narrations and traditions. The Islamic scholars have applied the same method in interpretation of Quran, and there are many proofs for this.

Quran is never ordered like a human composition, starting a subject and following it up to end. Quran is a series of verses revealed gradually on behalf of God for various events and different objectives. Various objectives and different subjects are discussed in one sura, and thereby the previous and next verses could not be a strong proof. once all verses of a sura are correlated like a chain, and once they are not related to each other at all.

In this way, a big problem is solved, that is, many verses in a sura, do not have the least relation with their previous and next verses.<sup>2</sup>

It may be questioned that: what is said hereto, is concerned with the relation of suras with each other and verses with each other. But the case of verse in question is different, which could not be solved so, that is:

The above explanation proved that it is not necessary for the verses of one sura to be completely related, but it is not possible for the sentences of one verse not to be related to each other, and the middle of verse to differ with its beginning and end.

Of course, the said verse is so. If the phrase, **اليوم اكملت لكم**, is about Walayat of Ali (a.s.), definitely, there is no relation between it and the beginning and end of the verse concerned with Halal and Haram fleshes. In this way, the previous explanation is not sufficient for removing this problem.

In order to clarify our reply, we have to write the text and translation of verse in three parts (beginning, middle, end):

1- **حرمت عليكم الميتة و الدم و لحم الخنزير و ما اهل لغير الله به و المنخنقه و الموقوده و المترديه و التطيحه و ما اكل السبع الا ما ذكيتم و ما ذبح على النصب و ان ستقسموا بالازلام ذلكم فسق.**

Forbidden to you are carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, what has been hallowed to other than God, the beast strangled, the beast beaten down, the beast fallen to death, the beast gored, and that devoured by beasts of prey- excepting that you have sacrificed duly- as also things sacrificed to idols, and partition by the diving arrows; that is ungodliness.<sup>3</sup>

2- **اليوم يئس الذين كفروا من دينكم فلا تخشوهم و اخشون اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم و اتممت عليكم نعمتي و رضيت لكم الاسلام ديناً.**

Today the unbelievers have despaired of your religion; therefore fear them not, but fear you Me. Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessings upon you, and I have approved Islam for your religion.<sup>4</sup>

3- **فمن اضطر في مخمصة غير متجانف غير متجانف لاثم فان الله غفور رحيم**

But whosoever is constrained in emptiness and not inclining purposely to sin- God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.<sup>5</sup>

In these three parts, the text and translation of verse is clarified, and we mean that, either the second part is about Ali (a.s.) or any other subject, either it is revealed on Eid-ul-Ghadir or Arafah, it is an independent phrase in the middle of verse.

The proofs supporting this idea are:

1- If the second part is omitted, it does not hurt the relation between the first and third parts. Pay attention to the text and translation of the verse.

In brief, if we add the end part to the first part, a complete verse is formed and omission of the second part does not hurt the relation of verse. This indicates that this part is an independent and separate phrase (revealed for any subject), which is located between the verse.

2- The content of this verse is repeated in the suras, The Cow, Cattle and The Bee, but the second part of above verse is omitted in these suras. Now, we narrate one of them:

انما حرم عليكم الميتة والدم ولحم الخنزير وما اهل به لغير الله فمن اضطر غير باغ ولا عاد فلا اثم عليه ان الله غفور رحيم.

These things only has He forbidden you: carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, what has been hallowed to other than God. Yet whoso is constrained, not desiring nor transgressing, no sin shall be on him; God is All-forgiving; All-compassionate.<sup>3</sup>

This verse includes the most part of what is mentioned in the first and third parts of the verse in question, but basically, there is no trace of the second part. It proves that the second part of the verse is an independent phrase and has no relation with its previous and next phrases.

3- The narrations indicating the occasion of revelation of verses have discussed the second part separately without talking about its beginning and end parts. For instance, they say: the ., has been revealed on Eid-ul-Ghadir or Arafeh. *verse, اليوم يئس*.

This is a proof for independency of this part which has been located in the middle of verse for some reasons.

On this account, when sound traditions narrated by Shiite and Sunnite imply that this part has been revealed on Eid-ul-Ghadir about Walayat of Ali (a.s.), the beginning and end parts can not prevent us from belief on the context of the traditions, because it is a separate phrase concerned with any subject, but having no relation with its previous and next parts.

4- Attention and reflection on the content of verse, could well guide us to the point that the verse is only applied for Walayat.

