Man's Spiritual Needs

In the same way as man has physical needs in life which he strives and struggles to fulfil, the soul too has needs that must be satisfied. These spiritual needs and urges have been placed by the hands of creation in the depths of his soul. The soul craves for appreciation and recognition, and it is for the sake of satisfaction of this inner urge that everyone so eagerly seeks social approval for his acts and conduct and is keen to receive the appreciation that he deserves. This helps reaffirm his personality and fulfils his aspirations and expectations.

Since self-love is inherent in man, he is in passionate love with his own creative achievements and intellectual and artistic accomplishments. Hence encouragement and appreciation play a most basic role in the motivation of individuals, and this is one of the most essential facts of social life. Appreciation, while being the simplest and cheapest kind of medicine, is so marvellously effective that it can infuse new life into a torpid and impoverished society and open before it new vistas of life.

On the contrary, parsimony in showing appreciation and absence of encouragement are big obstacles in the way of society's progress and growth. They prevent latent capacities and talents from blossoming by causing lethargy, apathy and isolationism, which take the place of creativity and dynamism. Young people who have mentally and emotionally entered a critical phase of life and reached the threshold of independent life need, more than anything else, appreciation and encouragement to actively advance in life and to apply greater effort.

Bertrand Russell says:

Praise should not be given for anything that should be a matter of course. I should give it for a new development of courage or skill, and for an act of unselfishness as regards possessions, if achieved after a moral effort. All through education any usually good piece of work should be praised. To be praised for a difficult achievement is one of the most delightful experiences in youth, and the desire for this pleasure is quite proper as an added incentive, though it should not be the main motive. The main motive should always be an interest in the matter itself, whatever the matter may happen to be ...

All moral instruction must be immediate and concrete; it must arise out of a situation which has grown up naturally, and must not go beyond what ought to be done in this particular instance. The child himself will apply the moral in other similar cases. It is much easier to grasp a concrete instance and apply analogous considerations to an analogous instance than to apprehend a general rule and proceed deductively. Do not say, in a general way, 'Be brave, be

kind,' but urge him to some particular piece of daring, and then say, 'Bravo, you were a brave boy;' get him to let his little sister play with his mechanical engine, and when he sees her beaming with delight say, 'That's right, you were a kind boy.' The same principle applies in dealing with cruelty: look out for its faint beginnings and prevent them from developing. [1]

It is the biggest blow to the creative capacities of the young to show indifference to their accomplishments, to deprive them of recognition, and to set no store by their personality. Because when they feel that people think nothing of their work and the fruits of their effort are of no account to them and deemed worthless, they become greatly upset. Their growing capacities and talents lose their vigour and languish. Their sense of confidence and future hope die within their hearts. As their psychological need of security remains unsatisfied they become prone to psychic illness. That is because when an urge remains unsatisfied, it is repressed and becomes buried in the unconscious, giving rise to undesirable complexes that vex the mind.

Aside from this, when persons possessing knowledge and skill discover that the results of their labour and work cannot help them obtain recognition, their feelings of disappointment may radically alter the course of their thought and conduct. As a result, they may take recourse to improper methods in order to satisfy their psychological need. Instead of seeking spiritual excellence and human merit, they may resort to fraud, deceit, and other illegitimate means in order to obtain some kind of recognition in life. This is a fact which has been established by psychological findings.

The Profound Effect of Appreciation and Recognition

A single laudatory remark can produce a profound effect on one's spirit and bring about a spiritual revolution that could impel one to devote an entire lifetime to intense effort and endeavour for achievement and success. There are many who consider their success and achievement as owing to the appreciation shown by their elders and their generous compliments. Were it not for their appreciation, they could not have climbed the ladder of success.

