The word Riyaa is derived from Rooyat which means pointing to or showing of a deed. Man's aim behind this deed is to attract peoples towards him. He does it in various ways:

A – By his deeds or actions; for example, he prolongs his actions during namaz and makes his face appear fearful and courteous.

B – By his words: For example, during his admonitions and sermons he tries to attract others towards his own person.

C – Sometimes he makes his face appear like that of one who remains awake through nights in worship.

D – Sometimes he presents himself in such a way that he appears full of concern for Islam and Muslims.

There is no doubt that all these things do have an aspect of worship as there are several narrations and verses dealing with them. In the book Urwatul Wuthqa, in the chapter about ablution (Wuzoo), the late Syed Muhammad Kazim Tabatabai has quoted nearly ten kinds from which we point to the following four:

1 – The aim of doing a good deed is only showing of self to people.

2 – The deed has, behind it the intention of both Divine Reward and show but the latter is greater than the former.

3 – Both the intentions are equal and that each one of the two can make him do a good deed.

4 – He has the intention of both show, as well as Divine pleasure but the wish to gain Allah's pleasure is greater.

In other manner this division can also be made like this: Sometimes Riyaa is in the root of Islam, like the hypocrite who makes him appear like a Faithful. Sometimes it is in the matter of worship by accepting the basic beliefs of Islam. But in non-worship acts it can be divided in five orders viz. Waajib (obligatory), Haraam (prohibited), Mustahab (preferable), Makrooh ((detestable) and Mubaah (admissible.

Prohibition of making a show in Quranic verses

O you who believe! Do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury, like him who spends his property to be seen of men and does not believe in Allah and the last day; so his parable is as the parable of a smooth rock with earth upon it, then a heavy rain falls upon it, so

it leaves it bare; they shall not be able to gain anything of what they have earned; and Allah .does not guide the unbelieving people

Some noteworthy points in this verse

A – From the sentence Do not make your charity worthless we are enlightened that some of the deeds, it is possible, can snatch away rewards of good deeds, and this is that very problem of Ahbaat??? We have explained this in our book Maad yaa aakhareene saire takaamul.

B – The parable of a deed of hypocrisy, that it is like a of rock on which there is a thin layer of dust is very meaningful, because, hypocrites hide their coarse and barren inside with a face showing benevolence and beneficence. They perform deeds that do not have any firm root. But events in life soon tear off this curtain to expose their inner selves.

C – The phrase and Allah does not guide the unbelieving people in this verse mean that a hypocrite is an unbeliever. And those who spend their property in alms to be seen of the people and do not believe in Allah nor in the last day; and as for him whose associate is the Shaitan, an evil associate is he!

We get two points:

A –Company of evil people can affect man's life to such an extent that it may drag him to the last degree of downfall.

B – The connection of hypocrites or the devil and the devilish deeds is a continuing connection or relation and not a temporary one.

Surely the hypocrites strive to deceive Allah, and He shall requite their deceit to them, and when they stand up to prayer they stand up sluggishly; they do it only to be seen of men and do not remember Allah save a little.

It should be noted that in this Ayat Riyaa has been considered one of the attributes of hypocrites.

Therefore whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and not join anyone in the service of his Lord.

.So woe to the praying ones, Who are unmindful of their prayers, Who do good to be seen

Prohibition of Riyaa in Traditions

1 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said to Ibaad bin Kaseer Basri in the masjid: Woe unto you o Ibaad! keep away from riyaa. Whoever does anything except for Allah, the Lord abandons him to the one for whom he acted.

2 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Wherever the apparent is more shining than what is within, it is hypocrisy.

3 – Imam Baqir (a.s.) said: If a man does something for Allah's pleasure and also entertains someone else's pleasure, he is a polytheist.

From these narrations we come to know that even subordinate show is Haraam.

4 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: The reward of one is with the person for whom the deed was done. Then added: O Zurarah! Every Riyaa is Shirk. Every pretense is polytheism.

5 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: A group of people is being ordered to go to hell. The angel in charge of the fire asks: O unlucky person : What did you do? They say: We performed deeds for others than Allah; now we have been asked to obtain the reward from the ones for whom we worked.

6 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Most of my fear regarding you is in the matter of lesser polytheism. They asked: what is the lesser polytheism? He said: It is Riyaa; making a show for others. While giving rewards to people in the Hereafter on the Day of Judgement Allah will say to the hypocrites: You may take your reward from those you worked for. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) then said: Seek Allah's refuge from Hubbul Khizyz. They inquired as to what it was. He replied: It is a valley in Hell that has been prepared for hypocrites. He added: A hypocrite will, on the Day of Judgement, be addressed: O Criminal!, O Dishonest!, O Pretender! Take your reward from the one for whom you performed your deeds. 7 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Allah never accepts any performance if there is, in it, even an iota of show.

Question: How can we know that we are pretenders? Some of its forms are so subtle that man himself is unaware of it.

Answer: Firstly: - Everyone who considers his performance better. The Holy Quran mentions:???

Secondly – Signs of pretenders have been mentioned in several narrations. For example: There are three signs of a hypocrite: He becomes happy when people see him performing or worshipping; becomes lazy in prayers when he is alone; and he likes to be praised for all of his deeds.

Question: In view of the existence of such signs of pretence, is it not good for man to perform his deeds secretly?

Answer: The great scholars have said: It is better to perform voluntary good deeds and donations secretly but the obligatory duties should be carried out openly, especially when the person concerned is being accused of non-performance of his duties. It is also mentioned in narrations. Perhaps it can also be said that it can be different for different people in different

circumstances. Whenever one feels pretence or is doubtful of it he may perform his deeds in secret. Otherwise it is better to be open especially in the matter of performing ones duties.

