

Section Nine: Application To One's Own Condition

One of the important disciplines of reciting the Qur'an that causes one to get so many good results and advantages is "application" [*tatbiq*]; that is, each *ayah* which he recites and thinks about, he is to apply its concept to his own condition, to make up for his shortcomings by resorting to it, and to cure his ailments with it. Take, for example, the honored story of Adam ('a).

See what caused Satan to be expelled from the Sacred Threshold of Allah, despite his countless acts of worship and long devoted bowings, so that you may purge yourself of it, because the state of Allah's proximity belongs to the pure ones, and with satanic conducts and character no one can be admitted to that Sacred Presence. From the noble *ayahs* one can learn that the reason behind *Iblis*' refusing to bow down was self-conceit and self-admiration:

"I am better than he. You have created me of fire while him you have created of clay."¹

This self-conceit led him to selfishness and ostentation, which is arrogance. This led him to obstinacy, which is independence and disobedience, and hence he was expelled from the Sacred Court. We, from the beginning of the life, call Satan as the accursed and the discarded, and yet we ourselves possess his very vile characteristics.

It has not occurred to us that anyone possessing the same reasons, which caused the dismissal of Satan, will be dismissed, too. Satan has no particular specialty; whatever reason expelled him from the threshold of Allah's proximity would never let us into that proximity. I am afraid that the curses, which we send to *Iblis*, are to be shared by us, too.

We may further think of the same noble story, and what caused the superiority of Adam ('a) over Allah's angels, so that we ourselves may acquire them, too, as much as possible. The cause was "teaching the names," as the Qur'an says:

“And He taught Adam all the names.”²

The high degree of teaching the names is realizing [*tahaqquq*] the state of Allah's Names, such as the high degree of counting the Names as in the noble *hadīth*: “Allah has ninety-nine names; whoever reckons them enters Paradise”³ which means realizing [*tahaqquq*] their truth, by which man obtains the Paradise of the Names.

Man, by way of cordial austerities, can be the manifestation [*mazhar*] of Allah's Names and the great divine sign, and his existence becomes a divine one, and the hand of the divine Beauty and Majesty manages his kingdom. In another *hadīth* it is also said: “The connection of a believer's soul to Allah, the Exalted, is stronger than the connection of the sun's ray to it or to its light.”⁴

In another authentic *hadīth* it is said: “When the servant approaches me through his supererogatory acts, I love him, and when I love him I become his ears with which he hears, and I become his eyes with which he sees, and I become his tongue with which he speaks, and I become his hand with which he takes.”⁵

In a *hadīth* it is said: “Alif is Allah's eye and hand”⁶ and similar ones, as in a *hadīth*: “We are His Most Beautiful Names.”⁷ In this respect, rational and traditional proofs are plenty.

Generally speaking, whoever wants to get a good share and advantage from the Qur'an have to apply each of the noble *ḥayāhs* to his own condition so that he may get its complete benefit. For example, the noble *ḥayah* of the *Sūrah al-Anfal* says:

“The believers are those whose hearts feel fear when Allah is mentioned, and when His ḥayāhs are recited to them they increase them in faith, and in their Lord do they put their confidence.”⁸

A *sālik* must see whether he falls in line with these three attributes or not: Does mentioning Allah make his heart collapse and fear fall upon him? When the noble divine *ḥayāhs* are recited to him, will the light of faith increase in his heart? Are his confidence and trust in Allah, the Exalted? Or is he void of any one of these stages and devoid of these attributes? If he wants to know whether he fears Allah and that his heart falls down because of that, let him look at his deeds.

The one, who fears Allah, would not dare to do an act of pertness, or to violate any divine law in the Presence of His Sacred Majesty. If his faith increases by the divine *ḥayāhs*, the light of faith flows to his external kingdom, too. It is impossible for the heart to be luminous while the tongue, the speech, the eye, the sight, the ear and the hearing remain in the dark.

A luminous person is the one whose entire worldly and heavenly powers are radiant, diffusing light, and, besides guiding him to happiness and the straight path, they throw light on the road for others and guide them along the road to humanity. Likewise is the one who depends upon Allah and puts his trust in Him, in which case he cuts his eye of covetousness off others, and puts down his burden of need and poverty

at the threshold of the Absolute Self-Sufficient, and regards others as poor and helpless as himself.

So, the duty of the traveler to Allah is to expose himself to the Glorious Qur'an, and, as the criterion to tell a true and valid *hadīth* from a false and invalid one is to expose it to the Book of Allah, and the one which is not in harmony with it is to be judged as false and nonsense, similarly, the criterion for telling straightness from crookedness, and happiness from wretchedness, is that it is to turn out in the Book of Allah to be straight and correct.

And, as the character of the Messenger of Allah is the Qur'an, he [the *sālik*] should make his character coincide with the Qur'an, so that it corresponds to that of the perfect friend of Allah. The character which is contrary to the Book of Allah is nonsense and false. Likewise, he is to conform all his [other] knowledge, [*ma'rif*], condition of heart, internal and external deeds with the Book of Allah, so as to be in harmony with it, and the Qur'an becomes the image of his inside:

You are the clear Book that, By its letters the hidden is exposed.⁹

There are other disciplines in this field, some of which have already been mentioned early in this book under the title “the general discipline of worship,” and some others are mentioned here. Going on explaining further disciplines will lengthen our discourse; therefore, we relinquish them, and Allah is the Knowing.

¹. Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:12

². Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:31

³. Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 4, pp. 186–7.

⁴. Usūl al-Kāfī, vol. 3, “The Book of Faith and Disbelief” ch. on “The Believers' Brotherhood to One Another,” hadīth 4, p. 242.

⁵. Usūl al-Kāfī, vol. 4, “The Book of Faith and Disbelief”, ch. on “The One Who Hurts the Muslims and Slights Them,” hadīth 7, p.53.

⁶. In a sermon by Imām 'Alī ('a), it is said: “I am Allah's eye and His truthful tongue and His hand.” Ma'āniy 'ul-Akhdar, hadīth 14, p. 17; At-Tawhīd, ch. 22, hadīth 2, p. 65.

⁷. Usūl al-Kāfī, vol. 1, “The Book of at-Tawhīd”, ch. on “Wonders,” hadīth 4, p. 196.

⁸. Sūrah al-Anfāl 7:2.

⁹. This is a line of a poem which begins with:

You think you are a small matter, While in you is contained the biggest world.

The poem is ascribed to Imām 'Alī ('a).

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