

Joint Diseases of the Powers of Intellect, Anger, and Passion

This last section of the book deals with vices relating to combinations of any two of the Powers, Intellect, Anger, and Passion, or all three of them, and the methods of treating them. There are thirty-one of such vices. This discussion, which deals with a large number of vices and virtues and which contributes to the subject matter of most books on ethics, covers half of the total length of the *Jami' al-Sa'adat*. In order to keep ourselves within limits appropriate to this summary, we shall confine ourselves to a brief discussion of the points raised in this section of the book.

1. Jealousy (Hasad)

Hasad consists of a desire to see someone's advantage or blessing taken away from him. If one simply aspires to have the same advantage as someone else, this would be *ghibtah* (envy), and if one has the desire to see someone continue enjoying an advantage or a blessing, which he deserves, this would be *nasihah*. That which is a vice amongst all these states, is *hasad*, which makes man deserve chastisement both in this world and the next. The jealous person knows no peace, and is always burning in the fire of jealousy. Moreover his jealousy destroys the value of all of his good works, as mentioned in a prophetic tradition:

الحسد يأكل الحسنات, لما تأكل النار الحطب.

Jealousy consumes virtues as fire consumes wood.

However, both *ghibtah* and *nasihah* are virtues, which must be nourished by cleansing the soul from the vice of *hasad*. The fatal disease of *hasad* may proceed either from the Power of Passion or the Power of Anger, or both of them, depending on what motivates it. Thus, in order to cure it, we must concentrate our attention on these two Powers, and what we have already said about various diseases associated

with these Powers also applies to the disease of jealousy.

What can best help the individual to cure himself of this disease is to contemplate the negative psychological and spiritual effects of jealousy, which affect only the jealous person himself, not him who is the object of jealousy. Moreover, the jealous individual should try to create within himself the virtue of *nasihah* (wishing the welfare of others), which is the opposite of jealousy. At the beginning, it may be necessary for him to impose upon himself the attitude necessitated by this virtue, notwithstanding his inner inclination to the contrary, until jealousy is overcome and *nasihah* becomes an established trait of his character.

2. Harassing and Insulting Others

This kind of behaviour is usually caused by jealousy and enmity, although it may also be rooted in greed (*hasad*), avarice (*tama'*), pride (*takabbur*), etc. Thus, its source is either the Power of Anger or the Power of Passion, or both. In any case, harassment and insulting of other Muslims is a major sin, and has been repeatedly condemned both in Qur'anic verses and traditions:

And those who hurt believing men and believing women, without that they have earned it, they bear the guilt of slander and manifest sin. (33:58)

And in a tradition attributed to the Prophet (S) we read:

من آذى مؤمنا فقد آذاني, ومن آذاني فقد آذى الله, ومن آذى الله فهو ملعون في التوراة والإنجيل والزيور والفرقان

Whoever hurts a believer, hurts me; whoever hurts me, hurts God: and whoever hurts God is the accursed of Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms, and the Qur'an. (*from Jami' al-akhbar*)

On the other hand, stopping someone from harassing and insulting others is a worthy act praised in several traditions, of which the following prophetic *hadith* is an example.

من زحزح عن طريق المسلمين شيئا يؤذيههم, كتب الله له به حسنة ومن كتب له عنده حسنة أدخله الله بها الجنة.

Whoever removes an annoying hurdle from the path of Muslims, God shall write for him a virtue, whose reward is Paradise.¹

3. Frightening and Bothering Muslims

This kind of behaviour is a branch of the above-mentioned vice, and is caused by either anger, ill-temperedness, or avarice. Its opposite is making others happy and removing their cause of sorrow or

anxiety. There are numerous traditions in praise of this virtue, such as the following from the Prophet (S):

ان احب الأعمال إلى الله عز وجل إدخال السرور على المؤمنين.

Indeed the most beloved action near God, the Almighty, is to make the believers happy.

4. Indifference to the Affairs of Muslims

Being indifferent to the affairs of Muslims is a moral vice caused by lethargy, spiritual weakness, or miserliness. This vice is condemned in numerous traditions, an example of which is the following wellknown statement of the Prophet (S):

من أصبح لا يهتم بأمور المسلمين فليس منهم ومن سمع رجلا ينادي يا للمسلمين فلم يجبه فليس بمسلم.