Question: Is it pretence even when one gets thoughts in mind but does not pretend actually? Answer: No, but sometimes they are satanic thoughts as Satan wants man to stop from doing good. So the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) has said: If you are performing your prayer and Satan suggests that you are a pretender the man must, in order to defeat Satan, lengthen his namaz.

Advice and warning

A Mo-min must always be intelligent and should not be deceived by an apparent cheating. It is so because some people are very cryptic and, in order to achieve worldly status, undertake sufferings and painstaking mortifications, and make worldly pleasures too unlawful for themselves. Someone asked the Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.) about Azeemus Shaqaaq (big painstaker). The Imam (a.s.) replied: The one who gives up the world for the sake of the world loses both the world as well as the Hereafter, like a pretender who suffered pains but without any benefit.

Question: Can hypocrisy be considered even after the performance of a deed? In other words, if one entertains a thought after the actual performance of a particular deed if the above mentioned verses and traditions apply to him?

Answer: Riyaa is only during the performance of a deed. The above quoted Ayats and narrations do not apply after the performance of a deed. Some great scholars have explained this matter and some of them have even considered it as a unanimous opinion. Yet, in a letter from Imam Baqir (a.s.) to Ali bin Asbaat, it is mentioned:

Maintenance of a deed is more difficult than its performance. It was asked: what is maintenance of a deed? He replied: A man donates for pleasing only one God. A reward for a secret good deed is being written in his account. Thereafter he talks about his deed. So a reward for an open good deed is written for him, which is less. Then he repeats its talk until he rubs it out and it is written as Riyaa in his roll of deeds. He, not only does not get any reward but also earns punishment.

Question: Sometimes a man performs a good deed only to please Allah and does not have any intention of making a show of it. But when people come to know about his deed he becomes happy. Is this also Riyaa?

Answer: What we derive from verses and traditions is that one must do a deed only to obey the commandment of Allah. However, many a time, it is but natural to feel happy after performance of a good deed except in the case of one who has undertaken much mortification and has

become a real slave of God. So we have read earlier that the reality of honesty and sincerity is that man must not like that he should be praised for his good deeds. It means he has reached a status in his mortification when He dislikes his praise for his good deeds. Of course, mere feeling of pleasure, in the absence of a liking for praise, is all right.

Someone asked the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.): We do our duty and do not like that others should know about it. Yet sometimes people come to know about it and this makes us feel happy. So what about it? The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) replied: You have earned two rewards: One reward of a secret deed and the another of its becoming open.

A similar narration has also been quoted from Imam Baqir (a.s.) but at the end he says: There is none but that one likes that Allah may make his good deed open, in case he has not done anything for it.

Question: What is the reason of Riyaa and which factors bring it in?

Answer: The factors of pretence are of two types:

A – Not knowing the Holy Being of Allah – If one, really knows the Lord of the Universe and understands that no one else but He alone is effective in the universe, he will never entertain any hope but from only one god. It has been described for us in narrations. Here we quote two examples:

1 – It has been quoted from Imam Sadiq (a.s.): One of the signs of the worthiness of a Muslim is that he does not make people happy by making Allah unhappy like the one who issues Fatwas according to the liking of the people or speaks what pleases people but makes Allah angry, and does not reproach people for what Allah has not given them because sustenance is available neither by the greed of the greedy nor by the asking for it by man. And if a man runs away from sustenance as he runs away from his death his sustenance will surely reach him as death surely reaches him. Then he said: Allah has, due to His justice and equity, put joy and peace of mind in Faith and resignation and kept grief and anguish in doubtfulness and discontent.

2 –Amirul Momineen (a.s.) said: No person has tasted the sweetness of Faith until he knows that whatever he has got will not be removed from him and whatever has been taken back from him will not come back to him and that the giver of profit and loss is only one God, Almighty Allah. In fact he reaches a stage where he understands that in the cosmos there is none but only one god, Almighty Allah is effective.

If somebody, really, reaches the stage of certainty that everything is in the control of the Lord and that if any benefit or loss reaches man it is from the Lord, then he, thereafter, never deals with anyone else, leave alone doing anything for his sake!

In conclusion, man should make effort so that the strength of certainly increases and we, Insha Allah, while discussing Faith, shall describe the problem of certainty at length.

B – Ambition for position and status makes a man hypocrite. If one thinks a little he knows that even if one becomes the owner of the whole world from east to west, one is not going to last for more than a few days.

It is necessary here that we should deeply study the narrations relating to love for position so that we may keep ourselves away from this unbecoming habit or attribute and may not keep, while doing everything, none but only one God in our view.

Self – deception and Egotism

One of the most dangerous attributes that are mostly seen among the scholars and saints is egotism. It is the same self-centredness for explaining the meaning whereof great teachers of ethics and morals have written much.

Egotism is that man thinks himself to be great due to his material attainments, be those actual virtues in him or only in his imagination. Some have said: Egotism is that, man due to whatever attribute or blessing he has thinks that he is great and becomes unmindful of the one who granted all that to him. They have not considered it self-deceit and egotism if one considers oneself to be better than others. It is Ujb even if there is none besides one. Contrary to this, in case of pride, it is necessary that there is somebody else so that the proud may be able to imagine himself to be better than the other.

The late Allamah Majlisi (r.a.) has said: Ujb means to imagine oneself's deed as great and to be pleased with it is in such a way that he does not consider him at fault but thinks that he has obliged Allah!

It can be said that there are stages or grades of self-deceit and egotism. It is not necessary that the egotist must have crossed all the stages. So it is mentioned in an authentic narration by Ali bin Suved from Moosa bin Ja'far (a.s.): I inquired about the deed called ujb. The Imam (a.s.) said: Some of the stages of it are that a bad deed appears good to one, he considers it nice and becomes happy with it and thinks that he has done a good thing.???