Amongst progressive nations of the world a special importance is given to recognition of outstanding individuals, and this is done in various ways. In such environs the light of genius and talent is never extinguished and suitable conditions are maintained for the development of talent and the emergence of dormant capacities, because learning and effort receive the recognition they deserve. But, regrettably, many of our press media, whose duty is to educate and guide the people and whose goal should be to enlighten minds and raise the general level of the people's knowledge and their awareness of real problems of life, mostly promote

matters which lead to the depression of the general mental level. They divert the people's attention towards insignificant things and spread moral mediocrity and decadence, whereas there is no trace in them of any effort to promote real values and to encourage men of science and merit. A contemporary Iranian writer criticises this significant failing of our society in these words:

Motivation-real, not one marred by publicity-is one of the biggest of our psychological and social needs. Nowadays our businessmen and marketing experts have created diverse and perplexing forms of false kinds of motivation. If some gentleman or lady taking part in a quiz competition, for instance, is able to name the fifth mistress of Louis XVI, they send him or her by air on a month's trip to Europe. Or if one of the contestants in a certain competition is able to describe better than others the advantages of using a certain head shampoo, he receives a big bundle of cosmetics as a gift. But we have not yet instituted an award to show recognition to our best creative minds of the year.

During youth, which is the most important phase of life in respect of the foundations of one's moral character, one is capable of showing appreciation and admiration for outstanding work or some remarkable service rendered by someone. But the more one advances in life, the lesser does anything attract one's attention and admiration. That is why it is essential to reinforce the spirit of appreciation and gratitude in persons in their formative years and to awaken their feelings of admiration for outstanding personalities.

This programme is quite effective in maintaining psychological balance and equilibrium in the youth because of their natural propensity for adopting some kind of model. Of necessity, the young person selects certain personalities as his models, and if during that stage his attention is not turned towards men of higher character, and should he fail to develop an admiration for their accomplishments and deeds, he may choose perverse characters as his models and try to emulate them. It is obvious what bad and undesirable effects that would have on the life of the youth. Those who have a refined temperament, a kind heart, and an open mind commend and applaud every good deed and positive action that they come across. The sublime perspicacity and high-mindedness of great men has an extraordinary radiance that invigorates others and gives them power and warmth. Contact with higher morals raises one's level of thinking and relieves one of egoism, which is the greatest obstacle in the way of moral improvement and development. Those who have come under the influence of the spirit of great men and have been nourished by their thoughts, will be advantageously equipped to ascend to the peaks of human sublimity. But there are some others who staunchly grudge mentioning even the merits of their closest friends. They are never willing to say a word concerning their worthy and

meritorious qualities or to pay a compliment appreciating their valuable services and accomplishments. Most of the time they adopt an indifferent attitude .

There are some base characters that lack the higher human virtues and are capable of acquiring every undesirable quality. They deprecate and view with contempt everything that is praiseworthy and admirable, and express their displeasure and disapproval of everything. The achievements and successes of others are painful and distressing to them. Not only they cannot bear hearing any word of praise concerning their successful colleagues, but are delighted by their problems and hardships, which are the biggest means of their satisfaction. When they feel that their colleagues are getting ahead of them, the flames of anger leap up in the furnace of their hearts. Their narrow-mindedness and envy may even lead them to resort to unseemly and hostile conduct against their fellows and induce them to lie in wait for an opportunity to deliver an unmanly blow to their rivals.

This kind of narrow-mindedness and decadence, which is untouched by wholesome morals, is well reflected in the following couplet: Now that Providence has looked with favour upon my rival and granted him gifts, Haven't I the right to view him with indignation and regard him with disdain? The wise take lesson from the conduct of the foolish and refrain from their mistakes. The foolish, however, are not willing to follow the conduct of the wise and draw lesson from their morals and human merits.

Cynicism and Principled Criticism

Finding fault with people and negating their personality are one of the greatest defects of our society and these characteristics are prevalent among all its various classes. Anyone who makes an innovative move or starts something new immediately attracts criticism and disapprobation from every quarter and group, though the critics should lack all competence to give an opinion and judgement concerning the matter. Without anyone making a study of the new venture or inquiring into its character, the innovator is assailed by a flood of criticism from every side. Dale Carnegie writes: The late Johan Wanamaker confessed: I learned thirty years ago that it is foolish to scold. I have enough trouble overcoming my own limitations without fretting over the fact that God has not seen fit to distribute evenly the gift of intelligence. [2]

Principled and proper criticism is undoubtedly one of the beneficial methods of reforming society. But what is unfortunate is that most criticism is made without due consideration and study. This is itself an injustice and a violation of others' rights which blocks the way of change and innovation, as this vice of society may discourage even the strongest of individuals in his efforts and make him feel despondent. According to psychologists, criticism of others and finding fault with them often reflect the critic's own shortcomings and inadequacies which he

unconsciously projects on to others. In this regard they say:

In general, criticism and censure of others' actions and lapses mostly derive from our own shortcomings of which we are not aware. We observe these inadequacies in others because unconsciously we sense their presence in ourselves. The wise and positive person does not spend his time criticising and blaming others, for he is always engaged in doing something positive and beneficial. The critics rarely belong to the class of creative and productive individuals. In fact, the art critics in their criticism of others' art implicitly criticise their own work. The experts who always show the 'practical way' are mostly theoreticians who have faced practical defeat.

