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7) Strengthen Your Heart With Certainty

“ وَقَوَّهِ بِالْيَقِينِ ”

Certainty or conviction is a decisive, stable, mental state in accordance with reality and unperishable which gives peace and quiet to the man of conviction, this conviction being related to knowledge about God or related to other matters of belief. [1](#)

This kind of conviction which is beyond the usual belief and knowledge and in Khwaja Nasr's understanding of the term, consists of two kinds of knowledge: the knowledge of what is known, and the knowledge that its converse is impossible. It is in fact, the source of strength in human spirit, and this is emphasized by Imam 'Ali (as).

[The Importance And Value Of Certainty](#)

Certainty or conviction is a valuable capital which is given to only few people. Anybody possessing this, enjoys great prosperity.

Imam Reza (as) has stated:

الإِيمَانُ فَوْقَ الْإِسْلَامِ بِدَرَجَةٍ وَالتَّقْوَى فَوْقَ الْإِيمَانِ بِدَرَجَةٍ وَالْيَقِينُ فَوْقَ التَّقْوَى بِدَرَجَةٍ وَلَمْ يُقَسَّمْ بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ شَيْءٌ أَقْلُ
"مِنَ الْيَقِينِ"

"Faith is one degree above Islam; God-wariness is one degree above faith. Certainty is one degree above God-wariness. Nothing less than certainty is divided among God's believers" [2](#)

The narrator says: I heard Imam as-Sadiq (as) saying:

"إِنَّ الْعَمَلَ الدَّائِمَ القَلِيلَ عَلَى اليَقِينِ أَفْضَلُ عِنْدَ اللّهِ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ الكَثِيرِ عَلَى غَيْرِ يَقِينٍ"

"Indeed, a small act based on certainty that is performed continually, is better before God than abundant actions not based on certainty"3

He also said:

"إِنَّ اللّهُ بِعَدْلِهِ وَقِسْطِهِ جَعَلَ الرُّوحَ وَالرَّاحَةَ فِي اليَقِينِ وَالرِّضَا وَجَعَلَ الهمَّ وَالْحُزْنَ فِي الشُّكِّ وَالسَّخَطِ"

"With his justice and fairness, God has put tranquility and ease in certainty and satisfaction, and has put sorrow and grief in doubt and displeasure".4

Types Of Certainty

Certainty has degrees. These degrees are referred to in the Qur'an as "certain knowledge", to see with the "eye of certainty" and "certain truth".

The verses 5 and 7 of Surah al-Takathur: ***"Nay! If you had known with certain knowledge, you should most certainly have seen Hell; then you shall most certainly see it with the eye of certainty"***

"كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ اليَقِينِ ... ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ اليَقِينِ"

refer to the first and second degrees respectively and verse 95 of Surah al-Waqi'ah:

"إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ حَقُّ اليَقِينِ"

"..Most surely this is a certain truth," refers to the third degree of conviction.

'Ilm Al-Yaqin (Certain Knowledge)

This is reasoning-based certainty. It is reached through reasoning with majors and minors. For instance, we are convinced that fire exists when we observe the smoke, or the reasoning which takes place to prove God's existence

"سُنُّرِهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ"

"We will soon show them Our signs in the universe and in their own souls, until it will become quite clear to them that it is the truth".⁵

'Ayn Al-Yaqin [To See With The Eye Of Certainty]

This is conviction derived by observing the thing itself: for example, observing the fire itself.

Haqq Al-Yaqin [Certain Truth]

This kind of conviction is arrived by touching the thing itself, i.e., a connection to the thing and adopting its characteristics, for instance, entering the fire and feeling its heat or extinction in God, and dissipation in His love.

In the sanctified tradition we read:

مَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَا يَزَالُ الْعَبْدُ يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتَّى أُحِبَّهُ فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ
كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ وَبَصَرَهُ الَّذِي يُبْصِرُ بِهِ وَلِسَانَهُ الَّذِي يَنْطِقُ بِهِ وَيَدَهُ الَّتِي يَبْطِشُ بِهَا، إِنْ دَعَانِي أَجَبْتُهُ وَإِنْ
سَأَلَنِي أَعْطَيْتُهُ

"My servant does not approach Me with anything dearer to Me than what I have made incumbent on him. He continues to approach Me through supererogatory acts until I love him. When I love him, I become his hearing through which he hears, his sight through which he sees, his tongue through which he speaks and his hand through which he strikes. If he calls on me I answer him, and if he asks me I give him."

Fayd Kashani has told the following poem regarding this issue:

You were with me. I did not consider you as I myself,

Or perhaps you were me and I didn't know;

When I departed, I recognized you,

As far as you were me, I didn't know.

Another poet has said, regarding this:

So much I thought about you, I became entirely you,

You came gradually, and I slowly departed.

The Effects and Signs of certainty

Parallel with the degrees of certainty, there exist different effects and signs for it. Those who are at the stage of *Haqq al-Yaqin* enjoy a better degree of recognition and high temperaments. They can perform extraordinary feats. They who live at the other two degrees of certainty (i.e.) *'Ilm al-Yaqin* and *'Ayn al-yaqin*, naturally enjoy fewer advantages.

