

Light Upon Light

Towards Correcting Our Beliefs and Practices

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Quran

“And whosoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad), and transgresses His limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment.”
(An-Nisaa 4:14)

Hadith

Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Truly, what is lawful is evident, and what is unlawful is evident, and in between the two are matters which are doubtful which many people do not know. He who guards against doubtful things keeps his religion and honour blameless, and he who indulges in doubtful things indulges in fact in unlawful things, just as a shepherd who pastures his flock round a preserve will soon pasture them in it. Beware, every king has a preserve, and the things Allah has declared unlawful are His preserves. **Beware, in the body there is a flesh; if it is sound, the whole body is sound, and if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt, and behold, it is the heart.**"

[Bukhari & Muslim].

The Pillars of Kufr are Four

Shaykhul Islaam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah

"The pillars of Kufr (i.e. disbelief and disobedience) are Four:

1. **Kibr** i.e. arrogance, which prevents him from submission, (to the command of Allah)
2. **Hasad** i.e. jealousy, which prevents him from accepting advice and giving it.
3. **Ghadab** i.e. anger, which prevents him from being just.
4. **Sha`wah** i.e. lowly desires, which prevents him from devoting himself totally to worship.

Hence, if the pillar of arrogance is removed then it becomes easy to submit, and if the pillar of jealousy is removed then it becomes easy for him to accept naseehah (i.e. advice) and to give advice. If the pillar of anger is removed then it becomes easy for him to be just and humble himself and if the pillar of lowly desires is removed then it becomes easy for him to be patient, chaste and devote himself to worship. Every imprudent characteristic derives from these four. And when these characteristics settle in his heart they will cause him to see falsehood as truth and to see truth as falsehood. To see Ma`roof (i.e. good) as Munkar (i.e. evil) and evil as good, and it brings him closer to the life of this world and pushes the hereafter further from him.

Uprooting strong and power mountains from their places is easier than removing these four characteristics from the heart of an individual who is tested with them. This proves especially true when these characteristics become firmly rooted and embedded in an individual to the point they become second nature, for when an individual reaches this point it is almost impossible for him to do any good deeds, nor would he purify himself with them if he were to perform any acts of good. The more he strives diligently to perform acts of good the more his actions are corrupted by these four characteristics.

If you reflect on the disbelief of the past nations, you will find that it derived from one of these four pillars, and it was due to one of these four that they were punished. However, the severity of the punishment was dependant on the degree and extent of these pillars with those nations. So, whoever adorns himself with these pillars then he subjects himself to all types of evil consequences, in the life of this world and in the hereafter. And whoever avoids them, distances himself from all types of evil, because these characteristics prevent him from Inqiyad (i. e. submission), Ikhlas (i.e. sincerity), Tawbah (i.e. repentance), accepting the truth, giving advice to the Muslims and humbling himself to Allah and to His creation.

These characteristics emerge due to the slave's ignorance of his Lord, and his ignorance of his own self-worth or value. If he truly knew his Lord with all of His lofty characteristics and was truly aware of his own short-comings and deficiencies, he would not have a reason to be arrogant nor seek retribution for himself, nor would he be jealous of anyone because of what Allah has given them, because in reality, jealousy is a type of enmity or hostility towards Allah, primarily because the slave hates the fact that Allah has bestowed upon one of his servants a particular blessing and he ardently desires that this blessing be taken away from him. So he actually oppose and contests the decree of Allah and he deems the blessing of Allah to this slave to be unjust and dislikes for him what Allah loves for him. And it was because of this characteristic that Iblis became the enemy of Allah, i.e. his arrogance and jealousy.

Hence, to replace these two hideous and evil characteristics with sound knowledge of Allah and His uniqueness and being pleased with Him as your Lord and turning towards Him for assistance in all of his affairs, and replacing anger with true knowledge of himself and his value, and the fact that he does not have the right to get angry and seek retribution for himself, because in this is giving precedence to himself over the pleasure of his Lord and expressing anger towards his Lord, who originated him.

(continued on other side...)

Pillars of Kufr Continued...

And the greatest thing which would assist him in ridding himself of this characteristic is to condition himself to get angry for the pleasure of Allah and to be pleased for the pleasure of Allah. And every time he gets angry or is pleased for the pleasure of Allah then anger and pleasure for other than Him will be obliterated, and the opposite is the same.