The second part includes two ideas: first, on a particular day, the unbelievers have despaired of the victory over the Moslems, and God's religion has been perfected. Now, we shall see when these two events happened?

1- Day of Prophet's mission: Certainly, these two events did not happen on the day of Prophet's mission, because on that day, neither the unbelievers had despaired, nor the religion was expressed, what about being perfected!

2- Day of conquest of Mecca: This idea too is similar to the previous one, because Mecca was conquered on the eighth of A.H., while many of agreements between Moslems and unbelievers were still valid, and the idolaters were free to accomplish Haj ceremonies as they did at the Age of Ignorance. on this account, the unbelievers were not despaired, and God's religion was not perfected on this day, and even we have some commands which have been expressed after conquest of Mecca.

3- Day of Acquittal, when Ali (a.s.) recited the Acquittal sura for the idolaters.

Although, the idolaters despaired on that day from any victory, but the religion was not perfected then in view of ordinances, and some ordinances like retaliation and legal punishment in the Table sura, were revealed later. We shall find a day on which both events happened.

4- Day of Arafeh in the Farewell Pilgrimage: Most of Sunnite interpreters have selected this idea, and have also narrated some traditions. However, we believe these two critical events did not happen on this day,

because then, we shall see who the unbelievers who had despaired from overcoming Moslems were. If we say that it refers to the Qoreysh idolaters or the majority of idolaters in Arabia peninsula, surely, this day has not been the day of despair for them, because Qoreysh were despaired of any victory on the day of Conquest of Mecca, and the others after recitation of "Acquittal sura", but not on Arafeh. on the other hand, if we say that it refers to the all unbelievers on the earth, either in the Arabia peninsula or other places, definitely such despair did not happen to them till the last minutes of Prophet's life.

Moreover, what does perfection of religion refer to? Does it indicate Haj tasks? It is evident that teaching obligations for one task does not result in perfection of religion! Or it may refer to the explanation about Halal and Haram stated in this sura (The Table)? Nevertheless, according to the Sunnite scholars, many of Islamic ordinances, like heritage and usury, have been available to the Moslems after the Day of Arafeh.

Therefore, we shall confess that there has been a special despair accompanied with perfection of religion, and these two are only realized through appointment of a successor. Many Quranic verses testify that the unbelievers were always hoping defeat of Moslems' religion, and their last desire was to persuade Moslems to give up their religion and convert to their ancestor's religion, as it says:

ود كثير من اهل الكتاب لو يردونكم من بعد ايمانكم كفاراً

Many of the People of the Book wish they might restore you as unbelievers, after you have believed.<sup>7</sup>

In contrary, Moslems were in progress, and the Meccan idolaters were losing their fortresses one by one, and losing their hope.

Their last delusive hope was that since the messenger of new religion does not have any son to rule over the Moslems after him, and lead the young Islamic government, the palace of his governance and Islamic religion will be ruined after his death, and soon they will overcome Moslems, and the situation will be restored to the first one.

Quran narrates this reality from the idolaters in the following verse:

ام يقولون شاعر نتربص به ريب المنون

Or do they say, "He is a poet for whom we await Fate's uncertainty (his death)?<sup>8</sup>

This was their last hope, but when Prophet (s.a.) appointed his successor and leader of Moslems after himself, an apparition of fear and despair overshadowed their life. on that day, Islam changed into a stable and surviving religion, and the Prophet (s.a.) perfected his religion through strengthening and confirmation of causes of survival, that is, appointment of a successor and leader.

### Notes

1-Quran, The Table: 3

2- For instance, please refer to the Cow sura, 238-239. These two verses discuss about prayer, while their previous and next verses are concerned with the women's obligations and ordinances.

3, 4, 5- Quran, The Table: 3

6- Quran, The Cow: 173

- 7- Quran, The Cow: 109
- 8- Quran, The Mount: 30

## Question 27

It is said: one of the miracles of Islam Prophet (s.a.) is the act of splitting the moon. Is it right?

### Reply:

For clarification of this issue, we have better to investigate it from several aspects?

1- Is it possible for the moon, such a big sphere, to split and then restore to its initial form?

2- If it is possible, we shall see to find definite proofs for occurrence of such event at the time of Prophet (s.a.) as a miracle?

3- If there are proofs for occurrence of this miracle, how it has happened?

