

Fifth Means, Benevolence and Service to Humanity

According to Islamic doctrine, God's worship and nearness neither can be summarized simply performance of prayer, fasting, Hajj, pilgrimages, invocations, and supplications, nor is limited to presence in mosques, temples, and tombs; instead, discharging social responsibilities, compassion, goodness, and serving God's servants, if done with the intention of God's nearness, are considered as most superior worships and could become a means for self-building, self-purification, and God's Nearness.

In Islam, devotion and undertaking spiritual journey towards God-Almighty do not necessarily require living in seclusion, rather could be done together with acceptance of social responsibilities as well as living a perfectly normal social life.

Cooperation in righteous deeds and benevolence; goodness, endeavors in fulfilling the needs of believers and making them happier; defense of oppressed and deprived; taking care of the affairs of Muslims; solving their problems and extending a helping hand towards God's servants, from the Islamic point of view are considered a great worship whose reward is ten times higher than performance of a Hajj pilgrimage.

Their exist hundreds of traditions narrated by the Holy Prophet (S) and Infallible Imams (a.s.) which emphasize the importance of this matter. e.g.: the following has been narrated from Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) that God-Almighty said:

قال أبو عبدالله عليه السلام: قال الله عزوجل: الخلق عيالي فاحبهم الى الطفهم بهم واسعاهم في حوائجهم

“My servants are my children, therefore, the most beloved persons before me are those who are kindest towards them and do their best in taking care of their needs.”¹

The Holy Prophet (S) has said:

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله: الخلق عيال الله فاحب الخلق الى الله من نفع عيال الله وادخل على أهل بيت سرورا.

“The people are God’s children, therefore, the most beloved persons before God–Almighty are those whose benevolence reach to God’s children, thus, making their families happier full of joy.”[2](#)

Imam al–Baqir (a.s.) said:

عن ابي جعفر عليه السلام قال: تبسم الرجل في وجه اخيه حسنة وصراف القذى عنه حسنة وما عبد الله بشيء احب إلى الله من ادخال السرور على المؤمن.

“Smiling of a believer while encountering a fellow brother believer as well as solving his problems are accounted as righteous deeds. There is no worship more beloved before God–Almighty than making a believer joyful.”[3](#)

Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) said:

قال الصادق عليه السلام: من سر مؤمنا فقد سرنى ومن سرنى فقد سر رسول الله ومن سر رسول الله فقد سر الله ومن سر الله ادخله جنته.

“Whoever makes a believer happy has made me happy; whoever makes me happy has made the Holy Prophet (S) happy, whoever has made the Holy Prophet (S) happy has made God–Almighty happy; and whoever has made God–Almighty happy will enter into Paradise.”[4](#)

And said:

قال ابو عبدالله عليه السلام: لقضا حاجة امرى مؤمن احب الى الله من عشرين حجة كل حجة ينفق فيها صاحبها مائة الف.

“Fulfillment of a believer’s need before God–Almighty is more beloved than performance of Hajj pilgrimage for ten times each time spending ten thousands.”[5](#)

And said:

قال الصادق عليه السلام: مشى المسلم في حاجة المسلم خير من سبعين توافا بالبيت الحرام.

“To strive for fulfillment of Muslim's need is better than circumambulating around the Holy Kaba seventy times.”⁶

And said:

قال الصادق عليه السلام: ان لله عبادا من خلقه يفرغ العباد عليهم في حوائجهم اولئك هم الامنون

“God–Almighty has created some of His special servants, that at the time of their needs, people take shelter in them. These are the ones who will be immune from God's Punishment on the Judgment Day.”⁷

Therefore, as described above, according to Islamic point of view –benevolence, goodness, helping God's servants and to solve their problems are considered as great worships. And if they are done with the intention of God's pleasure will become means for nourishment and perfection of self, spiritual migration and ascension towards God's Nearness.

Unfortunately, a majority of people lack the proper understanding of true Islam, and therefore, have been deprived from benefits of such a large and important part of Islamic worship. In their opinion worshipping and undertaking spiritual journey towards God–Almighty is not possible, except, through prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, supplication, invocation, and incantations.

^{1.} al–Kafi, vol. 2, p–199.

^{2.} al–Kafi, vol. 2p–164.

^{3.} Bihar al–Anwar, vol. 2, p–188.

^{4.} Bihar al–Anwar vol. 74, p–413.

^{5.} al–Kafi, vol. 2, p–193.

^{6.} Bihar al–Anwar vol. 74, p–311.

^{7.} Bihar al–Anwar, vol. 74, p–318.

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