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## Great Benefit Provided by Khomeini in Treating Conceit:

We would like to conclude this research with something useful provided to us by our greatest mentor, im Mem Khomeini, may his blessings last, in the field of treating the conceit sickness. It is hoped that those who seek it will arrive at the anticipated result with precision according to the useful statement of our mentor and of those stated by great scholars of ethics, and surely All he grants success and helps.

Im Mem Khomeini, may his shade last, says the following: "Be informed that the contemptible sin of conceit is created by loving the *nafs*. This is so because man by nature loves it, and loving the *nafs* is the source of every human sin and the origin of all moral vices. Because of this love, man sees his insignificant deeds as looking great in his eyes, seeing himself as a benevolent person when doing these deeds and one of those who enjoy a special status with the Truthful One, the Almighty.

He sees himself, because of these insignificant deeds, worthy of praise and lauding. His ugly deeds may be decorated for him. When he sees others doing better and greater deeds than his own, he is not concerned about them. He often interprets people's good deeds in a bad way while interpreting his ugly deeds and wrongdoings as good according to a level of interpretation. He thus thinks ill of All®h's manner while thinking well of his own self.

He, through this love, sees himself as crediting the Truthful One, the Almighty, obligating Him to be merciful to him through an insignificant deed which is mixed with a thousand filths and with everything that distances one from his Lord. We ought to think for a short while of the good deeds and the acts of adoration which come out of us in order to see if we deserve to be praised and lauded on their account and be worthy of rewards and mercy, or should we be blamed, penalized and receive the wrath on their account?

If the Truthful One burnt us with the fire of His subduing and wrath because of these deeds which we consider to be good, it would have been truthful and just.

"I now would like to seek your own judgment, reader, with regard to the question which I am going to submit to you and ask you to confirm, after thinking and considering with the eyes of fairness; the question is:

"Had the glorious Prophet, peace of All®h be with him and his progeny, who is truthful and trustworthy, informed you that if you worshipped All®h Almighty and obeyed His commandments as long as you live, abandoning illicit desires and wishes throughout your life, or if you disobeyed His commandments all your life and acted according to the dictates of your own self and illicit desires, it will not make a difference in the degrees of your hereafter and you will be saved anyhow and enter Paradise and be secure against the torment without a difference between your performance of the prayers or your committing adultery, but the pleasure of All®h Almighty is in keeping yourself busy worshipping Him, praising and lauding Him, abandoning your illicit desires and inclinations in this world, and that All®h, Praised is He, does not grant you rewards in exchange for this action in the first place..., will you be in this supposition among the sinners, or would you be among those who adore?

Would you abandon the illicit desires and deprive yourself of pleasures in order to earn His Pleasure, the most Praised One, and out of your love for Him, or would you not? Would you be regular in doing what is commendable, in observing Friday congregational prayers, mass acts of worship, or would you immerse yourself in illicit desires, merriment, play, singing, etc.? Answer while eying equity and without pretending.

"As for me, I can tell you about myself and about those who are like me. We used to be in that condition, among the people of transgression, leaving acts of obedience behind our backs, following our illicit desires, and the result of all of our deeds was for the sake of personal pleasures and to look after the stomach and private part!

We were those with bellies, worshippers of their desires. But we abandoned such pleasures for the sake of a much greater pleasure. Our full attention and hopes rested on making the desires easily accessible to us. The prayers, which are the ascending ladder to nearness to All®h, we prayed so we could be close to the women of Paradise and not connected to nearness to the Truly Almighty nor connected to obedience to the command of All®h: The prayer was distant by thousands of parasangs from All®h, Praise to Him.

"O poor soul ignorant of the divine knowledge who knows nothing but taking care of your desire and anger! And you, holy man, who is regular in performing his rituals and optional acts of worship as well as obligations, who abandons what is hated and prohibitive, who is adorned with good manners and who avoids bad conduct!

Weigh your deeds with the scales of equity so you may see that all these deeds to reach the selfish desires, to sit on a bench of emeralds, to sleep with the *huris* having large lovely eyes, to wear silk and brocade, to live in high mansions and to achieve the wishes! Can all these deeds, which are all for the

sake of worshipping and loving the self, be attributed to Allsh and to the worship of the Truthful One?

What is the difference between you and the one who works for a wage? If the worker tells his boss that he has done his job purely for his own sake, you will call him a liar. Are you not a liar when you say that your prayers are for seeking nearness to All®h or to be close to the women of Paradise and achieve what you desire? Let me say the following frankly: All our acts of worship, in the eyes of those who know All®h and who are friends of All®h, are themselves major transgressions.