First argument

For proving the possibility of splitting of the moon in view of sciences, we will refer hereunder to some samples of the explosion and splitting in the solar system:

a- Asteroids are the great celestial bodies revolving around the solar system, also called minor planets, sometimes with 25 km diameter. The scientists believe that they are formed from a big planet with an orbit lying between Mars and Jupiter, exploded and splitted for unknown reasons. This is a sample of splitting in the celestial bodies.

b- Meteoroids are small stones wandering with an amazing speed around sun in a particular orbit. Sometimes, they cross the earth orbit, and are attracted towards the earth.

The scientists believe that these are the remains of blazing stars exploded and split due to unknown events. This too is another example of splitting in the celestial spheres.

c- According to the theory of Luplus and many other astronomers, appearance of solar system has been the result of a great splitting in the sun, and all of these planets and sun have been primarily a single mass, each splitting gradually. However, there is dissidence between the astronomers about the cause of separation and splitting, but all of them have accepted the possibility of occurrence of splitting and separation in the spheres of solar system.

We conclude from above that the occurrence of splitting in the celestial spheres is possible, and science does not deny it.

Obviously, splitting in any of the spheres requires a great power, known in some cases according to the existing theories, and unknown in some other cases.

Certainly, a mysterious factor has involved in splitting of the moon. Anyone believing in the issue of splitting of the moon, knows that the Prophet has sought help from a supernatural and extraordinary power, and no one claims that he has done this with normal human power to be incompatible with science.

Now, one problem remains, that is, the possibility of full conglutination of moon after splitting.

To solve this problem, we shall know that if the cause of splitting is not severe and splitting is not so strong to result in complete dispersion of the components, their conglutination and restore to the first position due to the

attraction of the same components is justifiable, because we know that two bodies attract each other according to the popular formula of Newton, and with less distance and or more mass, the attraction would be more powerful.

Therefore, it will conglutinate soon after a little cleft.<sup>1</sup>

Here, we conclude from above that in the event of "splitting of the moon" nothing is impossible by science.

Second argument

The best argument for occurrence of the miracle of "splitting of the moon" is the first verses of The Moon sura in the Holy Quran:

افتريت اساعه و اذشق القمر و ان يروا آيه يعرضوا و يقولوا سحر مستمر و كذبوا و تبعوا

اهوائهم و كل امر مستقر

The Hour has drawn nigh: the moon is split; Yes if they see a sign they turn away, and they say, "A continuous sorcery!"; They have cried lies, and followed their caprices; but every matter is settled.<sup>2</sup>

Both Shiite and Sunnite commentators believe definitely and explicitly: The above verses are concerned with the issue of splitting of the moon, as a miracle at the lifetime of Prophet (s.a.). This has been mentioned in the Quran commentary books, from Shiite: Tafsir Bayan, Majmaol Bayan, Abolfateh Razi, Menhejol Sadeqin, Safi, Borhan, Norothaqalein va Shabbar, and from Sunnite, Tafsir Tabari, Dorrolmansour, Fakhr Razi, Bizavari, Kashaf and Fazelalel Quran.

The late Tabarsi in the popular commentary of Majmaol Bayan, under these verses says:

All commentators believe this verse is concerned with the miracle of "splitting of the moon" at the lifetime of Prophet (s.a.)

Also Fakhr Razi, the famous commentators says under the above verses:

All commentators believe that the verse indicates "splitting of the moon" at the lifetime of Prophet (s.a.).

Moreover, about 40 traditions have been narrated in the Shiite and Sunnite books regarding "splitting of the moon", in most of which, it has been stipulated that the above verses are revealed for "splitting of the moon".

Therefore, there is no doubt or denial for indication of the above verses to the occurrence of this miracle (splitting of the moon).

Third argument

It is deduced from the above verse and traditions that the miracle occurred at the lifetime of Prophet (s.a.) upon the request of the unbelievers, that is to say: the moon split by a mysterious power (divine power), and restored.

However, the specifications of this event written in some books (which could be correct), need more discussion. However, since knowing its specifications is not necessary, we avoid to discuss about it.

At the end, we shall remark this event too, like many other issues has not been immune from the fanciers and tradition forgers, and many unreal things have been added to it, like the baseless story that half of the moon came down and entered the Prophet's sleeve and came out from the other one.



This has not been mentioned in any of authentic Shiite and Sunnite tradition books, and is baseless.