It is also one of the stages when man believes in God and imagines that he has favoured Allah! Whereas the truth is that Allah has favoured him.

Because it was he who guided him to Faith

In short, it can be said that it is Ujb when man becomes happy with himself and this is the very

first stage of egotism. Sometimes pride and self-centeredness also branch out from this stage and man begins to imagine himself to be better than others. Sometimes it so happens that he imagines that as a result of some of his good deeds he has acquired some rights over Allah.

Scholars have explained this subject from various aspects.

There are many narrations in this matter. Here, we mention three of them:

1 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: Whoever is taken over by egotism is finished.

2 – It is narrated either from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) or Imam Baqir (a.s.): Two men enter a mosque. One is a worshipper and another sinner. Then they get out of the Masjid in such a condition that the sinner becomes a Mo-min and the Aabid turns into a sinner. The reason is that the oft-worshipper enters the mosque happily taking pride in his worship and thinks only about it whereas the sinner feels very ashamed of his misdeeds and seeks Allah's pardon.

3 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Lord Almighty addressed Prophet Dawood (a.s.): O Dawood! Give good tidings to the sinners and warn the truthful and righteous. Dawood said: How can I give good tidings to the offenders and warn the pious? Came the commandment: O Dawood! Give good news to the sinners that I accept repentance and forgive sins and caution the truthful that they should not be self-centred due to their good deeds because there is no slave who is called for giving the account of his deeds ???and he is not destroyed.

Now that we have known that egotism is prohibited from the viewpoint of traditions, let us discuss some other aspects of it: Worldly and Otherworldly harms of ujb.

What is the sign of ujb?

How it can be cured?

From the viewpoint of worldly life the harms and corrupting effects of egotism are many. We point out four of them that have been mentioned in narrations:

A – Ujb means self-centeredness or egotism. Once man develops this evil he is no more prepared to obtain any benefit from the centres of knowledge or from knowledgeable persons, as he imagines himself on their level and sometimes even above them. Due to this he drags behind in scholarly achievements or in the progress of knowledge. He remains in a state of multiple ignorance forever. So most of us, possibly know a group of them, and in the words of our dear leader of the Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeini (r.a.) which he had uttered in one of his final addresses to the students: Honourable sire! Learn lessons, before your age advance and you turbans expand, because, then it is likely, you may not be ready to attend study circles and benefit from them, even though, sometimes, man knows that lesson is beneficial for him.

The master of the monotheists (a.s.) says:

Egotism prevents progress of knowledge.

He also says: Self-centeredness corrupts ones intelligence.

B – It is but natural that egotism makes a person unpleasant among the people who become displeased with him and do not care for him. So the Imam (a.s.) pointing to this, says: One who is pleased with himself makes many people angry with him. Yes, it must be said that egotism, in every meaning, is a harmful ignorance. Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says: No ignorance and foolishness is more harmful than egotism.

C – Egotism takes man away from reality. Consequently he is not able to benefit from good deeds. For example, once Isa (a.s.) = Isa (a.s.) was travelling with one of his companions. When they reached seashore, Isa (a.s.), with full faith in the Lord of the worlds, uttered the Name of Allah and began to walk on water. The youth accompanying him also took the Name of God with full Faith and walked on water likewise. But, during the walk in the sea, egotism took over the latter youth. So he said to himself proudly: Now how is Isa (a.s.) superior to me? At the very moment he entertained this thought he went down in the water. Hazrat Isa (a.s.) saved him and said: This happened due to egotism in you. If you repent you will return to your earlier condition. The youth repented and gained his earlier status.

D – An egotist mostly has failed and will fail because the Holy Quran, says in regard to the unbelievers: Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth declares the Glory of Allah, and He is the Mighty, the wise. He is who caused those who disbelieved of the followers of the Book to go forth from their homes at the first banishment; you did not think that they would go forth, while they were certain that their fortresses would defend them against Allah; but Allah came to them whence they did not expect, and cast terror into their hearts; they demolished their houses with their own hands and the hands of the believers; therefore take a lesson, O !you who have eyes

The Otherworldly Harm of Egotism

Egotism makes deeds meaningless. The Holy Quran says: Say: Shall we inform you of the greatest losers in their deeds? These are they whose labour is lost in their life and they think that they are well-versed in skill of the work of hands.

And again says: What! Is he whose evil deed is made fair seeming to him so much so that he considers it good is like the one who sees the Truth? Yes, those who think in this way destroy their good deeds, in a way, by casting favour. So says the Holy Quran: O you who believe do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury, like him who spends his property to be seen of men.

We conclude this discussion with a narration from Imam Sadiq (a.s.): Egotism is a plant the

seed whereof is kufr unbelief and its ground is nifaq (disharmony) and its water is oppression and its branches are foolishness and its leaf is waywardness and its fruit is condemnation and dumping in Hell. So whoever adopts egotism has cultivated and sown the see of blasphemy and its cultivation will be discord and know that they are bound to get this fruit.

Sign of Ujb

Obviously the sign of egotism is that one considers oneself better than others and in the Words of the Holy Quran: Nay! Man is evidence against himself, though he puts forth his excuses. And likewise Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: The one who does not recognise the personality of others is the one who is an egotist.

Remedy for Egotism

In reply it must be stated that there are two ways for its remedy: One is abstract and another detailed.

A – Abstract remedy: Man should ponder over the Greatness of the Creator of the Universe. He must understand that Greatness belongs only to Him. He must believe that the only one god is Waajibul Wujood The indispensable Being and that Power and Eternity are only his attributes and that, opposed to it or in comparison smallness and mortality belongs to man himself, he must think over his earlier stages of life, that is, what was he, how many times and through how much dirty passages has he passed and even now he is carrying dirt in himself and finally at the end also he will turn into a carcass.

