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Home > Knowing God > Effect Of Faith On Morals And Good Behavior > 3. Social Responsibilities

Effect Of Faith On Morals And Good Behavior

Knowing God, prophethood and resurrection are not imaginative and ineffective matters; on the contrary it is faith in the responsibility of creation and with action, and they are interdependent of each other. Faith is like the root of a tree and good deeds are like branches, leaves and fruits of that tree. Faith and belief of conscience cannot be without the effects of deeds. On the contrary they are definitely followed by effects and necessities.

Through the medium of deeds, people can scale the stages of faith. As much strong the faith is; as much will be the effects flowing from it. As less are deeds, the faith would also be as weak. One who expresses faith and religiosity, but the effects of faith is not visible in his deeds; or that he is faithless in his inward being and he makes a show of faith to deceive others or that he is having a very weak faith and he cannot put it into practice.

Faith is the source of deeds, fulfillment of the vow of creation and religious duties. Faith impels man to submit before divine commands in all dimensions of life and to follow the programs and guidance of prophets. In numerous traditions, faith is explained in this way. For example Imam Ali (a.s.) says:

"I asked the Messenger of Allah (S): What is faith? He replied: Testimony by the heart, acceptance by the tongue and action by the physical organs and limbs."1

If faith has really permeated in the heart of man, its effect would be definitely seen in his words and deeds.

The believer in his whole being has accepted Almighty Allah and has faith in His existence. He considers himself answerable before Him and submits before Him and commands of prophets. He has accepted the reality that man and the world are not aimless and in vain and man has not come into existence to end in annihilation.

On the contrary, he has come for the perfection of his soul and to be transferred to the world of the hereafter and to continue his life in that world. He knows that every man is responsible for his own deeds and he would have to account each of his acts in this world. He would in any case have to face the

consequences of his deeds. A believer has faith that death is not the end of life; on the contrary it is transfer from the temporal world to the world of effulgence and joy and an everlasting life in the hereafter.

How can a believer who has such faith be careless and ignorant of good morals, acts and words? Such a belief transforms the life of man in all dimensions and it turns his attention only towards one direction: seeking the pleasure of Allah through following the commands of prophets. Belief lies under the foundation of deeds and affects man in three ways:

1. Morals

A believer has faith in spiritual life and he knows that he can construct and nurture his future personality in this world and that he would be raised with the same on Judgment Day.

If he is righteous, he would be good and successful in the future and if he is evil, he would have a dark and unfortunate future and that is why he always makes efforts to reform his self and purify his being from all sorts of impurities and strives to develop perfect traits of character. He also tries to strengthen his human and ethereal personality and to control his selfish and animal desires.

2. Worship

Since believer has faith in Allah and considers Him as the sole creator and controller of the universe, he submits before His greatness and unlimited power and worships only Him. He assures himself by Allah and remains inclined to Him. He also presents his requests to Him alone and is always seeking His refuge. He begs for His eternal power and through worship and remembrance of Allah, tries to perfect and nurture his self and seeks His proximity.

3. Social Responsibilities

A believer considers the political and social system as the best medium of success in his world and hereafter and regards himself bound to fulfill the duties imposed on him to perfection. When confronted by injustice and oppression, he strives most in establishment of social justice. The believer man regards himself to be connected to the great and unique community of Islam.

He considers greatness and well-being of the community as his personal success and well-being and he takes its weakness and degradation as his personal weakness and degradation. In his view, the members of the Islamic Ummah are parts of his physical body. He is always desirous to impart comfort to them and to maintain their health and also feels their pain and discomfort.

What he desires for himself, the same he desires for other Muslims. What he dislikes for himself, the same he dislikes for others also. As much as he is thoughtful of his personal comfort and prosperity, as

much he tries for the well-being and comfort for others. Like he feels responsible for his own well-being and that of his family members in the same way he feels responsible for the well-being of the united community of Islam and Muslims as social responsibilities also originate from faith and shape an important aspect of Islam. A faith, which sends man to retirement and makes him indifferent to the future of society, is not true faith. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

"One who does not arrange the affairs of Muslims is not a Muslim. And one who hears the entreaty of a Muslim and does not respond to it, is not a Muslim."2

Life of the prophets and important religious personalities is also the best testimony. They spent their nights in worship and in the battlefield were as brave as lions. They did not sit in recluse away from the problems of the world engrossed in worship and supplication; on the contrary they were also present in the forefront in the social sphere and public life.

And in confronting injustice, oppression and deprivation, they tried their very best; and strived to establish social justice. And in fulfilling these great responsibilities they did not flinch in any way. They fought the unjust and tyrants and did not in any way fear hardships and difficulties.

Yes, the school of monotheism, school of morals, piety, school of worship and inclination to Allah, school of Jihad and steadfastness and loyalty, confronting injustice and inequity, enjoining good and forbidding evil; all of them originate from right faith.

It is said that since faith is the source of good deeds; just as good deeds also plays an important role in strengthening and steadfastness of faith. As much as we refrain from sins and bad character and as much as we try to perform good deeds, as much the effulgence of faith would increase in our hearts.

Therefore after faith in Allah, resurrection and prophethood, we should act on the commands of Allah so that we may scale the lofty stages of faith. One who is content only with a notional belief and he does not put it into practice, and who follows the selfish desires would not only fail to achieve the final aim of life but gradually, lose his faith as well. Knowledge and deeds for the human soul are having the same position of two such great things that not having any of them would prevent man from scaling the high points of God-worship and wayfaring in the path of Almighty.

- 1. Biharul Anwar, Vol. 69, Pg. 68.
- 2. Al-Kafi, Vol. 2, Pg. 164.

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