Now, we shall reply to the objection or doubt propounded on this issue resulting in doubt and suspicion of some people:

If the event of "splitting of the moon" had really occurred, with such significance, it should have been registered in the world's history books, while it is not so, and it has not been registered in any history book.

Following points shall be taken into account for replying to this problem:

First, We

1- Splitting may refer to cracking, not completely two separate halves. In this case, restore after splitting is more justifiable.

#### **Notes**

2- Quran, The Moon: 1-3

## Question 28

What have been the causes of infallibility of prophets, and were they infallible as a result of a particular divine blessing, or have they acquired this attribute thanks to their deeds?

### Reply:

Infallibility of prophets (avoidance from sin, mistake and error) originated from their spiritual and immaterial perfections.

With no doubt, the source of good and or bad actions is man's spiritual and immaterial states. The evil spiritual states, like ignorance, lack of belief on origin and resurrection, rebellion of insubordinate desires and such like, are the source of deviation, sin and taint. on the other hand, knowledge and science, belief and moderation of desires and virtue, prevents man from sin and taint, and cause a series of good and human actions.

Spiritually, the prophets enjoyed an extraordinary belief, knowledge and science. These two spiritual factors controlled the causes of sin and deviation in them. When a man is full aware of evilness of sin and its ill consequences for his eternal prosperity, and on the other hand, his belief and virtue is so much that the external and internal causes of sin could not effect in him, it is not possible for such person to commit sin in action.

Here, the question arises that whereof and how these spiritual states known as the sources of infallibility were formed in the prophets?

We shall care that appearance of these spiritual perfections is the result of several main and fundamental factors:

#### 1- Heritage

In biology, it has been proved that spiritual aptness and readiness for acquiring human virtues and perfections and even some of attributes and perfections are transmitted from one generation to the other through heritage. The families of prophets were generally pure and noble ones, in whom prominent spiritual perfections and virtues were aggregated by lapse of time, prevailed in them as a result of heritage from one generation to the other. History proves this basic reality in many cases. For instance, regarding the Islam Prophet's (s.a.) family, history approves that he was born in the noblest Arab tribe (Qoreysh), and the most honorable sect among Qoreysh (Bani Hashem). This family was really well-known for honesty, truthfulness, bravery, hospitality, justice, purity and trustworthiness, and on this account, were respected particularly among different Arab tribes. The forefathers of Islam Prophet (s.a.) have generally been prominent, honorable and faithful individuals as far as history has recorded their name.

Therefore, heritage has prepared a particular aptness and readiness for reception of spiritual perfections in the prophets. This preparation is a basic which nourished the virtues in these individuals after addition of some other factors, like "high and spiritual training".

#### 2-Transmission of spiritual virtues and perfections through training

The second factor in formation of spiritual perfections for the prophets is training. There were some perfections and virtues in the prophets' families which were surely transmitted to them through training, as a complementary

to their heritage aptness for acquisition of spiritual perfections. They were trained faithful, trustworthy, intelligent, brave and perfect in their families.

3- A series of unknown causes

In research of causes of individuals' spiritual personality (apart from heritage and training), psychology and biology have believed on a series of unknown reasons causing special effects in the particles of germ and the genes of individuals, and many of extraordinary states and powers in them. A number of psychologists and biologists believe these causes are the mutations in germs, resulting in extra states in the individuals and special spiritual privileges in them.

4- A particular divine favor

Beyond the above triple factors, there is another important factor that is particular divine blessing and favor in the prophets. The previous factors create aptness and readiness in the infallible to become liable to a special bounty and favor from God. Under the grace of this divine and heavenly bounty, his spiritual powers become stronger and more effective.

This bounty supports his spiritual perfections, and adds new perfections to them. The special divine favor strengthens prophet's faith, knowledge, intuition, and as we said earlier, the two factors of "Strong faith and extraordinary knowledge" result in condemnation of sin factors in the infallible. In this way, the various factors cause immunity of the infallible from taint to sin, and deviation. It is noteworthy that in all of these stages, the infallible has freedom of will, and his infallibility is a fully voluntarily state.

You can study the detailed explanation of this part in the reply to the next question, and it goes without saying that the above applies to the Imams too.

## Question 29

We read at the beginning of the Night-Journey sura in the Holy Quran:

سبحان الذى اسرى بعبده ليلا من المسجد الحرام الى المسجد الاق الذى باركنا حوله

ل يه من آياتنا انه هو السميع البصير

Glory be to Him, who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque to the Further Mosque the precincts of which We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs, He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing.