The Holy Quran describes thus:

Cursed man! How ungrateful is he! Of what thing did He create him? Of a small life-germ; He created him, then He made him according to a measure, Then as for the way -- He has made it easy for him, Then He causes him to die, then assigns to him a grave, Then when he pleases, He will raise him to life again.

Also he should think about his origin that he was dust in the beginning, and then he was turned into semen as the Holy Quran mentions: Who made good everything that He has created, and he began the creation of man from dust. Then he made his progeny of an extract, of water held in light estimation.

Then he should again ponder over his weakness. In this respect the Holy Book says: Allah is he who created you from a state of weakness, then he gave strength after weakness, then ordained weakness and hoary hair after strength; he creates what he pleases, and he is the knowing, the Powerful. As a poet has said: What are we? But nothing in a world of nothingness, nor do we have anything….

And as another poet says: Sometimes animals eat him away, sometimes potter moulds you as he likes once when I hit an axe on the ground, I heard a voice full of pain saying please, I am a scull having eyes and ears. Every face beneath this ground was once an independent personality and every picture was a picture of a prince of his time.

How good would it have been had he been left in that state forever. But he is going to be made live again after some time and he will be made to stand in a fearful forest. That is the time when he says In the words of Quran: O! Would that I were dust.

Detailed Remedy

Sometimes man takes the path of egotism for his elegance and soundness. Its remedy is that he should know that this beauty is not in his hands and many a time it vanishes as a result of an illness. He should also think that after some time when this beauty is grounded in the dust it turns into a carcass abhorred by everyone. So warns the Holy Quran: Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him of the generations those who were mightier in strength than he and greater in assemblage. And the guilty shall not be asked about their faults.

2 – If egotism of man is due to his strength and power, he must remember that this power is inferior even to a microbe. This man becomes humble when confronted even with a mosquito. Summary is that this power and beauty and…. All are from the Creator of this Cosmos and have been given to him as a trust. The Holy Quran explains:

So that it may become clear how he gets out of the bush of trial.

3 – If egotism is based on wisdom and intelligence and abundance of knowledge we ought to know that this is a Divine bounty for which we must be thankful to God. Often even a little illness wipes out all the knowledge of man, which may be much precious. In the words of Allamah Ayatollah Haeri: One of the great scholars of Qua had lost all his intelligence due to an illness to such an extent that he could not remember his path too. Also I have seen one of the great teachers of the university of Qum who had become mad and was leading a strange life. Sometimes when his nerves were at rest, he would hold circles of study wherein students gathered and he replied to their problems quite satisfactorily.

Sometimes it is this same knowledge which brings havoc in man's life. Consequently, he joins circles that anger God. Finally, they reach such a stage about which the Holy Quran says: So his parable is the parable of the dog; if you attack him he lolls out his tongue; and if you leave him alone he lolls out his tongue.

And also says: The likeness of those who were charged with the Tavrat, then they did not observe it, is as the likeness of the ass bearing books. Once Imam (a.s.) said: These are the

highwaymen of the path.

In short, Man must in all the circumstances be mindful of God so that he may get salvation from the evil of carnal desires. 4 – If his egotism is because of his race he must realise that no family relation is loftier than with the progeny of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and this superiority too, as clarified by the faultless Imams (a.s.), is only until man follows their line. This relation loses benefit no sooner than one leaves their path.

And if man feels proud of the power and strength of his forefathers he must know that practically they his elders are bound by their own deeds and their greatness no more returns and as, according to a famous saying: Granted your father was great, but then what good do you get from the greatness of your father? Someone has also said:

I am the child of myself and my surname is also my civility. I may be an Arab or a non-Arab. In fact, brave is the one who says: I not the one who says my father.

5 – If man's pride is due to abundance of wealth and children, firstly, he should know that these are some of the bounties bestowed by Allah and have been entrusted to him for some days by way of a trust for his trial. Also that whenever God sees fit He takes them back. The Holy Quran says: Your possessions and your children are only a trial…

Secondly, if property and children were the cause of man's greatness, God would not have given it to His enemies. But, as we know, they have been in every age, superior to the believers in this respect. Quran quotes them as saying: And they say: We have more wealth and children, and we shall not be punished.

Also, in reference to some of the kings belonging to Bani Israel, quotes: And he possessed much wealth; so he said to his companion, while he disputed with him: I have greater wealth than you, and am mightier in followers.

And with regard to the third says: And were it not that all people had been a single nation, We would certainly have assigned to those who disbelieve in the Beneficent God to make of silver the roofs of their houses and the stairs by which they ascend. And the doors of their houses and the couches on which they recline, And other embellishments of gold; and all this is naught but provision of this worlds life, and the hereafter is with your Lord only for those who guard against evil.

And thirdly, All this wealth and children and…. Are not the cause for final salvation. So, the Holy Quran says: The day on which property will not avail, nor sons Except him who comes to Allah with a heart free from evil.

And again mentions: And not your wealth nor your children, are the things which bring you near us. And many a time the same wealth and possession and leadership becomes the cause of

our misfortune. The Holy Quran says: Do they think that by what we aid them with of wealth and children, We are hastening to them of good things? Nay, they do not perceive.

Again it says: And let not those who disbelieve think that Our granting them respite is better for their souls; We grant them respite only that they may add to their sins; and they shall have a disgraceful chastisement.

In her sermon in front of Yazid in Syria Zaynab e Kubra (a.s.) resorted to this verse and thereby pointed out that the verse applied to people like him Yazid. So it is understood from the verses of the Holy Quran that the Lord Almighty, cautions criminals in case they have not been drowned in the sea of sins and, in order to awaken them, by describing the reactions of their misdeeds and their penalties so that they way return to the true path.