Undeserved and unreasonable criticism mostly results in violation of rights and destroys the permanent value of everything. A source of intense dissatisfaction is traceable in persons who make unjust and unjustified judgements of whose unfairness they are themselves unconscious. The inner dissatisfaction is transferred from inside such a person to the outside and spoils the worth of everything. We observe such a kind of reaction especially in persons whose life has been spent in despair and defeat and to whom the whole universe appears as futile and counterfeit. Their criticism of things and other persons derives from personal dissatisfaction. They dislike today what they used to like until yesterday, without realising that this hatred is not related to external reality but springs from their own spirit. Pessimism and hostility are in fact due to the drying up of the mainsprings of love within man. [3]

Even in cases where the good act is part of someone's duty, it must be appreciated and commended and the dutiful person must be thanked and his work appreciated. That makes him perform his duty with greater dedication and carry out his responsibilities with further zeal, constancy and conviction. Several years ago I was in one of the famous cities of Iran. One day there was a failure of electric power due to some technical fault in our area. I phoned the manager of the electric company and requested him to take steps for removing the fault. After a relatively long interval, electricity was restored to the network. I again contacted the manager to thank him and appreciate his action. At first when he spoke there were visible signs of annoyance and reticence in his voice, but after that he heard me thank him he was so affected that his voice suddenly became animated quite perceptibly. With a great liveliness mixed with surprise he asked me, "Who are you? This is the first time since I have been in charge of the company that someone has appreciated my work!" In reply I told him, "Unfortunately, or fortunately, I do not belong to this town. I wanted to appreciate you for having done your duty." Then he expressed his wish to have a closer personal contact.

After that time whenever electricity failed as a result of some fault in the decrepit network of

the area, as soon as I would inform him he would eagerly and heartily take immediate steps to remove the fault, which would be done in a short time. On making an inquiry I came to know that this person had been the company's top man for several years and during this long period of time not even once had he received any note of thanks or appreciation for his efforts.

Flattery is Reprehensible

It should be remembered that encouragement and appreciation, with all their beneficial and revolutionary results, have certain reasonable and logical limits beyond which they must not go. For, in the same way as indifference to the positive and constructive actions of individuals is an obstacle to the growth of talents and capacities, exaggerated praise and admiration, too, which amount to flattery and sycophancy, are harmful and reprehensible, for they involve a kind of departure from reality.

Dale Carnegie writes:

Of course, flattery seldom works with discerning people. It is shallow, selfish, and insincere. It ought to fail and it usually does ... In the long run, flattery will do you more harm than good. Flattery is counterfeit, and like counterfeit money, it will eventually get you into trouble if you try to pass it. The difference between appreciation and flattery? What is simpler? One is sincere and the other insincere. One comes from the heart out; the other from the teeth out. One is unselfish; the other selfish. One is universally admired; the other is universally condemned. I recently saw a bust of General Obregon in the Chapultepec Palace in Mexico City. Below the bust are carved these wise words from General Obregon's philosophy: "Don't be afraid of the enemies who attack you. Be afraid of the friends who flatter you." No! No! No! I am not suggesting flattery! Far from it. I'm talking about a new way of life ...

