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## Ethic and Training

### [Is it possible to alter individuals' morality and mentality through training?](#)

This is the question, which clarifies the position of ethics, because if we accept that morality and mentality of individuals depend on the structure of their body and soul, ethics will be vain and purposeless. But if we accept that it is changeable, the importance and value of this science is manifested well.

Some of the scientists have accepted the first possibility and believe that as some of trees bear bitter fruits, and as a gardener cannot change his nature, mentality of the lowborn and impure-hearted will not be changed through training and even if it is changed, it will be very transitory and superficial, and will soon be restored to its first mode.

They suggest that structure of body and soul has a close relation with morality, and in fact morality of each person depends on the disposition of his soul and body, and for this reason, it is not changeable. They cite as a proof the traditions like:

«النَّاسُ مَعَادِنُ كَمَعَادِنِ الذَّهَبِ وَ الْفِضَّةِ»

The people are like the mines of gold and silver. [1](#)

In contrast to this attitude, majority of scientists believe that morality and mentality of individuals is completely alterable through training.

A great deal of experiences on the immoral persons has fully proved this reality that a lot of wicked and vicious individuals are perfectly corrected by a "healthy environment", "good association" and "high training". Otherwise, all of divine instructions of prophets and religious leaders were cancelled, because

all of them are concerned with training men's souls. On the other hand, all punishments having a corrective aspect, being common among all nations throughout the world, were vain and ineffective.

We see that even fierce and wild animals are domesticated through training, and are used for the purposes against their original disposition. How can we believe the ill-humour in men to be more rooted than ferocity of wild animals?

We believe that the best way for proving this claim is studying the procedure of formation of a "moral habit" in a bid to find the way of eradicating it in the same way it is formed. We know that every good or bad action leaves a similar effect in man's soul and "attracts" man's soul to it.

Practice and repetition of the action increases this effect and gradually a feature called "custom" is achieved and with more practice, it changes into "habit", and thus man's interior tendency to perform that action is increased by rooting of customs and habits. This reality is proved by experience.

Therefore, if moral customs and habits are formed through repetition of an action, they are removable in the same way. That is to say, first, "action", then "repetition" and then "formation of a moral attribute and habit".

Of course, suggestion, reflection, correct instructions and healthy environment- which have a suggestive effect are very effective in predisposing soul for acceptance and formation of a good morality.

### **Ill-humour is a sort of disease**

All of us know that man enjoys a special and particular position among all living creatures, because his personality is composed of antagonistic powers. On one hand, rebellious sensual desires as well as animal instincts and inclinations invite him to insolence, aggression to the rights of others, sensuality and lechery, lie and treachery, and on the other hand, the powers of intellect and cognition, humanistic affections and conscience call him to philanthropy, chastity, honesty and virtue.

Struggle of these powers exists in all men and relative dominance of one of these factors causes men to be in completely different levels in view of humanistic values, and increases the distance of man's "ascending" and "descending" curve. At times he becomes superior to the nearest-stationed angels, and at others he becomes more inferior to the most dangerous predator animals.

This fact is also deduced from several traditions. For instance, Imam Ali (A.S.) says:

« إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَصَّ الْمَلَكَ بِالْعَقْلِ دُونَ الشَّهْوَةِ وَالْغَضَبِ، وَ خَصَّ الْحَيَوَانَاتِ بِهِمَا دُونَهُ وَ شَرَّفَ الْإِنْسَانَ بِإِعْطَاءِ  
« الْجَمِيعِ فَإِنْ انْقَادَتْ شَهْوَتُهُ وَ غَضَبُهُ لِعَقْلِهِ، صَارَ أَفْضَلَ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ لِوُصُولِهِ إِلَى هَذِهِ الرَّتَبَةِ مَعَ وُجُودِ الْمُنَازَعِ »

God granted to the angel only intellect, without lust and wrath, and gave to the animals only lust and

wrath, without intellect, but ennobled man to granting all of these. So if his lust and wrath are controlled and ordained by his intellect, he will be superior to the angels, because he has achieved such station despite the existence of an opposing power. [2](#)

But it should be noted that instincts and dispositions and lusts in an original, natural and balanced form are not only harmless, but will also be an essential means for continuation of life.

In other words, as no useless and idle limb is created in the structure of man's body, any incentive, instinct and disposition has a vital role in the structure of his spirit and soul, and only in case of deviation from normal condition and disturbance of the balance, they will appear dangerous and fatal.