The writer of "Misbah al-Shari'ah" writes, Imam Sadiq (as) has said: "Certainty raises the status of the man to a lofty one, and the Great Prophet of Islam (S), hearing that Jesus Christ (as) had walked over water, replied: 'If Jesus enjoyed greater certainty, he would have walked on air as well'".

This statement depicts the lofty degree of certainty.

All Prophets are not on the same footing. Some who have more certainty are of higher status.

As the Prophets enjoy different degrees of certainty, so do the believers. A man who enjoys a better degree of certainty, naturally sees power and might only in the hands of Allah and insists on worshipping Him both publicly and in private. Existence or lack of it, more or less, appreciation or depreciation, glory or abjectness is equal for him...."[6](#)

The Young Man Of Certainty Who Knew The Secrets

In his book "The truth behind Faith and Certainty," al-Kulayni reports two traditions on the issue of the extraordinary effects of certainty. It seems both cases refer to a single person. However because of the significance of the issue, both are given here:

1. Ishaq b. 'Ammar says: I heard Imam Sadiq (as) saying: The Prophet (S) performed the Morning Prayer with people. He saw among the crowd a young man who was dozing off and his head was leaning towards his breast. His skin was yellow, his body thin, and his eyes deep in his skull. The Prophet (S) asked him: "O young man, how did you spend last night"? He replied: "O Messenger of Allah, I spent it with certainty". The Prophet (S) was surprised at his reply. Then, he told the youth: "For each certainty, there is a truth. What is the truth behind your certainty"?

He answered: "These are the effects and consequences of my certainty: It has made me sad; it keeps me awake for night prayers; it has made me go on fasting during the day. I have become disinterested in the worldly affairs. It is as if now I saw my God in the sky. I realize He is after the affairs of people. People, it seems, are gathering in the Doom's Day, I am among them, I feel. It seems as if I saw the inhabitants of paradise enjoying the blessings and having good time. It seems as if I saw the inhabitants of Hell crying and asking for help. It is as if I heard the noise of the people of Hell".

Then the Prophet (S), hearing these statements, told his followers: "God has illuminated this man's heart with light". Then he told the youth: "Continue with this state of mind."

Then the youth said, "O Messenger of Allah, ask God to make me a martyr in your holy wars. The Prophet (S) prayed for him. Some time later, he joined one of the prophet's holy wars and was the ninth martyr in that war."[7](#)

2. Abu Basir narrates from Imam Sadiq (as) who said, 'The Prophet (S) saw Harith Ibn Malik Ibn Nu'man al-Ansari, and asked him: "How are you, Harith"?

He replied: "I am a true believer". The Prophet (S) said. "For everything there is a truth. What is the truth beyond your speech"?

He answered, "O Messenger of Allah, I lack interest in this world. At night, I am awake for prayers, during the days, due to fasting and the heat, I am extremely thirsty. It is as if I saw my God in the Heaven. He is there to keep people accountable for what they do. I see the people of paradise meeting each other. It seems as if I heard the groans of the people of Hell."

The Prophet (S) said, regarding this youth: "He is God's servant whose heart has become illuminated by Him". Then, he told the youth: "You have got the insight. Be steady and firm."

The youth told the Prophet (S): "Please ask God to make me one of the martyrs among your army". The Prophet (S) asked God to provide Harith with martyrdom.

Some time later Harith was among the army dispatched for war. He killed 8 persons and then was martyred."[8](#)

[Some Other Examples Of The Signs Of The Effects Of Certainty](#)

Anybody, who gets the elixir of certainty at his disposal and employs it in his belief and practical daily affairs, will have peculiar excellent spiritual moods and will perform extraordinary works, some of which are mentioned here:

[A\) Godwariness](#)

The people of certainty enjoy Godwariness about which Imam 'Ali (as) has said:

التَّقْوَى تَمَرَّةُ الدِّينِ وَأَمَارَةُ الْيَقِينِ

"Godwariness is the fruit of religion and the sign of certainty."[9](#)

The Great Prophet of Islam, too, talks about Godwariness which is one of the signs of certainty: "There are six signs for the person of certainty: He has certainty of God, thus believes in Him. He is certain that death is true, thus he is wary of it.