He who wakes up without any concern for the affairs of Muslims, is not a Muslim; and he who hears the cry, 'O Muslims!' without responding is not a Muslim.

On the contrary, to meet the needs of the Muslims and to solve their problems is considered as one of the noblest forms of worship. The Prophet is reported to have said:

من مشى في حاجة أخيه ساعة من ليل أو نهار، قضاها أو لم يقضها، كان خيرا له من اعتكاف شهرين.

An hour covered on foot, at night or during day, in the effort to help one's brother meet his need, is better than two months of *i`tikaf* (spiritual retirement), regardless of whether or not one succeeds in one's effort.

5. Negligence in Carrying Out the Duty of "Al-amr bil ma'ruf wal nahy 'an al-munhar"

Failure to carry out the duty of *al- amr bil-ma`ruf wal-nahy `an il munkar* is an unforgivable sin caused either by moral weakness or lack of attention to one's religious duties, and results in the spread of immorality, corruption, injustice, and other forms of indecency throughout society.

"Commanding others to do their Divine duties and forbidding them from committing illegitimate deeds" is an obligatory duty of every Muslim, and has stages and conditions which have been explained in detail in books dealing with Islamic *fiqh*.

Since what we are concerned with here are the individual's duties with regard to his relationship with

others, this brief mention of this duty is sufficient.

6. Unsociableness

This vice is caused either by hostility, vengefulness, jealousy, or miserliness, and, therefore, it belongs either to the Power of Passion, or the Power of Anger. It has been condemned in numerous traditions.

The opposite of this vice is the virtue of sociability, hospitality and friendliness, which is conducive to expansion of warm, brotherly relations throughout the community. This virtue is highly recommended by Islam.

7. Breaking Ties with One's Family and Kin

This vice is a branch of unsociableness, but is far uglier and more harmful. The opposite of this vice is the virtue of maintaining close cordial family ties. A large number of traditions which can be found in the books on *hadith* deal with this subject.

8. Being undutiful to Parents

This is the worst form that the vice of breaking off ties with one's family can take, and according to severely worded traditions, it is the cause of severe chastisement both in this world and the next. As opposed to this, kind and loving behaviour towards one's family is considered to be one of the highest of human virtues.

It is reported that Imam al-Sadiq (A) was asked: "What action has the greatest value before God?" And he reportedly answered: "Prayer at the very beginning of its appointed time, kindness to one's parents, and *jihad* in the way of God." This mention of kindness to parents by the side of prayer and *jihad*, which are two of the most important pillars of Islam, clearly demonstrates its importance.

Here it is also necessary to emphasize one's duties to neighbours and the neighbours' rights, since it also belongs to the category of interpersonal relations briefly discussed above, and there are many traditions condemning harassment of one's neighbours and undesirable behaviour towards them.

9. Finding Faults with Others and Exposing Their Shortcomings or Sins

This vice is caused either by jealousy or hostility, and leads to the spread of corruption, animosity, and destruction of good relations between the people. The opposite of this vice is the virtue of covering up the defects and sins of others. This virtue has immeasurable merit, and here we shall mention one verse and a *hadith* in this regard, although there are a large number of traditions dealing with this subject:

Those who love that indecency should be spread abroad among the believers theirs will be a painful chastisement in the present world and the world to come (24:19)

And the Prophet (S) has said:

من ستر على مسلم ستره الله في الدنيا والآخرة.

He who covers up [the faults of] a Muslim, God shall cover up his faults in this world and the next.

10. Revealing Other People's Secrets

Disclosing other people's secrets leads to social discord and at times to animosity. Therefore, it is considered a vice and has been condemned in a large number of traditions. This vice may take various forms, one of which is to recount to someone the derogatory remarks made about him by another individual, thus creating discord and hostility between them.

Another form is to recount to someone in power and authority something that another may have said or done against him, thus inciting him to the detriment of the victim. In general, the vice of creating conflict and discord among people and stirring up hostility between individuals can take various forms, and disclosing people's secrets is one of its forms.

The opposite of this vice is the virtue of working to create good feeling, harmony, and love amongst people, which is a quality of great value. In opposition to the vice of revealing other people's secrets is the virtue of guarding their secrets and concealing them.