When we are not engaged in thinking about some definite problem, we usually spend about 95 percent of our time thinking about ourselves. Now, if we stop thinking about ourselves for a while and begin to think of the other man's good points, we won't have to resort to flattery so cheap and false that it can be spotted almost before it is out of the mouth. Emerson said: "Every man I met is my superior In some way. In that, I learn of him." If that was true of Emerson, isn't it likely to be a thousand times more true of you and me? Let's cease thinking of our accomplishments, our wants. Let's try to figure out the other man's good points. Then forget flattery. Give honest, sincere appreciation. [4] When 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, who in sharp contrast to other Umayyad caliphs was a man of some human merits, came to power and different classes of people thronged to welcome him to the throne, a man named Khalid ibn 'Abd Allah, an eminent Arab figure who was representing a group, stood up to address the general audience. He said:

O caliph and master of Muslims! For some people their honour relates to the position to which they rise in life. Their pride and prestige derive from their kingly and caliphal station. But you are the pride of the caliphate and the throne. The throne and crown are proud of you and owe their majesty and glory to your worthy self. In fact, the verse of the Arab poet befits you when he said: If the pearl gives charm to the beautiful face and heightens its beauty, It is thy beautiful face that gives the pearl its charm. It adorns thee not, but is adorned by thy beauty! 'Abd Allah spoke in this vein eulogising the caliph with glittering verses and phrases. But the caliph was annoyed by this flattery and sycophancy. Suddenly he interrupted 'Abd Allah's panegyric and asked him to take his seat. Then, turning to the audience he remarked: "Your companion has as much of an eloquent tongue as you may wish instead of wisdom." Flattery and sycophancy are other conspicuous defects of our present society and to a frightening extent they have penetrated many aspects of our social life. One comes across few people who express appreciation and gratitude solely for the sake of encouraging others and showing recognition for their work and with no purpose except to facilitate their progress.

An Iranian writer and social figure writes:

Little by little it has become an established law for me that everyone who comes to see me and express his admiration for my writings and works has some immediate request to make. Either he wants me to make a certain recommendation for him, or some need has prompted him to seek information through me, or he expects some other kind of help. Until now no one has paid me a visit solely for the purpose of encouraging me in my work. Then he adds: Truly, it is a matter of regret that whereas most well-known writers, poets and public speakers in advanced countries daily receive scores of letters from people who have no purpose in view except to express their sincere feelings of genuine appreciation and gratitude arising from admiration for their works, in Iran rarely does a writer or orator receive any appreciation that is devoid of some kind of self-interest.

Islam's Plan for the Propagation of Moral Virtues

One of the precious teachings of Islam is that Muslims should be grateful for the boundless bounties of God. In reality, the feeling of gratitude arises from an inner freedom, which is something mysteriously united with the human essence. Emotional motivation and encouragement is a useful means for the propagation of human virtues in society. Should the people reward good- doers and punish those guilty of misconduct by means of their appropriate reactions, society would move steadily towards health and growth. For when the feelings of reprobation for offenders and admiration and appreciation for the pious and virtuous are alive amongst the people, society naturally inclines towards piety and human merit

and the ideals of moral rectitude and virtue come to prevail. The moral worth of everyone becomes distinct and the qualities of the pure and the polluted become distinguished.

'Ali-may peace be upon him-in his historic directive addressed to Malik al-Ashtar, says: (O Malik:) The good and the wicked must not be equal in your eyes, for otherwise it would discourage the good from good-doing and encourage the wicked in their misconduct. Treat them in accordance with the kind of conduct he has chosen for himself. [5] For the rare kind of persons whose personality has reached the sublimest heights of development, the very satisfaction and inner peace that they derive from carrying out their duties and responsibilities is their reward and motivating agent. But reaching such an ideal level of morality is possible for only a numbered few. Most people have not attained such a spiritual development so as not to stand in need of praise and appreciation. Hence the significance of the effect of appreciation should not be ignored at any time. Shachter, the well-known psychologist, says: If it be necessary to find fault with someone and to criticise his conduct, it is essential first to mention one of his good points and commend him for it, so that his need for attention and appreciation is fulfilled. If you censure him after that it would not be so bitter and unpleasant; rather, he might accept your advice, and even reproof, eagerly and gratefully.

If the boss is dissatisfied with a letter written by his secretary, it would be better to tell him, "The one you had written the other day was quite clear and lucid. But this one is somewhat vague. Please look it over again and change it if necessary." Certainly the secretary will not feel dejected by this remark but would feel grateful for the chiefs attention and appreciation. He will perform his work with greater effort and attention. When you observe a bearer at a restaurant moving about swiftly and serving food, do not scold him and create ill feeling if there is some delay in bringing your food. Show appreciation for his effort and compliment him for his skill and agility. Rest assured that he will do his work with greater zeal and, by the way, bring your food as soon as he can. Irrespective of age and status, everyone likes his work to be appreciated by people. Even the old school teacher, after years of giving lessons and receiving recognition for his work, feels elated on hearing his little pupil say, "Sir, we have benefited greatly from your lesson today."

