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Chapter 23: How Can A Sinner Be Innocent?

Is there a more significant position in the community than that of the leader of that community?

Can anybody without the physical and mental prerequisites ever resume such a position which is considered to be a divine position?

Neither the political leaders, dealing only with the political issues of the country nor the economic leaders dealing only with the economic matters, are ever able to manage the issues of a country.

If this is the case then we should admit that the divine prophets and their genuine successors should have sublime attributes which could strengthen their leadership; Such a sublime position is bestowed upon them because of such magnificent qualities in them.

The required qualities of these leaders could be summed up under the following topics:

1. Immunity against sins.
2. Immunity against errors in learning the divine commands and in propagating them among people.

Before stating the necessity of infallibility in divine leaders, we shall deal with the nature of infallibility and with the techniques of staying flawless.

What is the nature of Infallibility?

Infallibility is an internal power which hinders a person from being engaged in sins.

In other words, it is an internal God-fearing instinct which insures a person vis-à-vis the commitment of sins.

Now, we are faced with the following question: how could a person be immune against all sorts of sins and against the issue of disobedience?

The answer: the avoidance of committing sins depends on the recognition of the consequences of committing sins. This, of course does not mean that any recognition of sins would automatically lead to being infallible. Rather, this recognition should be so vivid as to make clear to man all the abominable consequences of the engaging in sins. In this way, any occurrence of sins in him is absolutely impossible. An analogy is in order here:

Every one of us has mechanisms inside ourselves which keep us out of danger in life-threatening situations.

Take, for example, two bordering countries the soldiers of which are located at the borders watching one another carefully and making use of strong binoculars, projectors and trained dogs. They watch the passage of any living thing across the borders; as soon as one tries to pass he would definitely meet with death.

For this reason no rational man would ever attempt to pass the border; rather he develops a sort of resistance or infallibility inside himself vis-à-vis such an action.

We could even find some more tangible examples. Any rational being would develop some sort of infallibility against taking poison or against touching a naked electric wire; he would never ever engage himself in carrying out such acts. The reason for such avoidance lies in the visualization of the devastating consequences of such acts. The fatal consequences of such acts are so obvious to him and his wisdom that nobody would ever imagine carrying out such abominable and abhorrent acts.

We have seen those who easily take away the possessions of orphans but those who would never bring under their possessions even one small piece of illegal and unlawful items. How come the former carries out such horrifying acts, but the latter hinders himself from doing so?

The reason lies in the fact that the former, either does not believe in the fatal consequences of his wrongdoings, or the presence of transit, mundane whims and desires has drawn such a dark curtain over his rationality that he does not anticipate the evil consequences of such acts; in contrast, the latter group of individuals believe so firmly in the inevitable consequences of sins that they would be equivalent to any piece of the property of the orphan with a lump of hell-fire; now, no rational being would ever dare to eat fire. This is because he would visualize these illegal possessions having turned into burning fire. Thus he has developed in himself a sort of infallibility against engagement in sins.

If the individuals in the first group got such knowledge, they too, like those in the second group would stop confiscating the possessions of orphans.

Concerning those who collect gold and silver but refuse to pay the necessary Islamic taxes the Holy Quran states¹:

يَوْمَ يُحْمَى عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِأَنفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ

On the day when it shall be heated in the fire of hell, then their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded with it; this is what you hoarded up for yourselves, therefore taste what you hoarded.

If some of the gold hoarders could see the consequences of such hoardings and if they were warned of these consequences, they would immediately let go of their hidden treasures.

At times some individuals believe so firmly in the content of this verse without having seen the promised divine punishment that they can visualize the consequences of committing sins. Under such conditions these people would become immune against the sin of hoarding gold and silver; as a result they would stop piling such treasures.

Thus, infallibility is the result of a strong faith and the recognition of consequences.

However, the Prophets are immune against any sin due to their full recognition of the commitment of sins. They have in this way controlled their aggressive instincts and would never trespass God's pre-determined lines.

A point should be brought out here: it is a fact that the Prophets are immune against committing sins. But this would not guarantee that they are always obliged to be obedient to God's orders. Like other people, they too are free to choose among options: whether to sin or to remain innocent. However, through their complete awareness of the consequence of sins, they would stay away from sins. For an example, notice the following: no doubt God is capable of performing any act, both good and evil. However He would never be the initiator of evil acts, which would be against His wisdom and justice.

But if He does not carry out such vicious acts, it does not mean that He is not able to do so.

The innocent ones have a lame feeling towards sins and they would never get themselves involved in sins despite the fact that they could do so.

[1](#) . Quran 9:35.

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