In any case, all the various forms of *l'fsad bayn al-nas* (corrupting mutual relations between people) are considered sins and condemned in many Qur'anic verses and traditions.

11. Shamatah

This vice consists of attributing the misfortunes befalling someone to his unsavoury acts, delighting in his misfortunes, and blaming him for his misfortune. This vice is usually caused by jealousy or the Power of Passion.

Shamatah has been severely condemned in a large number of traditions, and it has been said that, firstly, *shamatah* causes the culprit who engages in it to fall victim to the same misfortunes he so delights in when they befall others; secondly, his *shamatah* hurts the feelings of his brother in faith, and is therefore a cause for Divine punishment; thirdly, the fact that a misfortune has befallen someone does not mean that he has committed an evil act; it may be a Divine test which may occur even in case of those closest to God.

12. Taunting and Dispute (Ta'n wa Mujadalah)

Taunting (*tan*) means saying something sarcastic with a derogatory aim, and disputatiousness *mujadalah* refers to engaging in futile disputes without really wanting to discover the truth. These two traits are considered moral vices, and lead to misunderstanding and bad feeling amongst friends. In opposition to those vices is the virtue of upright speech that aims at discovery of the truth through polite, sincere, and friendly discussion.

13. Making Fun of Other People and Ridiculing Them

This vice has the same harmful effects as taunting behaviour and disputatious attitude.

14. Joking

Joking must also be avoided as a general rule, because it may cause bad feeling and hostility in some people. However, it should be kept in mind that what is bad is jesting in its extreme form; otherwise the kind of humour which delights the soul and lightens the mind without resorting to lying and slander, and without discomfiting others, is permissible.

15. Backbiting (Ghibah)

Backbiting consists of saying something about an individual that he would not like. Backbiting is one of the major sins, about which much has been written, and which has been condemned in a large number of traditions and Qur'anic verses. A detailed discussion of its limits, characteristics and exceptions is undertaken in the book.

However, in order to remain within the limits set by the brief nature of our summary, we abstain from this elaborate discussion.

What is worse than backbiting (*ghibah*) is slander (*buhtan*), that is, false accusation. The opposite of backbiting is praising others, and the opposite of slander—which consists of falsehoods—honest mentioning of the actual good qualities of an individual.

16. Lying

Lying is a shameful vice and a great sin, which leads to personal and social corruption. There are a large number of traditions and Qur'anic verses regarding the evil of lying, and many works have been written to condemn it. The opposite of this vice is the virtue of truthfulness (*sidq*). Truthfulness is one of the most praiseworthy qualities of a human being and *sidq* is a word that recurs a great number of times in the Holy Qur'an.

17. Simulation (riya')

Simulation means doing a good deed for the sake of ostentation rather than for the sake of God. It is a great sin, and causes spiritual deterioration and death. And the Qur'an says:

So woe to those that pray and are heedless of their prayers, to those who would be seen [at worship], yet refuse charity. (107:4-7)

In another verse we read:

...showing off to the people and not remembering God save a little. (4:142)

Here is a prophetic tradition about the vice of *riya'*:

((إن اخوف ما أخاف عليكم الشرك الأصغر، قالوا: وما الشرك الأصغر؟ قال: ((الرياء

يقول الله عز وجل يوم القيامة للمرائين إذا جزى العباد باعمالهم: اذهبوا إلى الذين كنتم تراؤن في الدنيا ، فانظروا هل تجدون عندهم الجزاء.

[The Prophet (S) said:] "The main thing that I fear concerning you is `minor idolatry' (*shirk*)". They asked "What is `minor idolatry'?" He answered: "Simulation! On the Day of Judgement, when Allah the Almighty is examining the past deeds of His creatures, He shall say to the simulators, "Go to those to whom you showed off during your lives in the world and ask them for your reward."

There are different kinds of *riya'*: *riya'* in worship, whatever form it may take, is always reprobate; *riya'* in other matters, which is sometimes reprehensible, but at other times may be permissible (*mubah*) and even desirable.

For example, if one is openly generous with the intention of encouraging others to be generous also, his action is not only without reproach, but in fact is highly commendable. The significance of simulation in each case depends on the intentions of the individual involved.