These are those who still have the capacity to be guided and deserve Gods Mercy and hence their restlessness is considered a bless for them as we read in the Holy Quran: Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have wrought, that He may make them taste a part of that which they have done, so that they may return..

But in case of those who have drowned themselves in sins and have extended their disobedience and rebellion and mischief to its extremity, God leaves them to their state and, idiomatically, provides them a vast field so that their backs may be overloaded with sins and thereby make themselves liable to maximum punishment. They are those who have burnt all bridges behind them and have left no avenue for returning, have torn off all barriers of modesty depriving themselves totally of every qualification to be guided by Divine Light.

Now, how good if man gets cautioned from the very beginning and does not suffer such grave illness. The way of it is belittling ones self in such a manner that man does not consider himself at all significant in the face of Divine Commandments of the Lord of the Universe. He misdeeds before his eyes. He should think of the favours of God respectfully. He must feel in his heart that he is nothing and should have a constant feeling of shame. He should remain ever grateful for Gods bounties and must realise that whatever case he has is from HIS favour and Grace. He must never imagine himself worthy of that.

Before other people also he should consider himself little. He must consider others as better than himself. Imam Baqir (a.s.) has said: He should consider the aged better than him thinking that they have obeyed God more. Likewise he must consider the youngsters as better as they committed fewer sins. Not only this, he must imagine that those about whose faults he knows are also better than him because of the possibility that they might have repented or that their end will be good as the end in unknown. Again he must understand that all those who reached the position of Prophethood or Imamat or other lofty status were none but those who had

considered themselves lowly and weak.

As the poet has said: Learn lowliness if you are in search of grace because a high land never obtains water. At the end of this discussion we beg from God so that HE may guide us whereby we may turn ourselves into good men.

Pride and Its Kinds

Pride is man's attitude of considering himself better than others and this attribute is one of the calamities called egotism and self-centeredness. When man exposes or expresses this feeling of imagining himself better than others it is called or pride or haughtiness.

Sometimes this pride makes one stand up against Truth and signs of God and HIS Messengers and sometimes against Gods slaves other people and many a time it so happens that if such a proud man does not try to improve his inner self he even turns into a disbeliever.

Regarding the first kind, verses so describe: Surely those who are too proud for my service shall soon enter Hell abased.

2 Your God is One God; so as for those who do not believe in the Hereafter, their hearts are ignorant and they are proud. Truly Allah knows what they hide and what they manifest; surely HE does not love the proud. And when it is said to them, what is it that your Lord has revealed? They say:

Stories of the ancients.

3-What; whenever then an apostle came to you with that which your souls did not desire, you were insolent so you called some liars some you slew. And they said: What! Shall we believe in two mortals like ourselves while their people serve us?

And if you obey a mortal like yourselves, then most surely you will be losers. And they say: Why was not this Quran revealed to a man of importance in the two towns?

And when they said: O Allah! if this is the Truth from Thee, then rain upon us stones from heaven or inflict us a painful punishment. About this verse, Allamah Tabarsi quotes Imam Sadiq (a.s.): After the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) appointed Ali (a.s.) to caliphate at Ghadir-e-Khumm and said: MAN KUNTU MAULAAHU FA ALIYUN MAULAHU this matter spread everywhere. Noman bin Haaris Qahri who was a hypocrite came to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and said: You asked us to give witness to the oneness and ordered us to perform jihad, prayers, fasting, zakat and we accepted all of it. But you did not remain contented at that and made this boy he meant Ali bin Abi Talib (a.s.) you caliph and said: MAN KUNTU ….. Is this word from your calf or is it the command of Allah?

They Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) replied: By Allah except whom there is not Deity, it is from GOD,

Noman returned saying: O Allah: if this is the truth from Thee, then rain upon us stones from heaven. Soon thereafter a stone fell upon him and he was killed.

This Hadith does not come into conflict with the aforesaid verse that was revealed before Ghadir because the cause of its revelation was not the event of Noman but Noman had, in his enmity, referred to extracted from the verse which was revealed earlier. This is like our prayers wherein we quote the Holy Quran and say: RAB BA NAA AA TINAA ….

But regarding the second kind: Showing pride against people slaves of God is also Haraam and, in this regard, the Holy Quran quotes the words of Luqman like this:

And do not turn your face away from people in contempt, nor go about in the land exulting overmuch,; surely Allah does not love any self-conceited boaster.

2 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) says: One who has eve an atom size pride in his heart will never enter Paradise. They asked: O Messenger of Allah: Some of us do desire to wear good clothes and perform good jobs. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) replied: In fact, Allah is beautiful and HE likes beauty and nicety but what is pride is to reject the truth and to consider others lower than ones self.

3- Imam Baqir (a.s.) said: Pride and Greatness are the attributes of God and one who becomes proud stands against the Divine attribute of Greatness. 4- Imam Baqir (a.s.) said: Greatness is the cover cloth of God. Whoever takes any part therefrom will be thrown into Hell by God.

5- Imam Baqir and Sadiq (a.s.) have said: Anyone who has the minutest particle of pride in his heart will not enter paradise.

6- Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: Proud people will, on the Day of Judgement, arrive in the field of gathering in the from of ants and they will continue to be crushed under feet until God concludes taking account of all.

7- The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Tomorrow on the Day of Judgement most condemned people will be the proud people.

Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.) said: I am astonished by the behaviour of the son of Adam. His beginning was semen and his end will be a corpse and during his lifetime too he carries dirt and yet becomes proud.

Though there are many narrations in this regard we suffice with there few and hope that Almighty God will all of us away from this and from all other evil attribute.

Now that we have known the impermissibility of pride we restart with some other discussion about Takabbur.