For instance, who can deny the role of "wrath" in man's life? Suppose when the rights of a person are transgressed; if all of reserve powers of his body are not excited and mobilized, thanks to the wrath; is it possible for him to defend his rights in a composed mood, in which he may not utilize more than one tenth of his reserve powers? But when this anger and wrath is deviated from its main path, and is not any more a powerful tool under control of intellect, it alters man into a fierce animal who does not recognize any boundary.

In addition, the role of man's moderate desire to wealth, rank and such like in more attempts for development and progress is as obvious as the destructive effect of Mammonism and ambition that is extravagant in these desires.

Thus, as disturbance in corporeal balance is always accompanied with undesirable results called "disease", disturbance in balance of spiritual powers and instincts and desires too is considered as a sort of "mental disease", and ethics scholars call it "heart-sickness".

This concept has basically originated from Holy Qur'an that has considered hypocrisy of a hypocrite as a disease, where it says:

﴿ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا ﴾

***In their hearts is a disease, and Allah increaseth their disease. A painful doom is theirs because they lie. (2:10)***

## **Purification of carnal soul or the greater warfare**

Calling purification of carnal soul as "the greater warfare" suffices for its importance, and this interpretation is derived from the famous tradition in which Prophet (S) told to the warriors of his companions after returning from one of the battles:

مَرَحَبًا بِقَوْمٍ قَضُوا الْجِهَادَ الْأَصْغَرَ وَبَقِيَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْجِهَادُ الْأَكْبَرُ. فَقِيلَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا الْجِهَادُ الْأَكْبَرُ؟ قَالَ: جِهَادُ  
النَّفْسِ.

Bravo to the crowd who performed lesser warfare and the greater warfare is still left undone. They told: what is the greater warfare? He answered: warfare and conflict with rebellious sensual desires. [3](#)

This phrase too is narrated from the Prophet following this tradition:

«إِنَّ أَفْضَلَ الْجِهَادِ مَنْ جَاهَدَ نَفْسَهُ الَّتِي بَيْنَ جَنْبَيْهِ»

The highest warfare is warfare with rebellious desires, which are inside man's chest. [4](#)

This statement can explain Islam's logic in this critical issue and after studying and reviewing, following facts are found out thereof:

- 1- There are always antagonistic powers in man like a battlefield, and destiny of man depends on the dominance of one of these two parts of powers.
  - 2- This warfare is called "the greater warfare" since it is an eternal and unceasing one. Moreover, an internal battle is always more dangerous than an external battle, and more importantly, defeat in this warfare has no result save misery and misfortune, while defeat in common warfare may result in acquiring the honour of "martyrdom". That is to say, warfare with external enemy has never a real defeat, but there is a high possibility of defeat in inner warfare.
  - 3- Although this warfare is painful, it is the code of man's perfection, because perfection is usually the outcome of conflicts and struggle of "negative" and "positive" powers, and this is the reason why man does not become experienced and trained unless he is involved in the events and struggles with problems as Imam Ali (A.S.) says: The wood of forest trees (which are always exposed to a lot of incidents) is stronger and their fire is more durable.
- And herein the mystery of creation of these antagonist powers and sensual desires is manifested.
- 4- Warfare with outward enemy may occasionally be performed for material purposes (collecting booties or achieving fame and such like), but inner warfare will always be for gaining perfection and achieving virtue. So overcoming therein indicates decision, will and belief power as well as prominence of ambition and greatness of man's personality.

## Prosperity and happiness

Ethic scholars have mentioned prosperity and happiness as the final end of ethics. This is the same reality that men are always trying and struggling for prosperity and happiness, and are often complaining

for not gaining it.

## **What is prosperity?**

We can define prosperity in one short phrase: gaining any possible perfection that man has capacity and competence for achieving, and in other words, correct utilization of different material and spiritual powers being available for man.

But since to the same extent that "perfection" and "utilization" are clear in view of general sense, they are ambiguous and complicated in view of partial concepts, most often people have mistaken the path of prosperity so that for example, one egoist rich man, who has exchanged the heart's ease and relief of his spirit and body with accumulation of a massive wealth, may consider himself prosperous, while his capricious child, after death of father, deems scattering of this wealth for satisfaction of his lusts as prosperity, and in the meantime both of them are wrong.