The opposite of *riya'* is *ikhlas* (sincerity), which means doing everything for the sake of God alone, without expecting any reward from anyone for what he does. The station of *ikhlas* is one of the highest that a believer may attain, but may be reached through persistent exercise and perseverance.

18. Hypocrisy (Nifaq)

Hypocrisy, that is feigning to be what one is not or to believe what one does not, in religion or in social relations, is one of the most destructive vices. Throughout the Holy Qur'an, hypocrites are condemned in

the strongest of terms. Also, there are many traditions in condemnation of this vice.

The opposite of hypocrisy is being the same in one's external appearance and inward self, or preferably, being better inwardly than what one appears to be. This latter trait is a characteristic of the *mu'minun* (true believers) and those who are close to God (*awliya' Allah*).

19. Pride (Ghurur)

Pride consists of conceit based on selfish desires and fancies, and it may be in regard to the affairs of this world or that of the next. One may become proud of one's worship, or one's sons, wealth, position and power, or something else. All of these may lead to pride, and consequently to the spiritual and moral fall of man. And thus we see

that the Holy Qur'an warns man against all forms of pride, which is a kind of illusion and self-deception:

...Let not the life of the world beguile you, nor let the Deceiver (Devil) deceive you in regard to God. (31:33)

People from all walks of life may fall prey to the vice of pride. They may be believers or infidels, scholars, pious people, mystics, and so on, and each of them may be proud of some particular thing. Thus we see that pride can take numerous forms. Pride may be caused by the Power of Intellect, the Power of Passion, the Power of Anger, or all three of them together.

The opposite of pride—which as mentioned is a kind of self deception—is knowledge, wisdom, awareness, and *zuhd*; because the more a man is aware of reality the less he is likely to fall prey to pride. The following tradition of Imam al-Sadiq (A) suggests the true remedy to the vice of pride:

واعلم أنك لن تخرج من ظلمات الغرور والتمني إلا بصدق الانابة إلى الله والاختبات له ومعرفة عيوب أحوالك من حيث لا توافق العقل والعلم ولا يحتمله الدين والشريعة وسنن القدوة وأئمة الهدى وإن كنت راضيا بما أنت فيه فما أحد أشقى بعلمك منك وأضيع عمرا، فأورثت حسرة يوم القيامة

Know that you shall not be freed from the darkness of pride and desire unless you truly return to God in humility and penitence, and become aware of your faults and shortcomings—that is, those things which do not agree with reason and intelligence, and are not upheld by religion, Divine Law, and the tradition of the leaders of guidance.

And if you are satisfied with the condition you are in, be certain that no one is more callous and wicked in regard to your own acts and none more indifferent to the wastage of your years of life than yourself, and this attitude will ultimately leave you with the inheritance of bitter despair on the Day of Resurrection²

20. Having Elaborate and Far-Flung Hopes and Desires

This vice is caused by the Power of Intellect and Passion, and is rooted in ignorance and the love of the world. It harms man by keeping him occupied with worldly matters and by retarding his spiritual development.

In order to cure oneself of this disease, one must constantly think about death and the Hereafter, with the knowledge that the world and worldly existence are transitory, and whatever one may acquire, one day one is forced to leave it behind and embrace death. He must keep alive this realization in his mind that the only useful things that he can carry across the abyss of death are his good works.

21. Rebelliousness (ʿIsyan)

Rebelliousness here means disobeying God's commands. This vice belongs to the Power of Anger and Passion; its opposite is obedience and God-fearing (*taqwa*).

22. Shamelessness

Belonging to the Powers of Anger and Passion, this vice consists of impudence and absence of shame in doing prohibited acts. Its opposite is modesty and shame (*haya'*) which is a part of faith. Imam al-Sadiq (A) has said:

الحياء من الإيمان. و الإيمان في الجنة.

Modesty belongs to faith and faith is in paradise.

23. Persistence in Sin (al-'israr `ala al-ma'siyah)

This is an evil state, and its opposite is repentance (*tawbah*). Repeating sins makes them seem ordinary, insignificant, everyday affairs. Therefore, before this happens to one, it is necessary for him to contemplate the vicious outcome of committing sins and examine their harms both in this world and the next. Such contemplation leads him to repent his sins and become genuinely sorry and ashamed that he ever committed them.