Causes and Reasons of Pride

The problems which may cause pride are:

A – Sometimes knowledge and wisdom ends in this attribution whereby a man imagines oneself greater and higher than others. Of course this happens when man has not improved himself. Otherwise, if one takes into account the dimensions of spirit, the more his knowledge increases the more he imagines himself to be low and considers all others to be better than him.

B – And sometimes 'worship' becomes the cause of pride when man sees that he is a worshipping and obedient man and that others are not like that. As a result, a kind of pride is created within himself. So that is better is that such a man should ponder that it is possible that the deeds which, according to his thinking are good may not lead him anywhere as has been mentioned in a verse of the Holy Quran: -

"Say: Shall we inform you of the greatest losers in (their) deeds? (These are) they whose labour is lost in this world's life and they think that they are well versed in skill of the work of hands." (Kahn: 103 – 104).

Again it is possible that may be some of the good deeds of a man become void due to some other bad deeds done by him, leaving him nowhere.

C – And sometimes it is possible a man shows pride because of his 'lineage', forgetting the fact that lineage does not benefit a man because one day a man came to the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) and narrated nine of his forefathers' names by way of pride. The Holy Prophet (saw's.) said: do not you know that the tenth of them is you and will be in the hell?

And if we feel proud of our ancestors we must know that our origin is from dust as mentions the holy Quran:

"Who made good everything that He has created, and He began the creation of man from dust. Then He made his progeny of an extract, of water held in light estimation." (Sandal: 7 – 8).

The holy Quran says that the differences of tribes are for recognition and they do not bring any distinction for man. "O you men! Surely we have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is Knowing, Aware." (Hujarat: 13).

D – "Power and Courage" cause pride. First man must know that if the proof of personality is his strength then some of the animals may be more strong and courageous than us. Secondly man, in the face of illnesses, is so much weak that, as you see, he begins to shiver as a result of mere fever.

The Holy Quran says:

“Allah is He Who created you from a state of weakness then He gave strength after weakness, then ordained weakness and hoary hair after strength; He creates what He pleases, and He is the Knowing, the Powerful.” (Rum: 54).

E – And if the cause is pride, power and kingdom then we should know that, it is not only no part of human being, but no kind of assurance of its continuity is available to us. How many were the people who got up in the morning but could not maintain their kingdom till night or could not pass the night with power till next morning. Hence one of the poets sang about Naadirshaah:-

(When night fell he was wearing a crown on his head but when it dawned he had neither crown nor head. A single turn of the heaven showed Naadir was not there what to talk of his kingdom.

2 – Kinds of Pride

The above quoted verses and narrations show that there are three kinds of pride:

Pride or arrogance in front of the Creator of the Heaven and the earth.

Ego against the Messengers of God.

Haughtiness in front of the slaves of Allah.

3 – Grades of Pride

And the grades of pride too can be divided into three:

1 – This vice takes root in the heart of man and then his words and deeds make it known that he considers himself better than others.

2 – He does not express from his tongue but practically he considers himself to be higher than others.

3 – Man fights against this vice that has occupied his heart. So its signs are not traceable in his words and deeds. This is less dangerous than the earlier two types of pride. Yet, we must, under all circumstances, seek shelter in Allah, the ONLY ONE GOD, so that He may save us from the evil of our own soul.

4 – Signs of Pride

One of the signs of pride is that man imagines that he is better than others and is not ready to accept the truth. So it is quoted from Imam Sadiq (a.s.):

“Pride is to consider people low and truth to be light (weightless)” (Kafi, 2: 310).

And it is also related from Imam Sadiq (a.s.):

“Addressing Hafs he said: If a man considers himself to be better than others he can be considered to be proud. Hafs asks: What if a man considers himself better as he does not commit sin whereas others are sinning? Imam (a.s.) replied: Alas, Alas. It is possible that fellow is pardoned and he repents but you are kept in eye for being presented before God for

accounting. Have you not heard the story of Moosa (a.s.) and the magicians? (That they repented and were considered as true faithful). (Bihaar 73: 206, 226, 233).

And it has been mentioned that, according to the impeccable Imam (a.s.), the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) once passed by a group of people who had gathered round a man. He asked: What is the matter? They replied: O Prophet of Allah! This man is mad. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: He is not mad. He has a soul related (spiritual) problem or illness. If you want to know who is really mad I must say that mad or lunatic is a man who walks with ego and pride and wonders at his own opinion, while walking moves his shoulders arrogantly and hopes for heaven (paradise) from God (and also) no one has been safe from his evil and no one hopes anything good from him. This kind of man is mad or lunatic and the one who you think mad is a victim of spiritual ailment.

Sometimes signs of pride can be seen from the manner of speaking, sitting or walking of people. Also sometimes such person desires that a group of people should follow him or that others should stand like slaves in front of him. These are the signs of proud and arrogant people. It was due to this that the manner of sitting of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) was such that, most of the time, he did not look like the president of the assembly. Sometimes, while walking o road, he used to say: Some of you may walk ahead. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) used to walk behind them. (Bihar 73:206,226,233).

All that has been mentioned above was about pride. But what is the most important of all is man himself who should know what is his task:

5 – Harm of Pride

A – Whenever man imagined himself to be above others he stayed back from acquiring knowledge and wisdom and fell deep down in the pot of multiple ignorance. And as he is not prepared to consult others even form the worldly viewpoint he many a time, gets loaded with losses. So much so that sometimes he loses even his kingdom and family like, Khusro Parvez and Aboo Lahab and Rezashah Pahelvi and ……

B – Pride brings man down in the eyes of God and HIS creation. The Holy Prophet (SAW) is reported to have said: “Most hated persons are the proud ones. It is also narrated: “Man yastakbir….”

“The one who is proud is degraded by God”.