Anyway, herein we shall recognize man's real perfection and the correct way of utilizing these material and spiritual favours, although this recognition may need a great deal of study and inconvenience.

## **Does prosperity have only a spiritual aspect?**

A number of Greek ancient philosophers like Cynics believed that prosperity has only a spiritual aspect and whatever corporeal and material condition may be, it does not have the least effect on man's prosperity, and therefore considered acquiring moral perfection and virtues as the only way of prosperity.

Rather, they believed that absolute prosperity for man would not be possible in this world and as far as the spirit is connected to this material body, and tainted to corporeal impurities, it is deprived of real prosperity. Only when it is disconnected from body, it may achieve absolute prosperity. On this end, they spurned and neglected all material affairs.

The conditions of Dewjanse, the famous physician of Cynics, and his life in a jar! Instead of house and room, and his contentment to one drinking cup from all life facilities is well-known. Even it is said that once he saw someone drinking water from a water course with his hands, then he threw away that cup too.

Existentialists are on the opposite side to this idea and consider prosperity only in an unconditional utilization from material pleasures and condemn any obstacle on this way.

They assume absolute happiness only through material pleasure and go ahead in this way till the threshold of insanity, and practically disregard all social and moral limits and habitudes for achieving it.

It is obvious that we cannot call this ideology, which is unfortunately spread nowadays among some nations, a doctrine. Rather, it is a sort of delusion and mental disease. However, we can assume it a reaction to the extremist doctrines like Cynics who have totally ignored corporeal aspects in prosperity.

Moderate doctrine: since man is not merely a body or a soul, and the reality of his essence is composed of two parts, he should seek prosperity too in both parts and surely any program focusing in one part of his essence, shall not guarantee his prosperity, because it is not in conformity with the outward realities.

Among Greek philosophers, the first teacher, Aristotle and his followers advocated this doctrine and Islam's superior instructions have explicitly supported it, and have mentioned new principles for it. This reality is reflected in Qur'an and sayings of our great leaders, and motto of Islam in this regard is summarized in the following verses:

\*فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِن خَلَقٍ

وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

***But of mankind is he who saith: "Our Lord! Give unto us in the world," and he hath no portion in the Hereafter.***

***And of them (also) is he who saith: "Our Lord! Give unto us in the world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good, and guard us from the doom of Fire."***

***For them there is in store a goodly portion out of that which they have earned. Allah is swift at reckoning. (2:200-202)***

The point, which should be carefully considered in such discussions, is that the relation and connection of soul and body is so close that the effect of any deviation in one of them is manifested in the other.

Today psychoanalysis has proved that a part of moral and mental deviations is caused by incorrect satiation of corporeal and material instincts.

Repressed desires and instincts always emerge as mental complexes. Such complexes are a big problem for ethic scholars, and removing them through the ways available for training souls, is usually not possible. Rather, they should be treated in the same way they are created, that is, physical instincts should be satiated in a correct manner.

There are a lot of people suffering from suspicion, fear, jealousy, pride and hatred and such like vices and its cause is deprivation and repression in correct satiation of their physical instincts. Thus for being successful, now it is necessary for all ethic scholars and mental trainers to consider both physical and mental conditions for treating moral diseases.

Islam has studied this issue subtly and it explicitly says:

قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالطَّيِّبَاتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ ۗ قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

**Say: Who hath forbidden the adornment of Allah which He hath brought forth for His bondmen, and the good things of His providing? Say: Such, on the Day of Resurrection, will be only for those who believed during the life of the world. (7:32)**

And we read in aphorisms of Imam Ali (A.S.):

لِلْمُؤْمِنِ ثَلَاثُ سَاعَاتٍ: فَسَاعَةٌ يُنَاجِي فِيهَا رَبَّهُ وَ سَاعَةٌ يَرْمُ مَعَاشَهُ وَ سَاعَةٌ يُخَلِّي بَيْنَ نَفْسِهِ وَ بَيْنَ لُدَّتْهَا فِيمَا يَحِلُّ وَ «يَجْمَلُ».

The believer's time has three periods: the period when he is in communion with Allah, the period when he manages for his livelihood, and the period when he is free to enjoy what is lawful and pleasant. [5](#)

And this phrase is added to some traditions:

«وَ ذَلِكَ عَوْنٌ عَلَى سَائِرِ السَّاعَاتِ».

"And the last part is tonic and refreshing for the other parts."

