

On Extravagancy

“Verily, God is not pleased with the extravagants”. (Qur’an 7:31).

There is a marriage in the neighborhood. The parties belong to middle class. They cannot afford a big feast; they cannot afford the pomp and show. But oh, the strange twists of “inferiority complex”! They want to appear more prosperous than they are. Their trend of thought “What will ‘the people’ say if we did not do this, or did not do that? The ‘name of the family’ should not be allowed to be tarnished by our poverty”. And so, to ‘save the name of the family’, the poor people spend more than they can afford reasonably.

It is just one example. This evil is not limited to the special functions only. In fact, it has become the accepted norm of life in these days. Cars are purchased – on hire–purchase, of course – where a cycle would serve the same purpose. Nylon and silk is used when the cotton clothes may prove more comfortable. Watches are worn by people who have all the time in the world at their disposal. Typewriters are considered a necessity for a man who writes no more than two letters in a week. These examples are not imaginary.

And what is the result of this spending beyond limit? The first thing is that God is displeased. And his displeasure manifests itself in many ways. Usually there is no money when it is needed most: rent of the house becomes overdue, prompting the landlord to serve notice of eviction; family grocer grumbles that his bills are not paid in time, so he will not give any thing except by cash; the doctor gently reminds that his accounts must be settled without delay. And so on. But there is no money to meet these demands. It has already been over–spent on ‘face–saving items’.

There is only one remedy: Think twice before spending money. There is a test to decide, whether the thing you intend to purchase is actually a ‘necessity’. Is your work suffering without it? Are you experiencing actual difficulty without it? If so, go ahead and take it. If not, forget it.

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