6 – The Way of Remedying Pride

In the face of this ailment of the soul or spirit what should one do and in what way it should be driven away? To get rid of this illness it is necessary to follow some prescriptions:

Firstly: He should think what was he, what he is and what will be he? Man’s first and last is

obvious. Practically too he is hot the master of himself. Is it proper on his part to be arrogant or proud? He must ponder more over this.

Secondly: He must study carefully the verses and traditions condemning this vice and always remember he same.

Thirdly: He must keep its harms in mind so that the disease is removed fully.

Fourthly: He should practically fight with desires and crush them and for that purpose he should do that which is not pleasing to the heart. 7 – What Should Society Do While Confronting the Arrogant?

The judgment of intelligence or reason and the order of religion is that to assist or help anyone in anything wrong or evil is sin, ugly, disobedience of God and hence all means should be utilized so as to remove injustice and oppression and sins. The Holy Prophet (S) is reported to have said:

"Izaa ……"

"Whenever you meet with the courteous of my community be humble before them and show pride against the arrogant". (Akhlaaq e Bashar, p.172). Also we read in a well known tradition:

"At ta kab bur…."

"Showing pride (toughness) while facing the arrogant is a kind of worship. 8 – Who shows pride?

Generally those who suffer from inferiority complex show pride and imagine themselves to be better than others. What man understands is that, pride or arrogance is the result of meanness and ignobility of man. It is recorded from Imam Sadiq (a.s.): "Maa min ……."

"Man does not show arrogance but due to the abjectness which he finds in himself". (Kafi, 2:312). In another hadith we read: "Maa min rajulin…." "No man exhibits pride and arrogance .(except because of the weakness which hi sees in himself". (Ibid

Love of Status and Fame

Doubtlessly love for status and fame is one of the attributes, which often destroys homes and Kingdoms. Similarly it also takes away his religion and the world from man. If one does not improve oneself from the very beginning, by the time he attains governance or power, his entire aim become to rule over people and not to better and develop his community. So when Mu'awiyah arrived in Kufa and climbed the pulpit he said: I have nothing to do with your prayers and fasting! My desire is to rule over you and I have attained it.

In order to give a better understanding of the subject of love for status and fame, we divide its deliberation into two parts:

1 – The Quranic verses and the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) s and Imams (a.s.) s narrations prohibiting and condemning love and fame and status.

2 – What has been condemned is the love for governance. So in the matter of property and wealth, it is the worldly material love and not the said things in themselves.

Condemnation of the over ambitious in the Quran

A: As for that future abode, We assign it to those who have no desire to exalt themselves in the earth nor to make mischief and the good end is for those who guard against evil.

B: Whoever desires this worlds life and its finery, We will give them in full their deeds therein, and they shall not be made to suffer loss in respect of them. These are they for whom there is nothing but fire in the Hereafter, and what they wrought in it shall go for nothing, and vain is what they do.

C: Whoever desire the gain of the hereafter, We will give him more of that again; and whoever desire the gain of this world, We give him of it, and in the Hereafter he has no portion.

It is very well understood from there verses that in the sight of Quran, love for fame and status is very indecent.

There are many narrations about this. We suffice but with few:

1 – Mummar bin Khalaad says: Imam Moosa bin Ja'far A was asked that man loves power. Imam said: Maa zimbaane…. For a Muslim the loss from love for status is more then the loss of a herd of sheep which does not have a shepherd while it is attacked by two wolves.

2 – Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) said: Whoever desires status and power is destroyed.

3 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: The one who entertains the love for power gets destroyed.

4 – It is written in one of the prohibiting orders of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) Beware! The one who takes up the rule and power of a community will, be brought on the Day of Judgement in such a manner that his hands will be fastened with his neck. Then, if he had acted according to Divine commandments during his rule, Allah will disband his hands. If he had oppressed people he will be taken toward the Hell. How bad is the place that is Hell.

But it must be remembered that the status which has been condemned is when man likes it to be the ruler and had worked for getting it. Otherwise, the status which has been granted by Lord Almighty is not only unobjectionable but it is also very desirable.

Hence the Holy Quran avers in the words quoting the words of Prophet Yusuf Joseph – (a.s.): He said: Place me in authority over the treasures of the land, surely I am a good keeper, knowing well.

Imam Reza (a.s.) said: One who desires to get authority for himself, gets destroyed as the

authority does not befit the one who is not qualified for it.

But some people, despite knowing that others are more qualified for status than him or that they are not suitable for it, want to get power and present themselves in such a way that people may think that they the power seekers intend to serve Islam and Muslims. But these are satanic thoughts who deceives man.

Truly if we have seen that others are more fit that us and that they are more able to perform their duties and yet if we make a show of being of well-wishers of Islam, is all this not a love for power and an attempt to divert people from the path of Islam? And again, what dishonesty is worse than that of a man who does not have any suitability for a post and yet he, by telling hundreds of lies and playing various tricks tries to impose himself on people and usurps the place of the pious, because this does not harm only one person or seize the rights of an individual but it is a big fraud on the entire society and on the coming generation.

Said the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.): We must, in every situation, seek Gods refuge to be safe from the desire of the self and from the evil of satanic suggestions.

Love for the world

What we find in Quranic verses and from the narrations about ambitions for worldly or material things can be explained in three divisions: Ayats and traditions condemning worldly desires. Praise for desiring admissible worldly things and verses and traditions permitting it. Combining the above two ideas.

And we, by the help of Almighty God, quote below verses and narrations explaining the above-mentioned divisions. For detailed study refer to textbooks of Iqtisaad and Islamic comparison of This world and the Hereafter.

Verses condemning materialism

And this worlds life is naught but a play and an idle sport; and certainly the abode of the Hereafter is better for those who guard against evil; do you not then understand?