"So, poor soul, you act before the Truthful One, the most Great, and before His angels who are close to Him contrarily to the pleasure of the Almighty, while adoration is the ascension ladder for nearness to Him which is performed by the *nafs* that quite often commands the doing of wrongdoing and by Satan while, at the same time, you have no shame but lie in every act of worship many times before the Almighty and the angels close to Him!

You invent claims, thinking you are doing Him a favor, feeling proud of what you are doing, acting like a spoiled child, having no shame! What is the difference between my worship and yours coupled with the transgressions of the transgressors the strongest of which is pretension, for pretension is *shirk*; its ugliness and seriousness are due to worship not done for the sake of the Almighty. All our acts of worship are *shirk*, and there is no tint of loyalty and sincerity in them. Rather, the pleasure of Allsh Almighty does not find its way to them due also to *shirk*.

Rather, they are for the sake of attaining pleasures, for satisfying the stomach and the private part. So, dear one, a prayer service aiming at achieving the love of a woman, be she one of the women of this life or of the hereafter, is not for the sake of All®h. A prayer service undertaken for the sake of reaching the hopes of this life or the aspirations of the hereafter is not connected with All®h; so, why such flirtation and indulgence?! You look down at the servants of All®h, thinking that you are one of those chosen by the Truthful One!

O poor soul! You, through such a prayer service deserves to be tormented and are worthy of a chain the length of which is seventy yards. So, why do you see yourself as having credit with Allsh, preparing for yourself through this flirtation and conceit an additional torment? You are supposed to perform the deeds which you are ordered to perform and pay attention to their being for the sake of Allsh. Be informed that Allsh Almighty permits you to enter Paradise through His favor and mercy.

The most Praised One has lightened some *shirk* for His servants due to their weakness, throwing on them the covering veil through His forgiveness. Do not violate the sanctity of this covering, and leave the covering of forgiveness of the Truthful One placed on the bad deeds which we called "acts of worship" for, God forbid, if the pages are turned and the pages of justice are brought, the stink of our worship will be no less than that of our transgressions, the sins of transgressors.

"Thiqatul–Islam [the one trusted by the Muslims], al–Kulaini, has narrated in Al–K $\mathbb{I}fi$ , through isn $\mathbb{I}d$  to Im $\mathbb{I}m$  al– $\mathbb{I}d$  $\mathbb{I}g$ 0 who cites the Messenger of All $\mathbb{I}h$ 1 ( $\bigcirc$ ) saying, "All $\mathbb{I}h$ 2, the most Exalted and Great,

said to Dawud [David]: 'Give the glad tidings to the sinners and warn the truthful ones.' Dawud said, 'How do I give glad tidings to the sinners and warn the truthful ones?'

The Almighty said, 'O Dawud! Give the glad tiding to the sinners that I accept the repentance and forgive the sin, and warn the truthful ones against admiring their deeds, for I do not let a servant of Mine stand for judgment except that he perishes." So, since the truthful ones perish in the process of the judgment, although they are pure of sins and transgressions, what I can say, and what can you?!

"All this is as such if our deeds and yours are indicative of purely worldly pretension which is one of the abominations and prohibitions, and seldom does it coincide that we do a good deed which is free of pretension and hypocrisy. Leave this subject alone; we shall not talk about it.

"Now, if there is room for conceit, flirtation and indulgence, do it. And if fairness places one in a position where he feels ashamed, lowering his head, admitting his shortcoming, then seek All h's forgiveness and repent to Him with seriousness. In all reality clear each act of worship which you undertake from the lies which you pronounced in the presence of the Truthful One, the most Exalted, and about the titles which you bestowed upon yourself without any right.

Should you not repent about saying, while facing the Truthful One, the most Exalted One, prior to performing your prayer, "I have directed my face towards the One Who created the heavens and the earth, submissive, believing, and I am not among the polytheist; surely my prayers, asceticism, life and death are for the sake of All®h, Lord of the Worlds"?

Did you really submit your heart to the One Who created the heavens and the earth? Are you really a Muslim? Are you pure of *shirk*? Are your prayers, adoration, life and death for the sake of All®h? Should you not feel ashamed when you say in your prayer, "Praise to All®h, the Lord of the Worlds"? Do you really see all praise being due to the Truthful One, the Almighty, or do you see it fitting His servants, even praise due for the enemies of All®h?