Respect others' need for appreciation and care so that the give and take of life goes on smoothly and happily. Don't lose any opportunity of showing appreciation for others and complimenting them for their good work so that others too may honour your need for appreciation and attention. [6] We should realise that in the same way as persons possess certain positive and outstanding qualities, they may also have some shortcomings and defects. We ourselves are no exception to this rule. Therefore, instead of always pointing out others'

weak points, we must keep in view their merits and positive qualities. 'Ali, the Commander of the Faithful, may peace by upon him, draws our attention to this point with an interesting metaphor. He says

Be like the honeybee, which always drinks the purest of things (i.e. the nectar) and yields the purest of things and does not break any bough that it alights upon. [7]

When one receives the affection and benevolence of one's friends and observes them making effort to fulfil one's wishes with utmost sincerity and eagerness and striving lovingly to solve one's difficulties, then morality and humanity dictate that one should thank them for their generosity and kindness, win their pure hearts, and give them one's ungrudged love in order to be worthy of their unmingled affection. Gratitude may express itself in an act of kindness free from any kind of ostentation. Kronin (?) writes:

My son, who was studying medicine, narrated that once a patient was admitted into the hospital. A blood transfusion was necessary for his treatment and recovery. On recovering from his illness, he began to inquire about the identity of the person who had given blood for his treatment. He was told that the names of the blood donors were not disclosed. After several weeks, the same person turned up at the hospital to donate his blood. He did that repeatedly without any ostensible motive. When one of the surgeons asked him about it, he answered in a very simple manner: Some unknown person donated his blood for me. This way I want to thank him for it. [8] It would be far from manliness not to give benevolence and kindness even the most elementary kind of recognition, which is verbal appreciation and thanks. It is also a kind of injustice.

The Great Harms of Ingratitude

There are some people who not only do not express any gratefulness-either in words or in deed-no matter how much help or kindness they may receive, but remain dissatisfied, as if it were the responsibility of others to do them service and to show kindness, whereas their own duty were to be ungratefully indifferent to the rights of others! The reader may have observed this type of persons around him. Their conduct does not conform to any rational, human, or logical norm. 'Ali-may peace be upon him-puts this group of ungrateful persons in the ranks of animals. He says: One who does not appreciate a favour and kindness is no more than an animal. [9] Even when someone does not succeed in getting one's work done, one must appreciate his sincerity and disinterested motives when one feels that he has sincerely sought to help one.

'Ali-may peace be upon him-said

One who does not appreciate the good, unmingled, and sincere intentions of his friend will also

not appreciate his services and acts of kindness. The Eleventh Imam said: The best of your friends are those who forget your inadequacies but never forget your kindness. The spirit of ungratefulness brings irremediable harm, for when one denies gratitude and appreciation to others for their service and kindness despite being aware of their significance and the trouble and effort undertaken by them, they would not be disposed to help him out in a hardship next time.

'Ali-may peace be upon him-refers to this kind of loss and deprivation in the following saying One who does not thank for a favour will not find anything except deprivation and disappointment. [10] In the directive to Malik al-Ashtar he points out the significance and benefits of appreciation: (O Malik:) Attention to major matters should not make you neglect minor and less important ones, for the people benefit from your trivial services and acts of kindness in their own right, while they cannot do without your major services ... Hence pay thorough attention to the demands and needs of the people. Pay compliments to those who take pains and do worthy work. For the tribute paid to them for their work gives enthusiasm to the brave and serves as a constant source of their motivation. This practice also helps motivate conservative and timid persons and draws them to the field of battle. [11] We may also pay attention to the experiences that have been acquired in this field:

If parents and children show greater appreciation and regard for each other, you will see that the crowds at psychiatric clinics of patients suffering from various complexes would be very much diminished. Every now and then one needs to be animated by the warmth of others' approval and compliments. Otherwise one's mental health and self-respect would be endangered. If one does not hear a word of thanks in life for one's efforts, life would be very difficult. At times I myself feel like the old woman who had served the cowboys for twenty years waiting for a word of appreciation. One day they told her that she was mad. In reply she told them, Until now I haven't heard anything from you that might show that you can distinguish between one who is mad and one who isn't.