He is certain that the Resurrection is true; therefore, he is fears the humiliation (of that day). He is certain that Paradise is true; therefore, he yearns for it. He is certain that the Hell fire is true; therefore, he strives to save himself from it. He is certain that the accountability on the Day of Judgment is true; therefore, he is takes account of himself".[10](#)

B) He Gets Rid Of Deceiving Hopes

Imam 'Ali (as), regarding this, says: "Anybody who is sure that he will separate from friends, that he will be put under the ground, that he will be accountable on the Day of Judgment for what he has done, that what he leaves behind will not help him in the future, that he will need what he has sent in advance, should shorten his far-fetched whims and desires and add to his good deeds"[11](#)

C) He Is Patient And Disasters Seem Easy To Him

Imam 'Ali (as) has said,

"الصَّبْرُ ثَمْرَةُ الْيَقِينِ"

"Patience is the fruit of certainty"[12](#)

Imam 'Ali (as) has also stated:

"سِلَاحُ الْمُؤْمِنِ، الصَّبْرُ عَلَى الْبَلَاءِ وَالشُّكْرُ فِي الرَّخَاءِ"

"The weapon of a believer is patience during trials and being thankful at the time of ease."[13](#)

Imam 'Ali (as) in the same letter (No 31) advises his son Imam Hasan (as) in the following way: "With the help of patience and certainty, make sorrow flee from you."

Imam as-Sajjad (as) in his prayer invokes God: "O God! I ask you to give me conviction; in this way, you will make the hardships of the world seem easy."[14](#)

The word "treasure" in the holy verse

"وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُ كَنْزٌ لَهُمَا"

"And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and there was beneath it a treasure belonging to them [Qur'an 18:82]"

is not meant literally, but it was a slate on which was written; "I am Allah. There is no god but me. Anybody who has certainty in death, does not laugh so broad as to show his teeth; One who has certainty in accountability, is not very happy; and one who has certainty in Divine destiny, does not fear anybody except God." [15](#)

Imam Sadiq (as) as well, has said, "There exists no action without certainty, and there is no certainty

without greeting God with humility and respect."¹⁶

D) Ascent To Divine Fate

Imam 'Ali (as) has stated: "Anybody who is satisfied with Divine Fate, will definitely enjoy good certainty."¹⁷

He has said, as well: "Being happy with God is the result of certainty."¹⁸

Imam Sadiq (as), as well, has said, "Being satisfied with affairs which seems to be troublesome, is of the highest degree of certainty."¹⁹

E) Sincerity

One who believes and has certainty in the origin of the creation, Resurrection, and Islamic education, naturally can not perform his affairs and actions for anybody else except God. Thus, regarding this, Imam 'Ali (as) has said, "The sincerity of your intention is based on the strength of certainty and on the soundness of the intention"²⁰

He has also said, "The reason behind sincerity is certainty."²¹ He has also said, "The sincerity in actions is the result of the strength of certainty."²² He as well has mentioned:

"The people of certainty are the people of sincerity."²³

F) Piety

As certainty includes a lot of advantages, the lack of interest in the world, too, is the result of certainty.

This is clear from a look at Imam 'Ali's statements which follow:

"Certainty has piety as a result"

"Piety is the basis of certainty"

"One who is sure of the Doom's Day, will not be greedy for this world"

"Certainty is the best agent for lack of interest in this world"²⁴

G) Trust and Reliance on Allah

One other result of certainty is the trust and reliance on Allah. Regarding this, Imam 'Ali (as) says: "With trust in Allah we reach certainty." He also says: "Trust in God stems from the strength of certainty."

That also has said, "The truth of belief exists in the trust in God."²⁵

¹ . Jami' al-Sa'adat, vol. 1, p. 119.

² . Usul al-Kafi, vol. 2, pp.52-57.

³ . Op cit.

⁴ . Usul al-Kafi, vol.2, pp.52-57.

⁵ . Qur'an 41:53.

⁶ . Mulla Abd al-Razzaq Gilani's Sharh Misbah al-Shari'ah wa Miftah al-Haqiqah, p.471; Bihar al-Anwar, vol.70, p. 179.

⁷ . Usul al-Kafi, vol. 2, p.53.

8. . Usul al-Kafi, vol.2, p.54. Mawlana Rumi, in Volume One of the Mathnawi attributes this story to Zayd b. Harithah, and not to Harithah b. Malik. Mawlana writes:

The prophet asked Zayd,
How did you wake up, O loyal friend?
He answered a believer subject to God, He asked again
What are the signs of faith, if they have blossomed?
He answered: I was thirsty for days,
At nights I couldn't sleep because of my love,
He asked: what gifts did you bring us?
Which could be appreciated by people here.
He answered in the same way that people see the sky.
I can see the Heaven dwellers.
All of them I can see like the Doom's Day
Clearly, I see both men and women
Now tell me, shall I continue?
Mustafa hinted to him to be silent [Mathnawi, p.92.]

9. . Ghurar al-Hikam.

10. . Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p.22.

11. . Bihar al-Anwar, vol.73, p. 167.

12. . Ghurar al-Hikam.

13. . Ghurar al-Hikam.

14. . Mizan al-Hikmah, vol.10, p.788.

15. . Bihar, vol.70, p. 182.

16. . Tuhaf al-'Uqul, p.223.

17. . Ghurar al-Hikam.

18. . Op.cit.

19. . Bihar al-Anwar, vol.71, p. 152.

20. . Ghurar al-Hikam.

21. . Op.cit.

22. . Op.cit.

23. . Op. cit.

24. . Ghurar al-Hikam.

25. . Op.cit.

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