## Individual and Social Morality

Some believe that all moral principles return to the man's special social relations with others so that if there was no society, and any man lived completely apart from the others, and any individual lived unaware of existence of others, "ethics" was basically meaningless because envy and jealousy, modesty and pride, good opinion, justice and injustice, chastity, generosity and stinginess, and such like are all strictly meaningful within the society and contact of man with others. Thus man minus society will be accompanied with man minus ethic.

But while confessing that most of moral virtues and vices are concerned with social life of man, we believe this could not be generalized. Because there are a great number of moral cases which have only an individual aspect, and are true for a single man too.

For instance, patience or impatience for afflictions, bravery or fear for events, endeavour or laziness in achievement to one's objective, ignorance or attention to the Creator of the world, thanksgiving or ingratitude for His endless favours and such affairs, which ethics scholars have discussed in ethical books and have called them moral virtues or vices, that could have an individual aspect, and are truthful

for one living completely isolated from the society.

Hereof division of morality into "individual morality" and "social morality" is clarified. However, it is obvious that social morality is more important in ethics, and man's personality focuses on it, although individual morality too has a considerable part in respect to oneself.

## **Big Mistake**

It should be mentioned herein that those who isolate themselves from the society for purification of morals and training their souls, secluding themselves and supposing that they can achieve this great aim better in this way, are completely wrong.

Because they actually destroy the subject of social morality, and although they avoid some vices in this way, it is not really considered a virtue. It looks like the one who cuts his sexual apparatus for avoiding adultery and lewdness, although he is not tainted with unchastity, but this will not be a virtue for him.

Moreover, experience has shown that isolation and seclusion from society will cause a series of moral vices such as peevishness, suspicion, vanity and conceit, and suspicion of divine predestination in man, which will be illustrated in a separate discussion in detail.

So, Islam has encouraged Muslims to have a social life and to live in large cities and has recommended observance of moral principles in the heart of society.

## **Way of treatment of Moral Deviations**

Now, we shall study details of "moral virtues" and ways of treatment of "moral vices". However, two points are noteworthy:

First point: We shall always treat those involved in moral deviations like a patient, because as it was already referred, moral deviations are in fact a sort of mental disease, which sometimes result in physical diseases too, and or vice versa sometimes they originate from physical diseases. Thus, we shall observe herein the same principles which we observe in the treatment of physical diseases.

Second point: we always consider three principles in the treatment of diseases:

- 1- Diagnosis of disease
- 2- Finding causes of disease
- 3- Way of treatment of disease

We usually use symptoms and consequences of disease for its diagnosis. Of course, this is a relatively simple task in respect to physical diseases, especially with existing facilities and equipment. But in view

of moral cases, it is a very complicated matter, because moral deviations often have similar manifestations and symptoms, or there are some manifestations which are caused by a mixture of several moral diseases, and their diagnosis becomes difficult, and thus the ethics scholar and soul physician should study this science patiently and carefully for treating himself or the others.

For finding the causes of a disease, one should also carefully study biography of the deviated person, specially the backgrounds of his childhood period, which constitutes foundation of man's personality, as well as his family and social environment, his occupation and job and geographical area for recognizing the causes of a moral disease. Even heritage should not be ignored, because ill-humour (like physical diseases) is sometimes inheritable.

And for treating moral vices, it should be noted that if they have become chronic, they should be treated patiently and carefully and vigilantly, and one shall never get tired by lapse of time. However, if they are superficial and extrinsic, they will be treated in a shorter period.

For this reason, correction of moral vices of youths and children is much easier than adults. Because the former are both tainted and treated soon.

Imam As-Sadiq (A.S.) said:

«عَلَيْكَ بِالْأَحْدَاثِ فَإِنَّهُمْ أَسْرَعُ إِلَى كُلِّ خَيْرٍ».

Pay attention to the youths, who are ready for quick acceptance of any goodness. [6](#)

## Hygiene of morality

It is also noteworthy that current medicine is actually divided into two parts: "therapeutic medicine" and "hygienic medicine". What is meant by therapeutic medicine is clear. But hygienic medicine refers to preventing occurrence of diseases and destroying their causes, and since preventing a disease is much easier than curing it, hygiene has a precious importance in the life of individuals and destiny of the societies. On this account, heavy budgets are spent for it.