Dr. Whyle (?), who had a long experience in the treatment of problematic children, one day told me about the case of a child who suffered from an interesting illness. From this case he had come to the conclusion that at times praise and appreciation had to be ministered like a physician's prescription. The matter related to male twins, one of whom was quite brilliant in respect of intelligence while the other appeared to be retarded. Their father had approached me to find out the cause behind it," he said. When I had won the confidence of the retarded child, he told me something that children usually say in such cases. He asked me why others did not like him as much as they did his brother. They would smile whenever his brother did

something whereas they frowned when he himself did something exactly similar. 'I can do nothing as well as my brother,' he said." Dr. Whyle continued: "I kept the two brothers as apart as I could and put them in different classes at the school. I asked his parents not to attempt to motivate the retarded child by drawing comparisons between the two sons, telling them to make a conscious effort to compliment this child for his performance even if it were something trifling. Soon the child became such as to stand on his own feet."

One of my wealthy acquaintances who prided himself on not having tipped a single penny for any service was faced with a tragedy on the first day of the new year. His chief accountant committed suicide. The books and the accounts were in perfect order. The man who had killed himself, a meek and respectable fellow, had remained a bachelor. All that he had left for a clue was a note addressed to his rich employer. "Never during all these thirty years did I hear a word of encouragement. Exhausted and broken-hearted, I am fed up with my life," it read. [12]

The spirit of encouragement and appreciation arises from personal maturity, self-reliance and a healthy spiritual state, whereas flattery is a sign of low self-respect, baseness, fear, and a decadent personality. Undeserved praise of others is the practice of those who want to compensate for their inadequacies by this means, or are cunningly after their own interests. The compliments paid by self-seeking persons are devoid of any kind of worth, because they are not based on good faith or conviction but are aimed with a particular motive. These self-seeking sycophants are like skilled hunters who set traps of flattery to catch the passing prey. Voltaire says: "Those who exercise their rhetorical skills have often impious intentions in their hearts." 'Ali-may peace be upon him-said:

A compliment that exceeds a person's merit is flattery; if lesser than the merit, it is either due to incapacity or envy. [13] The Noble Messenger-may peace and God's blessings be upon him and his Household-said: Sycophancy is not in a believer's character. [14] Undue praise and compliments give rise to pride, and if the proud person be a man of influence and power, he will not find it easy to listen to sincere advice and exhortations or heed truth and reality. In the aforementioned directive, 'Ali-may peace be upon him-writes to Malik al-Ashtar: Make the people get accustomed to refraining from flattering you and from praising you unduly for something you haven't done, for excessive flattery brings about self-conceit and leads to pride and haughtiness. [15]

Hence if you pay someone a tribute exceeding what he merits and extol him beyond his real worth, you will not only add nothing to his personality but will harm your own personal dignity by your flattery and sycophancy. And if you commend someone with a compliment that falls short of his merit, that is an indication of your weak and unbalanced spirit or envy. But if you

honour and praise someone according to his real worth, that preserves both your own personality and his, and, as a result, neither he would fall into the trap of vanity, nor would you compromise your respect and worth. Moreover, as exaggerated compliments are not based on fact and do not arise from within the heart, one cannot depend on someone's hypocritical praise and compliments, for if he praises one in one's presence with a certain purpose he might also indulge, behind one's back, in any kind of backbiting or defamation for some other end of his.

'Ali-may peace be upon him-describes this repulsive characteristic of sycophants in these words: One who compliments you for some merit that you do not possess will have no qualms blaming you and accusing you of some vice that is not in you. [16] In the same way as appreciation and encouragement are one of man's psychological needs whose fulfilment leads to progress and development, constant and undue blame and censure produce a detrimental effect on one's psyche and lead into vice and deviance. The Commander of the Faithful-may peace be upon him-said:

Abstain from frequent reproach for such a practice has vicious consequences and makes censure ineffective. [17] Bringing joy to one's children is an effective way of winning their love and is beneficial for strengthening their emotional ties with other people. The Noble Messenger (s) said: Whenever a father looks lovingly at his child and makes him joyous, he receives a reward from God that is equal to that of setting free a slave. [18]