On the other hand, *tawbah* or repentance is return from the state of sinfulness. An even higher state of repentance is *inabah*, which is turning away from and giving up even permissible (*mubah*) things. In this higher state of repentance one seeks, in speech and act, only to please God, and remember God continuously. A necessary adjunct of *tawbah* is *muhatabah* and *muraqabah*, which means that a sincerely repentant person constantly takes an account of his deeds and gives thought to the moral quality of his actions. There is a tradition that says:

حاسبوا أنفسكم قبل أن تحاسبوا.

Take account of yourselves before you are taken to account.

24. Neglect (Ghافلah)

Ghافلah means indifference and lack of attention; its opposite is attention and resoluteness. If what is neglected is our ultimate felicity and well-being, it is a vice. However, neglect and indifference to baseness and wickedness is a virtue. That is, care and attention given to evil and base things is a vice, while care and attention given to things having to do with our well-being and felicity is a virtue.

Both negligence and resoluteness, or care, are derived either from the Power of Passion or the Power of Anger. For example, if one is intent on getting married, the motivation for such a resolution is rooted in the Power of Passion, and is a virtue. If one resolves on defending oneself against some enemy, that resolution is rooted in the Power of Anger and is also a virtue.

This was a general description of negligence and care or resoluteness. However, as a term used in Qur'anic verses and traditions, negligence usually refers to indifference to the real aims of human existence and the agents of man's well-being and happiness in this world and the next; and its opposite, resoluteness, is also interpreted as clarity of will and purpose in the same sense. In this sense, therefore, negligence is always bad and resoluteness is always good. The Qur'an makes the following remark about the neglectful:

We have prepared for hell many jinn and men; they have hearts wherewith they understand not, they have eyes wherewith they see not they have ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle; nay, rather they are further astray. Those—they are the neglectful. (7: 179)

25. Aversion (Karahah)

'Aversion' refers to a state of abhorrence for all things entailing hardship and labour. Its extreme form is *maqt* or 'hatred.' The opposite of *karahah* is *hubb* or inclination. *Hubb* consists of the soul's liking for pleasant and beneficial things. The extreme form of *hubb* is *ishq* (love).

Aversion can be either good or bad; for example, if one is averse to *jihad* for the sake of God or to self-defense, this is highly undesirable and reprehensible. If, however, one has an aversion to ugly deeds and sins, it is good and highly desirable. The same rule applies to *hubb*, in that if one likes good and beneficial things, it is a desirable trait; but not so if one likes evil things.

The point worthy of notice is that *hubb* must essentially be directed only towards God and whatever is associated with the Divine. This is the highest form of *hubb*. It should be kept in mind that the Real Beloved is God, and it is only when man loses his Real Beloved that he mistakenly adopts other objects

for his love, such as wife, children, wealth, status, or any other worldly thing.

If man were to find his True Beloved again, he would also achieve deliverance from his endless, aimless wanderings. In order to find the True Beloved, first we must know all the various forms of *hubb*. Basically *hubb* may be directed towards nine different things:

1. The human being's *hubb* for itself; which is one of the strongest forms of *hubb*.
2. The human being's *hubb* for things outside itself for the purpose of deriving physical pleasure from them, such as various kinds of foods, clothes, and other things which serve to satisfy physical needs and desires.
3. Man's *hubb* for another human being on account of the kindness or service that the other has rendered him.
4. Man's *hubb* for something on account of that thing's inherent goodness, such as beauty and righteousness.
5. Man's *hubb* for another individual without his being able to find any particular reason for it; not because that individual has beauty, wealth or power or something of the kind, but simply because of the existence of some invisible spiritual link between them.
6. Man's *hubb* for an individual who has come from a far-off place, or whom he has succeeded in meeting during a long journey.
7. Man's *hubb* for his colleagues and fellow professionals, such as the liking of a scholar for another scholar, or a merchant's for another merchant, and so on.
8. The *hubb* (affinity) of the effect for its cause, and vice versa.
9. The *hubb* of common effects of a single cause for one another; such as the love between members of a single family.