Please explain why God took His elected Messenger to ascension? It is not proper to say that God was going to show him His place, because God does not have any location and place, and is omnipresent, and if we say that the purpose has been to show him the spheres, galaxies, and the great views from the world of creation, again there could be an objection, because we Moslems believe that our Prophet and Imams (a.s.) are aware of everything and everywhere.

### Reply:

First, we shall note that the first verse of the Night-Journey only refers to the departure of Prophet (s.a.) from the Holy Mosque towards the Further Mosque, and do not say anything about his ascension to the heavens. However, this could be deduced from the other verses as follows:

علمه شديد القوى ذو مره فاستوى و هو بالافق الاعلى ... عند صدره المنتهى عندها جنه

المأوى اذ يغشى السدره ما يغشى ما زاغ البصر وما ط ل قد رأى من آيات ربه الكبرى

Taught him by one terrible in power, very strong; he stood poised, being on the higher horizon, Indeed, he saw him another time by the Lote-Tree of the Boundary night which is the Garden of the Refuge, when there covered the Lote-Tree that which covered; his eye swerved not, nor swept astray, Indeed, he saw one of greatest signs of his Lord.<sup>1</sup>

The above verses clearly indicate journey of Prophet (s.a.) to the heavens, but the first verse of the Night-Journey sura only refers to the beginning of his journey on the land. However, the purpose of this journey (as it was referred to in two parts of the said verses) is to observe the verses and great signs of God in the world of creation.

Obviously, the observation has been a personal observation, which is not possible for the being having body save through its attendance before what he wants to see. The point that Prophet (s.a.) was aware of heavens without ascension to the heavens completely differs with close observation. For instance, something has happened in the city, and we are aware of its occurrence, but we have not been present in the place of occurrence, and have not seen it by our eyes. Surely, presence in the place and observation of the event has a much deeper effect in man, while the non-personal awareness is not so.

Therefore, God had willed the Islam Prophet (s.a.) to observe closely the effects of His magnificence with eye, and to make his heart more aware. If one thinks that Prophet (s.a.) could see the effects of God's magnificence in the higher worlds with his normal eyes, he is wrong, and it is not in

conformity with the reality, because he had the properties of corporeality and the material world in view of matter, and a man's eyes seeing power has a special limit.

**Note**

1- Quran, The Star, 5-8, 14-18

### **Question 30**

We read about Imam Ali (a.s.): he was so drowned in worship and focus on God when praying that arrow was pulled from his foot and he did not notice. on the other hand, we read that he noticed a beggar when praying and donated his ring to him! How agreement of these two states is possible?

#### **Reply:**

We shall note that there is a big difference between "pulling arrow from body" and "donating ring to a poor man", because the former is a personal and corporeal affair, and far from the rank of full attention to God and being drowned in His pure essence. However, care to a poor servant lamenting and pleading for mercy in the Prophet's (s.a.) mosque is an act pleasing to God, and proportionate with attention to God.

In fact, he did not notice himself, but the poor, and this is the same notice of God!

In other words, contribution to God's people and the poor and the needy is one of the great worships, and compatible with prayer as a great worship. Therefore, it is not surprising if the heart-rending lament of the poor man and pleading for mercy from the Moslems draws Ali's attention while praying so that he performs another act of worship simultaneously, both for God's satisfaction. Even, the deed was such a righteous and valuable action that a verse was revealed for it.

#### **Note**

1- Quran, the Table: 55.

### Question 31

Mr. Sayed Abdollatif, Head of Cultural Studies Institute, has written in his article about literacy of Islam Prophet (s.a.) and has mentioned some proofs and reasons indicating that Islam Prophet could read and write before his mission, and it is really unfair that Moslems believe he has been illiterate. Is this idea correct?

#### Reply:

Before studying the reasons proposed by the said writer, we first investigate the issue in view of Moslems, and explain what they mean by application of uneducated (Ommi) for him in order to remove any ambiguity and mistake in this regard:

1- We believe that: Islam Prophet is the most perfect of mankind in view of knowledge, practice, and his divine book, rules, commands, advices, and various instructions are clear proofs for his abundant knowledge and religious sciences.

2- We believe that: Islam Prophet was aware of the mysteries of world of creation, and secrets of creation and rules prevailing in the world. Not only all the Moslems agree on this idea, but also the non-Moslems submit to his works, utterances, and great Quran.