Is this not lying when you say, "Praise to All®h, the Lord of the Worlds", although you fix lordship in this world for others? Is repentance not required when you say, "Thee do we worship, and from Thee do we seek help"? Do you worship All®h, or do you really worship your appetite for food and lust for sex? Do you seek All®h or do you want the *huris* with large lovely eyes? Do you really seek help only from All®h, and does every matter in your eyes seem to be rendered to only All®h? Is your pursuit and goal is All®h when you go to visit the House of All®h? Is your pursuit and goal the Owner of the House?

And does your heart act upon the statement of the poet who says, "It is not love for the abodes that occupies my heart [but it is the love for those that live therein]"? Do you seek All®h? Do you seek the manifestations of the Greatness and Beauty of the Truthful One? Do you hold commemorative gatherings for the sake of the master of the oppressed?

Do you beat your chest and head for his sake, or is it to reach your wealth and wishes, and the catalyst

for your holding commemorative gatherings is the craving of the stomach? What pushes you towards the congregational prayers is the craving for the sexual intercourse [with the *huris* of Paradise], and what prompts you to keep you busy with the rituals and acts of adoration is love for your own self.

"Brother! Discern the traps of the *nafs* and of Satan, and be informed that Satan does not let you undertake a single sincere act [of worship], and these insincere deeds which were accepted by All®h, Glory to Him, only out of His favor, Satan does not let you get them to reach home; so, he fares with you, and with them, rendering them as nil through conceit and indulgence.

Thus, this gain, too, passes you by, for you have distanced yourself from All®h and from His Pleasure, and you did not reach Paradise or the *huris* with large lovely eyes. This is not all. You became eternally lodged in the torment, tortured in the subduing fire of All®h.

Did you claim that through these worn out deeds, the stinking and shaky ones, the ones mixed with pretension and desire for fame, with a thousand calamities each one of which bans the acceptance of your deeds, that you indeed have done All®h Almighty a favor, or you joined the company of those who love or who are loved?

O poor soul! Who is unaware of the condition of those who [truly] love, and the wretch who is ignorant of the hearts of the lovers wherein fire burns, the poor soul that is unaware of the burning of the sincere ones, of the *noor* of their deeds..., did you think that their deeds, too, were like my deeds and ours?

Did you imagine the prayers of the Commander of the Faithful (ع) as having distinguished itself from our prayers because a phrase in it was recited with prolongation or the recitation was more accurate than ours, or the bowing and prostrating were longer, or the praises and pleas were more numerous than ours, or that he, peace be with him, distinguished himself from us by praying during every night many prostrations, or that the silent supplication [munajat] of the master of those who prostrate was like mine and yours, and that he shed his tears and cried for the sake of the huris with large lovely eyes and for the plums and pomegranates of Paradise?!

"By their lives, and it surely is a great oath, if all humans pretended and wanted to utter a single "La ilaha illa All®h!" [There is no god except All®h] a single time just it was uttered by the Commander of the Faithful (ع), they would never be able to do that. So, woe unto me for thus knowing the status of the authority of Ali, peace be with him!

I swear by the status of Ali ibn Ab® Talib (ع) that had the angels close to All®h and the messengers, aside from the Seal of Messengers, who is the master of Ali and of everyone else, that had they wanted to make a single *takb®r* like that of Ali, they would never be able to do it; the condition of their hearts is known only by themselves.

<sup>&</sup>quot;So, dear one! Lessen your claim that you love All®h.

"O you man of knowledge, the ascetic one, the judge, the one who performs *jihad*, who subjects his heart to exercise, the *faq* h, the believer, the holy one! O poor souls, the wretches who are afflicted by the traps and desires of the *nafs*! O helpless folks who are afflicted by the hopes, wishes and love for their own selves! Since we all are incapable, and we all worship while being distant by many parasangs from sincerity and from loving All h..., do not think well of yourselves, and do not act like the spoiled ones, and ask your hearts if they truly seek All h or seek their own selves.

Does the heart believe in the Unity of All®h and seek the One and Only God, or is it polytheistic? What is this conceit, and what is the meaning of such pointing out to the deeds? If the value of a good deed, taking for granted it is complete in all its parts and conditions and is free of pretension, shirk, conceit and all destructive elements, is to reach the satisfying of the craving of the stomach and of the private part, what value is attached to it, since all these deeds are shown to the angels of All®h?

So, they have to be hidden from the visions [of humans]. These deeds are among the ugly and calamitous ones. One must be ashamed of them and must cover them up. Lord! We seek refuge with You, we the poor ones, from the mischief of Satan, the evil of Satan and the evil-insinuating self [nafs]. Do protect us, Lord, from their traps by the status with You reserved for Muhammad and the Progeny of Muhammad, All®h blesses him and his Progeny."

This is the end of his statement, may his shadow prolong, about those who are conceited and who brag about their good deeds.

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