However, the cure for his lowly desires is sound knowledge and understanding that his obedience to his lowly desires is the greatest reason or hindrance for him attaining satisfaction, and his abstaining from these lowly desires is the greatest reason and means by which he can attain satisfaction. So every time he sets out to attain satisfaction by following his lowly desires he actually pushes himself further away from achieving this satisfaction, and the more he avoids his lowly desires, the closer he is to attaining the satisfaction he is looking for in the most complete manner.

So Ghadab (i.e. anger) is like a predator, the minute you turn your attention away from it, it will eat you alive.

And Shah`wah (i.e. lowly desires) is like fire, the moment he ignites it, it will begin to burn him alive.

And Kibr (i.e. arrogance) is like arguing with a king about his possession, either he will kill you because of this, or just deprive you of it.

And Hasad (i.e. jealousy) is like showing enmity and hatred towards someone who is more powerful than you.

The one who can control his lowly desires and his anger will remove the Shaytan from his midst. And the one whose lowly desires and anger overtakes him deprives himself from the shade and protection of Allah.

(Ref: Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah [*rahimahullah*] in his *Fawa'id ul-Fawa'id*, page 288, translated by Brother Shadeed Muhammad, Abu az-Zubayr and taken from <http://www.madeenah.com/article.cfm?id=1260>)

Expecting the mercy of Allah

There once lived a pious man who was enslaved to a wicked master. The righteous slave wanted to teach his master a lesson that he would not forget, a lesson that would make him change his ways.

The Master told him one day to plant wheat. The slave took the opportunity. He went and collected seeds of barley and planted them. As the season drew near, the master was enraged to see that after all this work and time the slave had planted the wrong seed. In his thrashing rage, he scolded the slave saying, "Why did you do this?"

The righteous slave said, "I had hope that the barley seeds would come out as wheat."

The Master said, "How can you plant barley seeds and expect it to come out as wheat?"

The slave stopped and said quietly, "How can you disobey Allah and expect for His bounteous mercy? How can you openly challenge his Deen and hope for Jannah."

The Master was stunned and silent. He understood. "You have taught me something today that I had never realized. You are free for the sake of Allah."

Names of Allah

Al-'Aliyy (the Exalted), al-A'laa (the Most High). He is the One Who is completely exalted in all aspects, in His essence, in His status, in His attributes and in His dominion. He is the One Who rose over the Throne and Who dominates all things. In all the attributes of might, pride, glory and beauty that are ascribed to Him, He reaches the ultimate level.

Al-'Azeez (the Almighty), to whom belong all might and power, the power of strength, the power of dominion, the power of invincibility. None of His creatures can harm Him. He has subjugated all that exists, and the whole of creation is under His control and is subject to His might.

Question & Answer

Question: I know that Hajj is not obligatory for one who owes a debt. Does this apply to one who has long-term debts? Some people may have mortgages which it will take a lifetime to pay off. Do they have to perform Hajj?.

Answer: Praise be to Allaah.

A debt which is due now takes precedence over Hajj, because this obligation comes before Hajj. So he should pay off the debt and do Hajj. If he has nothing left after paying off the debt, then he should wait until Allaah makes him independent of means. If it is a long-term debt to be paid off at a future date, and the person feels confident that he will be able to pay it on the agreed date, then in this case the debt does not mean that Hajj is not obligatory for him, whether the lender gives him permission or not. If there is no guarantee that he will be able to pay it off as agreed, then he should wait until the date for the payment comes.

Based on that we say: if a person owes a debt to the mortgage fund, if he knows that when the time comes he will pay his debt, then Hajj is obligatory for him, even if he owes a debt.

Fataawa Ibn 'Uthaymeen, 21/96

It is reported from 'Alî b. Abî Tâlib –Allah be pleased with him – that he said:

"The thing I fear for you most is following desires and having extensive hopes (about this worldly life). Following one's desires blocks you from the truth, and having extensive hopes makes you forget the hereafter. Verily, this worldly life is departing and the hereafter is approaching and each of them has its children. So be children of the hereafter, not children of this world, for today there are (opportunities to do) deeds and there is no reckoning, but tomorrow there will be reckoning and no deeds."

Quoted by Al-Bukhârî, *Al-Sahîh*, *The Book of Raqâ'iq* without the first sentence. Reported in its entirety by Abû Nu'aym, *Hilyah Al-Awliyâ'* Vol.1 p40, and others.