If we give some thought to this matter, we shall reach the conclusion that since God is Absolute Existence and all other things depend on Him, whatever other things man may love lack any independent existence of their own. In other words, since God is the Ultimate Reality, He is in fact the ultimate object of true love, and all other kinds of love directed towards things are figurative and imaginary. Thus it is that one must sublimate one's love and discover its real object; and this is not possible unless the following conditions appear in him:

1. He should have a fervent desire of meeting God (*Iqa' Allah*); in other words, he should have no fear of death. His actions must be such as to reflect his assurance that he will meet God after his death.
2. He should give priority to God's wish over and above his own wishes and desires, since this is one of

the requirements of love.

3. He should not forget God for even a moment, just as the lover is not forgetful of his beloved for even a second.

4. He must not be happy when he gains something, or sad when he loses something, since if all his attention is centered on God all other things would be unimportant for him.

5. He should be kind and loving towards God's creatures, since whoever loves God will certainly love His creatures also.

6. He should have fear of God at the same time that he loves Him, since these two states are not contradictory.

7. He should keep his love of God a secret.

Under such conditions God would also love His servant and fulfil His promise:

Say (O Muhammad), `If you love God, follow me; God will love you and forgive your sins. '... (3:31)

26. Sakhat

Sakhat is being grieved at adversities and misfortunes which may befall one to the extent of complaining about them. The opposite of the vice of *sakhat* is the virtue of *rida* which is being satisfied and content with whatever God wills. *Sakhat* is a kind of *karahah*, and *rida* is a kind of *hubb*.

There are many traditions condemning *sakhat* and exhorting man to be patient in face of adversities and misfortunes; since they are for trials Divinely ordained. Basically, we must realize that life in this world is made up of suffering, difficulty, sickness and death, and without exception all men must undergo these things. So, we must teach ourselves to deal with these kinds of hardships. Such a preparedness is called *rida*, and its highest stage is complete contentment with Divine will. This is how the Qur'an describes such people:

...God is pleased with them and they with Him. That is the great triumph. (5:119)

And this is how it describes those who lack this quality:

...and they desire the life of the world and feel secure therein(10:7)

It should be noted that in books of ethics *taslim* (resignation) and *rida* (contentment) are usually used synonymously. This is because of their close meanings; because one who is content with whatever God wills for him is also completely resigned to God's will in all aspects of his life.

27. Huzn

Huzn means grief and remorse for losing or failing to attain something cherished. *Huzn*, like *sakhat*, follows from *karahah*.

28. Absence of Trust in God

This vice consists of reliance on intermediate means, not God, for solution of one's problems. It is caused by insufficient faith, and originates from the Powers of Intellect and Passion. Reliance on intermediary means is a form of *shirk* (polytheism).

The opposite of this vice is *tawakkul* (trust) in God in all aspects of one's life, with the belief that God is the only effective force in the universe. This is the meaning of the famous dictum:

لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله.

There is no power or might except that [it is derived] from God.

And the Qur'an explicitly states:

...And whosoever puts his trust in God, He will suffice him (65:3)

And the Prophet (S) has said:

من انقطع إلى الله, كفاه الله كل مؤنة

Whosoever abandons hope in everything except God, He shall take care of his means of life.

It should be noted that the notion of *tawakkul* does not contradict the idea that man has to undertake endeavour in order to benefit from the bounties of God.

This is why Islam considers it obligatory for the individual to strive in order to make a living for his family, defend himself, and to fight for his rights. What is important is to consider all these intermediary means as subject to God's authority and power, without any independent role of their own.

29. Ingratitude (Kufraan)

This is the vice of being unthankful for Divine blessings, and its opposite is *shukr* (thankfulness). The virtue of *shukr* consists of the following elements:

1. Recognition of blessings and their origin, which is Divine Beneficence.

2. Being delighted on account of the blessings—not for their worldly worth or for having gained them, but for their value in bringing us closer to God.
3. Acting on this joy and delight by undertaking to satisfy the aim of the Giver, in word and in deed.
4. Praising the Bestower of the blessings.
5. To use the bounty given to us in a way which would please Him. By 'blessings' are meant all those things which bring pleasure, benefit, and felicity, whether in this world or the next.