Bertrand Russell writes:

Blame should be given much more sparingly than praise. It should be a definite punishment, administered for some unexpected lapse from good behaviour, and it should never be continued after it has produced its effect ... To win the genuine affection of children is a joy as great as any that life has to offer. Our grandfathers did not know of this joy, and therefore they did not know that they were missing it. They taught children that it was their 'duty' to love their parents, and proceeded to make this duty almost impossible of performance. Caroline, in the verse quoted at the beginning of this chapter, can hardly have been pleased when her father went to her, 'to whip her, there's no doubt.' So long as people persisted in the notion that love could be commanded as a duty they did nothing to win it as genuine emotion. Consequently human relations remained stark and harsh and cruel. Punishment was part of this whole conception. It is strange that men who would not have dreamed of raising their hand against a woman were quite willing to inflict physical torture upon a defenceless child. Mercifully, a better conception of the relations of parents and children has gradually won its way during the last hundred years, and with it the whole theory of punishment has been transformed. I hope

that the enlightened ideas which begin to prevail in education will gradually spread to other human relations as well: for they are needed there just as much as in our dealings with our children. [19]

This approach to the upbringing of children which this British philosopher ascribes to the last hundred years was part of the educational programme of the Prophet of Islam thirteen centuries ago. His affection and kindness were not confined to his own children but extended, in the most unaffected and natural manner, to other children as well, whom he treated with loving care and attention. His biographers write about him: It was the habit of the Messenger .to show love to children

The Campaign Against Vices

An effective way of encouraging good people and discouraging those guilty of misconduct is to implement the rule of 'enjoining good conduct and forbidding misconduct' (al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar) in society. The spread of immorality and vicious conduct obliterates the worth of moral values which are the foundations of society's welfare and glory, and drive people off the path of piety and godfearing towards sinfulness. Sin, by nature, spreads rapidly, and like an epidemic spreads from one point to another affecting entire society.

If a serious and consistent effort is not made against vice at the point of its origin, its circle of influence increases continually, contaminating the surrounding areas and spreading to other healthy regions. The evil consequences of vice not only affect those who perpetrate it, but ruin even those who by their connivance and indifference permit it to grow and spread. That is because they abstain from any kind of corrective action and despite their power to prevent sin take a passive attitude towards it. Such persons share the guilt of polluting and ruining the social environment and get punished for their offence.

Hence, instead of remaining silent and indifferent, one should realise his own duty to counter immoral conduct. Because in the same way as one who leads others into deviance is an agent of corruption, so also one who is indifferent to the sinner's conduct and who fails to assist him despite possessing the means to do so is also an agent of immorality of another kind.

The teachers of morality and human excellence and the guides of nations-each in accordance with his level and situation-have brought the vices of various kinds and their harmful consequences to the notice of the people. They have called attention to the fact that any misfeasance and negligence in regard to any of these matters and immorality in the Vice results in destroying and undermining the spirit of freedom. In a society whose members have lost the capacity to perceive realities, vice is seen as virtue, waywardness as freedom, and retrogression as progress.

The precepts of religion emphasise that anyone who sees an immoral act being committed should stop it with the means at his disposal. They prescribe various levels and degrees of opposition to vice, so that whatever one's situation might be he should be able to use these means for its prevention. Those who have the influence and power to prevent unlawful conduct have the duty, assigned by God, to use their power to discipline the offenders and draw them toward the path of purity. If one does not possess the needed power to prevent moral misconduct in society, his duty is to guide by the word of mouth and to point out in an effective manner the evils of misconduct and its undesirable effects on life. Obviously, the speaker himself should be one who practices these moral virtues and values and is committed to them, so that his exhortations are earnestly accepted by others. Otherwise his admonitions would not go to their hearts and his insipid and lifeless preaching would be barren and fruitless.

The duty of someone who does not possess even this capacity is to condemn immoral conduct by disapproving of it and resenting it in his heart. Of course, in such circumstances when one cannot influence others one must not be content with merely taking a negative and passive attitude; rather, it is necessary that his inner indignation should lead to positive results. That is, he must break his ties of friendship with the offender so that the latter is made to feel like an outcast who cannot expect friendship and co-operation from others.