These two parts exactly exist in moral cases and mental diseases. So, we shall avoid occurrence of moral deviations as far as possible, and try for hygiene of morality of ourselves and others through adopting necessary counsels.

### 1- Avoiding poisonous and suspicious associations

Surely, a lot of moral deviations are caused by association, and just like contagious and epidemic diseases, particularly in cases that mental condition is ready for acceptance of morality of others, due to little age or little knowledge or weak belief and such like, association with immoral individuals is a fatal

and noxious poison.

It is seen in a lot of cases that destiny of a man is completely changed due to such associations and thereby, direction of life is changed.

Effects of association in correcting man's personality are so significant that it is said for knowing someone; look at the companions and friends he keeps. Imam Ali (A.S.) says:

«مَنْ اشْتَبَهَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَمْرُهُ وَ لَمْ تَعْرِفُوا دِينَهُ فَانظُرُوا إِلَى خُلَطَائِهِ».

When you are uncertain about someone and do not know his religion, look at his friends. [7](#)

The Prophet (S) says:

«الْمَرْءُ عَلَى دِينِ خَلِيلِهِ وَ قَرِينِهِ».

A man has the same religion of his friend and companion. [8](#)

Association with evil doers darkens soul, and weakens moral sense, and reduces ugliness of evil deeds and ill-humour, and it is interpreted as "heart death" in the traditions. The Prophet (S) says:

«أَرْبَعٌ يُمْتِنُ الْقُلُوبَ... وَ مُجَالَسَةُ الْمَوْتَى; فَقِيلَ لَهُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! وَ مَا الْمَوْتَى؟ قَالَ: كُلُّ غَنِيِّ مُتْرَفٍ».

Four things extinguish heart ..., including association with the dead. They asked: O God's messenger! Who are the dead? He said: lavish rich men. [9](#)

Association with evil doers stimulates sense of suspicion in man and makes him pessimistic to everybody.

Imam Ali (A.S.) says:

«مُجَالَسَةُ الْأَشْرَارِ تُورِثُ سُوءَ الظَّنِّ بِالْأَخْيَارِ».

Association with evil doers causes suspicion on good doers. [10](#)

In brief, the issue of association is so critical that God even premonishes His messenger from association with evil doers in Qur'an.

In contrary, association with good doers is one of the most important means of training, purification and

developing moral virtues and reviving heart and acquiring personality.

Islam emphasizes greatly on association with good individuals and righteous doers. Holy Qur'an says:

﴿ وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ﴾ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا  
﴿ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا

***Restrain thyself along with those who cry unto their Lord at morn and evening, seeking His Countenance; and let not thine eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who followeth his own lust and whose case hath been abandoned. (18:28)***

The Prophet (S) says:

«أَسْعَدُ النَّاسِ مَنْ خَالَطَ كِرَامَ النَّاسِ».

The most prosperous people are those who associate with good and honourable people. [11](#)

## **2- Correcting Environment**

Tainted environments, particularly those in which display of sin and vice is popular, increase the risk of involvement to moral vices, and this is an undeniable truth. Thus, one of the actions for hygiene of morality is conflicting vices in the environment and preventing display of sin and vice.

Basically, one of the most important hindrances for involvement in sin and moral vice is the importance and greatness of vice and sin in view of man and his hatred towards them. Display of moral vices and sins decreases its importance in view of people and lessens its hatred and prepares soul for accepting it.

And on this account, for renewing importance of sin in public opinion, it is instructed in Islam to punish evil doers publicly and in presence of people:

وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابُهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

***And let a party of believers witness their punishment. (24:2)***

Thereby, the significance of sin is renewed for people and the barrier which was violated, is restored.

Islam has put a great emphasis on open sin and vice, and has assumed immodesty and open debauchery as the causes of a person's defamation. Imam As-Sadiq (A.S.) says:

«إِذَا جَاهَرَ الْفَاسِقُ بِفِسْقِهِ فَلَا حُرْمَةَ لَهُ».

Whenever an evil doer debauches openly, is defamed. [12](#)

Imam Al-Baqir (A.S.) says:

«ثَلَاثَةٌ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ حُرْمَةٌ: صَاحِبُ هَوًى مُبْتَدِعٌ وَ الْإِمَامُ الْجَائِرُ وَ الْفَاسِقُ الْمُعْلِنُ بِالْفِسْقِ».

There shall be no respect for three persons: Innovator, unjust leader, and evil doer debauching openly.