The Holy Qur'an says:

...If you are thankful I will give you more; but if you are thankless, My punishment is surely terrible. (14:7)

And in elaboration of the second part of the previous verse, the Qur'an says:

God has struck a similitude: A city that was secure and well content, its provision coming to it in abundance from every place, then it was unthankful for the blessings of God; so God let it taste the garment of hunger and fear, for the things that they were working. (16:112)

30. Jaza` (Restlessness)

Jaza` leads to screaming, beating one's face, tearing clothes, and raising a clamour when faced with some misfortune or calamity. *Jaza`* is one of the vices of the Power of Anger. Its opposite is *sabr* (forbearance), which is one of the noblest virtues. In any case, *jaza`* is one of the vices which leads to man's fall, since it is essentially a complaint against God and rejection of His decrees.

Sabr, on the contrary, consists of preserving one's calm under all circumstances and doing one's duty in all conditions. *Sabr* has a different function in different situations; for example, *sabr* on the field of battle lies in perseverance in performing one's duty; in other words, it is a form of courage.

Sabr in the state of anger is self-control and synonymous with *hilm* (gentleness). *Sabr* in face of desires and lusts is *iffah* (chastity). *Sabr* with respect to luxurious and opulent living is *zuhd* (abstinence). To sum up, *sabr* is a virtue related to all of the four Powers.

Sabr has been much praised in Islamic traditions, and the Holy Qur'an extols this virtue, its merits and its rewards in seventy different places. For example, it says:

...Yet give glad tidings to the steadfast who, when an affliction visits them, say: 'Surely we belong to God and to Him we return;' upon those rest blessings and mercy from their Lord, and those—they are the truly guided. (2: 155–157)

And the Prophet (S) has said:

الصبر من الإيمان بمنزلة الرأس من الجسد, ولا جسد لمن لا رأس له, ولا إيمان لمن لا صبر له.

The relationship of *sabr* to faith (*'iman*) is like that of the head to the body; just as the body cannot live without the head, so also faith cannot survive without *sabr*.

There are five kinds of *sabr* in relation to the Islamic Shari'ah: *wajib* (obligatory), *haram* (forbidden), *mustahabb* (desirable), *makruh* (reprehensible), and *mubah* (permitted). An example of `obligatory *sabr*' is abstinence from forbidden pleasures and desires. An example of `forbidden *sabr*' is patience in face of injustice such as oppression or cruelty. `Desirable *sabr*' is steadfastness in doing things which are desirable (*mustahabb*), while `reprehensible *sabr*' is related to toleration of situations which are reprehensible. Finally, *mubah* or permitted *sabr* is related to permitted things.

It follows, then, that *sabr* is not always a worthy trait, and its worth, or the lack of it, depends on its object. In general, the criterion by which the various kinds of *sabr* are judged is the same by which all other deeds and traits are judged, i.e. all those actions which facilitate man's spiritual development are considered worthy and laudable, while all other actions and traits are considered bad and harmful.

31. Fisq

Fisq as a term means disobedience to the obligatory commands of Islamic Shari'ah or committal of acts forbidden by it; its opposite is *ita'ah* (obedience) to the commands of God, the Supreme.

A major part of the Divine commands consists of specific forms of worship which are considered either *wajib* or *mustahabb* in Islam. They are: *taharah* (purity), *salat* (prayer), *du'a'* (invocation), *dhikr* (remembrance of God), *qira'ah* (reciting the Holy Qur'an), *sawm* (fasting), *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca), *ziyarat al-Nabi* (pilgrimage to the Prophet's (S) tomb), *jihad* (fighting in the way of God), *ada' al-ma'ruf* (discharging the financial duties set down by Islamic Law, consisting of *khums*, *zakat* and *sadaqah* [voluntary alms-giving]).

At this point al-Naraqī—may God's mercy be upon him—centers his final discussion which is a treatment of the Divine commands just mentioned, their rationale, and their beneficial role in the spiritual growth and development of man. Since this discussion is mostly concerned with *fiqh*, we shall forego recounting it here for brevity's sake.

In conclusion we hope that God grants us the strength to morally improve ourselves by putting into practice the advices set forth summarily in the preceding four sections. It is also to be hoped that a careful study and examination of this short discourse on Islamic ethics would motivate us to adhere to its principles, thus bringing joy and satisfaction to the spirit of its author. *Amin*.

Concluded; wal-hamdu lillah

[1.](#) Ihya`ulum al-din, vol. II, p. 172

[2.](#) Misbah al-Shari`ah, chapter 36.

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