Opposition to immoral conduct has a special importance in Islam, which is very earnest in its struggle against vice and in its commitment to guide humanity towards ethical merits in all phases of moral development. The Qur'an has well described the meaning of salvation by stating that it exclusively belongs to those who call people to virtue and prevent them from vice:

Let there be one nation of you, calling to good, and bidding to honour, and forbidding (dishonour; those are the finders of salvation. (3:104

The Role of Appreciation in Social Progress

Accordingly, salvation and prosperity belong to those whose conduct is based on this principle. Commanding others to righteous conduct and forbidding misconduct is an inalienable part of their life's programme. In another verse of the same surah, the highest stations of human nobility and merit are ascribed to people who always practice this principle throughout the various stages of life: You are the best nation ever brought forth to men, bidding to honour and forbidding dishonour, and believing in God. (3:110) 'Ali-may peace be upon him-said: Always bid the members of society to virtues and practise them yourself. Beware lest you be one of those who bid others to do good but themselves refrain from it, otherwise the sinfulness of such conduct will overtake you and God's wrath shall seize you. [20] The Prophet of Islam-

may peace and God's benedictions be upon him and his Household-said: My followers shall live in welfare as long as they do not abandon the duty of bidding to good conduct and forbidding misconduct and co-operate with one another in good works. But when they abandon this programme in life, the blessings will be withdrawn from them and some of them (i.e. tyrants) shall be imposed on the rest. As a result they will suffer, but they will neither find any refuge on the earth, nor any helper will come to their aid from anywhere. [21]

In the civilised world of today some countries have framed and implemented laws resembling the principle of al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al- nahy 'an al-munkar with the objective of strengthening the moral foundations of their societies and promoting justice and right conduct.

An informed writer says:

It is an undeniable truth that if justice is to be established in society everyone must be committed to its preservation, like the Swiss people in whose constitution these words-which sound like a verse out of some scripture-have been written: "On observing the slightest violation of justice it is the duty and obligation of all individuals not to rest until justice has been restored." [22] This maxim is exactly like the duty that was legislated fourteen centuries ago by Islam for every individual Muslim.

NOTES:

[1]. Bertrand Russell, On Education (London: Unwin Books, 1966), pp. 95-96.

[2]. Dale Carnegie, How to Win Friends (New York: Simon and Schuster Inc., 1937), p. 27.

[3]. Strecker, Wilkerforce & Appel, Rawanshenasi baraye hameh, trans. Mushfiq Hamadani, pp. 259-257.

[4]. Carnegie, How to Win Friends, Persian trans. p. 42.

[5]. Nahj al-balaghah, "Kutub," no. 53 addressed to Malik al-Ashtar.

[6]. Shachter, Rushd-e shakhsiyyat, pp. 45-46.

[7]. Al-Amidi, Ghurar al-hikam wa durar al-kalim, p. 569.

[8]. Danistaniha-ye jahan-e 'ilm, p. 159.

[9]. Al-Amidi, op. cit., p. 672.

[10]. Ibid., p. 702.

[11]. Nahj al-balaghah, trans. Fayd, al-Islam, p. 997, "Kutub," no. 53 addressed to Malik al-Ashtar.

[12]. Albert Schweitzer, Kelidha-ye khushbakhti, trans. Ahmad Aram, Tehran: Shirkat-e Sahami-ye Intishar, Khurdad 1347 H. Sh., pp. 335, 336, 337.

[13]. Al-Qummi, Safinat al-Bihar, vol. 2, p. 528.

[14]. Nahj al-balaghah p. 509.

[15]. Nahj al-balaghah, trans. Fayd al-Islam, p. 990, "Kutub," no. 53 addressed to Malik al-Ashtar.

[16]. Al-Amidi, op. cit., p. 671.

[17]. Al-Amidi, op. cit., p. 359.

[18]. Al-Nuri, Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, vol. ii, p. 626.

[19]. Russell, op. cit., pp. 95, 97-98.

[20]. Al-Amidi, op. cit., p. 569.

[21]. Al-Shaykh al-Tusi, Tahdhib al-ahkam, vol. ii, p. 58.

.[22]. The Persian daily Ittila'at, Adhar Mah, 1342 H. Sh