3- We believe that: The great leader has received all of these perfections through inspiration, and has learned all of these lessons and knowledge in the school of prophethood. No teacher has taught him anything, because prophethood is not an individual and social genius, and its holder could not acquire this excellence through education and teaching like other genius individuals.

4- Confessing the above points, Moslems say: He has been uneducated (Ommi), and Ommi means that he has not been taught, but not illiterate and with no knowledge. This is an important point, because "uneducated" does not imply lack of knowledge and science, as the great leaders have been the greatest teachers for mankind, although they have not been taught. Hazrat Adam was uneducated, but according to Quran, he was the teacher of angels (it has been stated in details in The Cow sura, verses 28-32).

If literacy of Prophet refers to his extensive knowledge and abundant sciences even through inspiration, it is approved by all Moslems, and if literacy refers to education in the ordinary schools by a teacher, the honorific sheets of his life and the explicit verses of Quran refute it strictly.

5- Moslems believe that: The prophet neither read a book, nor wrote a page before his mission. This has been mentioned in the Spider sura, 48, which will be explained in details in reply to the proofs mentioned by the said writer:

Not before this didst thou recite any Book, or inscribe it with thy right hand, for then those who follow falsehood would have doubted. (Quran, Spider:48)

Did he read or write after his mission or not? There is no definite idea in this regard. It is popular that after his mission too, he did not practically read and write, and all of his letters were written by the others, and he only dictated to them. The Islamic narrations too confirm this idea.

On the other hand, many of scholars believe that not reading and writing does not mean his inability to write and read, because reading and writing are great perfections, and we can not say that Islam Prophet lacked this perfection, although he did not use it.

The Late Majlessi writes in Behar, Hodaibyeh chapter: We are not in doubt about his ability to write and read. How is it possible for the personality having such a lot of miracles, bounties, knowledge and sciences, to be unfamiliar with a series of letters and figures?1

Now we shall find if the proofs of this Indian writer confirm that the Prophet has been an educated person? And do they confirm that Islam Prophet has been able to read and write before and after his mission, and used his ability?

Here we investigate the idea and proofs of the said writer in this regard:

1- He says: The commentators have supposed that the solution for proving that Quran is the pure word of God, and the Prophet has not added anything to it, is to introduce Islam Prophet as illiterate. While, the one commissioned by God does not change God's word at all, either if he is literate or not.

Reply: This idea is surprising, and is never found in the authentic books of Islam scholars. Certainly, the real impediment for not changing the divine word by the prophets is their spiritual competence and so called their "Infallibility", not illiteracy.

By virtue of the verse:

الذين يتبعون الرسول النبي الامى

Those Who follow the Messenger, the Prophet of common folk.2  
Moslems consider Ommi as the one uneducated.

The Indian writer has made two mistakes in interpretation of the meaning of "Ommi", and the reason for describing Prophet with this attribute. First, he has supposed that the reason for calling the Prophet uneducated (Ommi) has been protection of Quran from any change and modification by the Prophet (s.a.), while it is not true. Second, he has supposed that "Ommi" means illiterate, while it means uneducated, and so called "one who does not read and write"3, and there is a big difference here.

2- He says: Quran introduces the Prophet as:

ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة

To teach them the Book and the Wisdom.4

and the minimum requisite for the one capable of teaching the contents of a book is the ability to use pen for writing, and or reading what is written.

Reply: One may say that Islam Prophet (s.a.) was able to read and write, although he has never used his ability even after the mission. Even with this confession, the verse does not prove claim of the writer, because the method of teaching of prophets differs with that of the teachers in the schools. Islam Prophet fulfilled his heavy duty through recitation of the divine verses and scientific guidance (education and training), and this method does not necessitate reading book and writing on the paper or blackboard.



Here, he is wrong because he has supposed the method of training by the Prophets similar to the teachers in the schools, while the honorific life of prophets, particularly the Islam Prophet, testifies the contrary.

3- He says: The Holy Quran advocates the rank of science and pen, and says:

الذى علم بالقلم، علم الانسان ما لم يعلم

Who taught by the Pen, taught Man that he knew not.5

so that one of the suras revealed in Mecca has been called "Pen". Now, is it possible to accept that the Prophet commissioned for teaching Quran, avoided using pen!