B: Whoever desires this present life, we hasten to him therein what we please for whomsoever we desire, then We assign to him the Hell; he shall enter it despised, driven away. And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it as he ought to strive and he is a believer; as for these, their striving shall surely be accepted.

C: And this life of the world is nothing but a sport and a play; and as for the next abode, that most surely is the life – did they but know;. D: Know that this worlds life is only sport and play

and gaiety and boasting among yourselves, and a vying in the multiplication of wealth and children, like the rain, whose causing the vegetation to grow, pleases the husbands men; then it withers away so that you will see it become yellow, then it becomes dried up and broken down and in the Hereafter is a severe chastisement and also forgiveness from Allah and his pleasure; and this worlds life is naught but means of deception.

And there are many traditions also about worldly love. For example we quote some below:

1 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: If one passes his day and night having the worldly gains his sole aim God makes him poor and upsets his life and he does not get from the world except that which was destined for him. But id somebody passes his day and nights with the next world hereafter in view almighty Allah makes him needless from heart and manages for his life.

2 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: One who develops more attraction toward worldly things will suffer more restlessness and sorrowful grudge at time of death.

3 – Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.) quotes the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.): The Dinar and Dirham (worldly wealth) has destroyed your predecessors and it will likewise destroy you too.

4 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: There is a harm to the Hereafter in desiring the present world, and there is a loss of the this world in asking for the Hereafter. So let this world be harmed as it is more fir to be harms.

5 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: This world is like river water. The more a thirsty person drinks of it the thirstier he feels and finally gets killed.

6 – Amirul Mo-mineen (a.s.) said: If man will see how speedily his death is coming toward him he will abhor ambitions and will give up admiring the world.

These are some examples from many narrations condemning the world.

Ayats and Traditions Praising the World

1 – Imam Moosa bin Ja'far (a.s.) said: Every person who strives to obtain Halaal sustenance or provision is like a fighter in the path of God.

2 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: Three groups of people will enter the paradise without accounting: 1: A just ruler, 2: A truthful trader, 3: An old man who spent his life in the way of Allah.

3 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Worship is of seventy kinds. The best of them is earning permissible provision.

4 – Imam Sadiq (a.s.) said: Good is not in one does not like to earn money through permissible path so that he may save his honour and repay his debts.

5 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: The one who makes efforts to earn money to maintain his family is like the one who has fought in the way of God.

6 – The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: It is the compulsory duty of every Muslim man and

woman to seek permissible Halaal provision.

And these are samples from tens of narrations calling upon a Muslim to strive for getting his provision and maintenance.

Conclusion: If one pays the least attention to these narrations one can conclude that what has been condemned is:

1 – Affection for world: Therefore we read in Traditions: The seed of every trouble is love for world.

2 – Happiness with worldly wealth: And they rejoice in this worlds life, and this worlds life is nothing compared to the Hereafter but a temporary enjoyment.

3 – The world which becomes the cause of indulging in playfulness: so we read in the Quran: O you who believe! let not your wealth, or your children, divert you from the remembrance of Allah, and whoever does that, these are the losers.

4 – giving preference to world over Hereafter: We read in Quran: Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your mates and your kinsfolk and property which you have acquired, and the slackness of trade which you fear and dwellings which you like, are dearer to you than Allah and His Apostle and striving in His way, then wait till Allah brings about his Command; and Allah does not guide the transgressing people.

5 – Amassing wealth and being stingy in expense: The Holy Quran says: and as for those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah's way, announce to them a painful chastisement on the Day when it shall be heated in the fire of hell, then their foreheads and their backs shall be branded with it; this is what you hoarded up for yourselves, therefore taste what you hoarded.

6 – Selling the Hereafter in exchange of this world: This has been condemned. The opposite of it has been praised as we read in the Holy Quran: These are they who buy the life of this world for the Hereafter, so their chastisement shall not be lightened nor shall they be helped. And in narrations too we read: Do not buy this world in exchange of your Hereafter.

7 – Extravagance: it is said in the Quran: eat of its fruit when it bears fruit, and pay the due of it on the day of its reaping, and do not act extravagantly; surely He does not love the extravagant. Difference between extravagance and waste: Waste applies to mindless expending and it is extravagance when the expending is more than the limit of moderation.

8 – Restraint in spending: Hazrat Ali (a.s.) says: O son of Adam: In whatever you have earned beyond your needs, you are a trustee treasurer of other.

9 – Not to rely on the world: Surely those who do not dope in our meeting and are pleased with this worlds life and are content with it, and those who are heedless of our communications: As

.for those, their abode is the fire because of what they earned

Praise for benefiting from the permissible things in the world

Hazrat Ali (a.s.) once heard a man condemning the world. He said: O the one who condemns the world who has been tricked by the conspiracies of the world and has been fooled by its deceptions! Do you get deceived by the world and again condemn it? Know that the world is the house of truth, for the one who can understand, it is a centre of needlessness for the one who saves from it and it is a place of advice and admonition for the one who has the qualification for getting admonition. It is the place for prostration for the friends of God and a place of seeking pardon of God for the angles of God and the place for the coming down of the Divine Revelation and a trade center for the companions of God who earned Divine mercy .therein and profited by paradise

The world which is beneficial for the Hereafter

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) said: Being needless is good and befitting for the God fearing. It has been recorded from Hazrat Ali: The good of this world and the Hereafter is in two attributes: needlessness and Piety freedom from want and Fear of God and the evil of the present world and the next life is in two attributes: poverty neediness and sins.

From this discussion we conclude that there is no contradiction between the ayats and Traditions of the first and second kind. In other words we come to know that denial of the world applies when what is mentioned above applies to it. Otherwise, as the first subject topic .this world is both Grace and Mercy of God for the pious and the Faithful