[13](#)

Even the narration of stories in respect to vice and adultery which taints minds and prepares environment for accepting vice, is forbidden in Islam's view. Prophet (S) says:

«مَنْ سَمِعَ فَاحِشَةً فَأَفْشَاهَا كَانَ كَمَنْ أَتَاهَا، وَمَنْ سَمِعَ خَيْرًا فَأَفْشَاهُ كَانَ كَمَنْ عَمِلَهُ».

One, who hears an evil deed and divulges it, is like the one who has performed it, and one, who hears a good deed and divulges it, is like the one who has performed it. [14](#)

And as for fighting with physical diseases, we shall first destroy centres tainted with microbe and purify life environment and restrain contamination of air, water, food and such like, it is necessary to purify social life environment from morality deviation means.

### **3- Emigration and escaping from tainted environments**

We shall do our best for correction of tainted and corrupted environments, but if, for any reason, it is not possible to correct the environment, and there is the possibility of being tainted in case of staying there, and we can immigrate to another healthier place, there is no alternative save immigration.

The same is observed in most of physical diseases, when those interested in their health immediately immigrate from the contaminated environment.

"Emigration" enjoys a special concern in Islam and it is interesting that it constitutes the foundation of Islamic Epic. Emigration of Islam's Prophet (S) from Mecca to Medina was nothing else than escaping from a tainted and unfavourable environment to a more favourable one for spreading belief and virtue.

The immigrants at the beginning of Islam enjoy a special privilege and prominence in Islam's history, and several verses are found in Qur'an concerning them. Several traditions are narrated in respect to immigration from parts tainted to sin and polytheism towards healthy parts indicating importance of the matter.

In Majmaol Bayan interpretation under verse:

وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرَاعِمًا كَثِيرًا وَسَعَةً

**Whoso migrateth for the cause of Allah will find much refuge and abundance in the earth. (4: 100)**

It is narrated from Islam's Prophet (S):

«مَنْ فَرَّ بِدِينِهِ مِنْ أَرْضٍ إِلَى أَرْضٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ شِبْرًا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ اسْتَوْجَبَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكَانَ رَفِيقَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَ مُحَمَّدٍ».

Whoso emigrates for his religion from a territory to another territory, although it may be as much as one palm of land, deserves paradise and will be companion of Abraham and Mohammad (two great emigrant prophets).<sup>15</sup>

Emphasis is indicated by the phrase "although it may be as much as one palm of land", and friendship and companionship with these two great prophets is for their immigration. Abraham (A.S.) departed from Babylon, the centre of idolaters and Nimrod, to Syria and Palestine, and Islam's Prophet from Mecca to Medina.

In Ali Ebne Abraham interpretation, under the verse:

يَا عِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ أَرْضِي وَاسِعَةٌ فَإِيَّايَ فَاعْبُدُونِ

**O my bondmen who believe! Lo! My earth is spacious. Therefore serve Me only. (29:56)**

It is narrated from Imam Al-Baqir (A.S.):

«لَا تُطِيعُوا أَهْلَ الْفُسُوقِ مِنَ الْمُلُوكِ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمُوهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكُمْ عَنْ دِينِكُمْ فَإِنَّ أَرْضِي وَاسِعَةٌ».

Do not follow sinful rulers and if you fear of being deviated from your pure religion (do emigrate) because My Earth is wide.<sup>16</sup>

Not participating in sin and vice meetings, which is mentioned in Islamic ordinances, and non-privacy with strangers and such like are all considered as sort of short term immigration from sin and mistake and risk area, and surely it is for preventing transmission of moral vices and not being tainted with sin.

<sup>1</sup>. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 61/65, tradition 51

<sup>2</sup>. Naraghi, Jami' as-Saadat 67/1

<sup>3</sup>. Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, 122/11, narration 1

<sup>4</sup>. Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, 123, narration 9

- [5.](#) Nahjul Balaghah, aphorisms, no. 390
- [6.](#) Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, 447/11
- [7.](#) Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 197/74
- [8.](#) Kulayini, Kafi 375/2
- [9.](#) Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, volume 2, page 128
- [10.](#) Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 191/74
- [11.](#) Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 185/75
- [12.](#) Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, 604/8
- [13.](#) Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, page 605
- [14.](#) Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, 609/8
- [15.](#) Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 31/19
- [16.](#) Ali Ebne Ebrahim commentary, vol. 2, page 151

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