Reply: Surely, as we said before, the ability to read and write is a perfection that the Prophet possesses and its application and usage is perfection, but the Islam Prophet avoided using pen due to some great and important expediencies.

The reason is that if he read and wrote like the other people, his adversaries took it as a pretext, and pretended that his theist religion, rules, and commands are the result of his thoughts, his studies and investigation on the books of predecessors, and not related to inspiration and God.

Quran has referred to this reality clearly and say:

كنت تتلوا من قبله من كتاب ولا تحطه بيمينك اذا لارتاب المبتلون

Not before this didst thou recite any Book, or inscribe it with thy right hand, for then those who follow falsehood would have doubted.6

Although his life approves that he was not educated, but a group of Jews accused the Prophet that he has taken these subjects from the previous books, and Quran narrates this accusation as follows:

وقالوا اساطير الاولين اكتبها فهي تم عليه بكرة واصيلا، قل انزله الذى يعمل السرفى السموات و الارض انه كان غفورا رحيمًا.

They say, 'Fairy-tales of the ancients that he has had written down, so that they are recited to him at the dawn and in the evening.' Say: 'He sent it down, who knows the secret in the heavens and earth; He is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.'7

In spite of avoiding to read and write, still he was not free from the accusation of the enviers. Now, if he read some books and wrote some sheets, then, his adversaries and enemies could find a pretext, and attributed much more false accusations to him!

4- He says: Quran introduces the Prophet as:

رسول من الله يتلوا صحفا مطهرة

A Messenger from God, reciting pages purified.8

The verse shows that the Prophet read Quran from pages, not in memory.

Reply: There is no doubt that the inspiration angel (Gabriel) did not read Quran from the pages, and revealed it unto the spirit, soul and so called the pure heart of Prophet (without any inscription) as it says:

نزل به الروح الامين، على قلبك لتكون من المنذرين

Brought down by the Faithful Spirit upon thy heart, that thou mayest be one of the warners.9

Now, we shall find what does the inscription from which the Prophet read, claimed by the writer refer to? Did Gabriel give an inscription to the Prophet?

This idea is in contradiction with the above verse, because the place of revelation of Quran has been the Prophet's blessed spirit and heart? Or the Prophet himself wrote it, or the Prophet dictated and the others wrote and Prophet recited from it?

Certainly, by virtue of command and will of God, Prophet memorized the verses revealed to him. He did not need to write or dictate to the others to write for him. The scribes of revelation wrote Quran for themselves and other Moslems, not for the Prophet!

It has not been mentioned in any of the Islam history books that the Prophet wrote and read Quran, or instructed to write it to read from it. on this account, the recitation of pages indicates reading it from memory.

Therefore, recitation does not imply reading from an inscription. In Persian too, when someone recites from memory the poems of Ferdowsi and Sa'di, we say that he read one or some pages of Shahnameh or Boustan.

The said verse is similar to the other verses revealed about the Prophet (s.a.)"

يتلوا عليهم آياته

To recite to them His signs.<sup>10</sup>

Referring to the history of Prophet's life who always recited Quran and revelation from memory clarifies this reality.

5- The said writer has stated a series of narrations and historical texts showing that Islam and the Prophet advocated science, knowledge and writing; such as: obligation of acquiring knowledge for any man and woman, even the teachers and students have been preferred to those engaged in recommended worships, and establishment of a school (Soffeh) beside the mosque for Moslems to learn knowledge there, and in Badr battle, instructing for liberation of any war prisoner teaching ten of Moslems how to write.

Then, he concludes that: Can we suppose that such a leader thinking too much of training and teaching to deprive himself from the benefits of reading and writing?!

Reply: What the esteemed writer has narrated from the historical evidences and Islamic works are all correct, but never prove his claim (that Islam Prophet read and wrote before and after his mission), because advocacy of Islam from knowledge and science is not hidden to anyone.

Now, it is questioned if Islam Prophet used this ability before and after his mission, and engaged in reading and writing in contrary to the clear text of the Spider sura, verse 48? Did the Prophet teach from the book like the present teachers? Or he trained people through recitation of Quran verses from memory, and teaching Halal and Haram, and giving high Islamic instructions, advices and admonitions? You can refer to the book, "In the school of inspiration" which is an extensive and detailed discussion about the Prophet being "uneducated" (Omni).

## Notes

- 1- Beharol Anvar, 16:136
- 2- Quran, The Battlements, 157
- 3- Please refer to Tafsir Almenar, 9:234
- 4- Quran, House of Imran, 164
- 5- Quran, The Blood-Clot, 4-5
- 6- Quran, The Spider, 48
- 7- Quran, Salvation, 5-6
- 8- Quran, The Clear Sign, 2
- 9- Quran, The Poets, 193-194
- 10- Quran, House of Imran, 164

### Question 32

When some events like earthquake and flood occur, a number of people ask the following questions from themselves:

Why the earthquakes, floods, contagious diseases and such like destroy the life of some people? Why these events happen in some parts and some others are not touched with them? What is the philosophy behind such occurrence of calamities and blights? Are only a group of people sinner and deserve punishment, and the other faultless? Why and why ?

#### Reply:

Basically, as far as we know and the books of previous scientists testify, people have always (specially at the time of occurrence of unpleasant events) discussed about these questions. Even the history of beliefs and religions indicate that sometimes not finding a real reply to such questions has led some to materialism, heresy, and neglecting the principle of "monotheism and theology", because due to a superficial study and hasty judgment at the time of occurrence of such events, they have found them horrible and hateful, and sometimes call them the wrath of nature! If we look at them in their real face with the glass of intellect and mind, we will reach another conclusion.

It is noteworthy that judgment about the advantages and disadvantages of anything is always a relative matter. We call good whatever is useful for us, and bad whatever is harmful for us. We do not consider that what would be the consequences of an event with a bad effect in our life, in the society, because a chemical substance may be a fatal poison for us, while it could be a remedy for another one, and visa versa .

Is our profit and loss a good criterion for evaluating something or an event as good or bad or we shall consider all effects of the event in all cases for a general and final judgment?

Consider the following example for more clarification:

Rainstorm has inevitably some advantages and disadvantages. People judge about it differently. Those people whose house or farm has been damaged by the flood, say: I do not know why this sudden calamity befell me! The others who are struck with drought, and the rain has provided a plenty of water in their streams, say: What a great blessing it was! God's blessing has come to us!

If we consider the total effects of the rainstorm, all will call it "the rain of blessing", not "wrath of nature"!

Furthermore, some of the calamities are the great favors which we do not know. For instance, man is afflicted with some diseases once during his lifetime, but it causes a permanent immunity against the disease or similar diseases in him.

If we only look at the time of affliction, we call it a trouble, and if we consider its effects throughout the life, we will certainly call it a blessing.

One of the other philosophies behind the occurrence of calamities is to appreciate the blessings.

With no doubt, we are endowed with a plenty of divine favors and blessings, but we do not appreciate and value most of these blessings, unless we are temporarily deprived from them. Suppose if there was not any

disease in the world, how we could understand that what a great blessing is our health! Or if there was not the night darkness, how we could understand what a valuable blessing is the sunlight shining to the world unsparingly during the day! If the earth was not shaken occasionally, could we understand what does calmness on the earth mean! And if there was not drought, was it possible to understand properly the essential role of rain in our life!

Therefore, in order to cause the man to regard the infinite blessings in his life and appreciate them and his benefactor God, they are sometimes changed slightly in such a way that we understand this great and valuable reality. These slight and temporary changes are what we call them "calamity".

Considering the above point, isn't this "calamity" an informative lesson for the man's society, and is it surprising, if we call them a "great blessing"!

Now, why these calamities happen in some parts of the world, and why only some people are involved in them ?

We shall notice that the calamities have a natural source, and wherever the conditions are present, the calamity happens.

As it has been mentioned in some of the traditions, one of the conditions for occurrence of calamity is spread of some major sins among people. We read in Komail Dua:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي الذُّنُوبَ الَّتِي تَغْيِرُ النِّعَمَ، اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ الذُّنُوبَ الَّتِي تَنْزِلُ الْبَلَاءَ

O God! Forgive my sins which change the blessings, O God! Forgive those of my sins which cause occurrence of calamity!

The Holy Quran too says:

وَ اتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً

And fear a trial which shall surely not smite in particular the evildoers among you.1

#### Note

1- Holy Quran, The spoils, verse 25

**Wa In-nahu Wali-al Taufeeq**

**All rights reserved for Al-Hassanain (p) Network Imam Hussain (p)  
Foundation**

**Alhassanain (p) Network for Islamic Heritage and Thought**

**[www.alhassanain.org/english](http://www.alhassanain.org/english)**