

The Thirtieth Talk

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

أَخَذْنَا أَهْلَهَا بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَضُرَّعُونَ

We did afflict its folks with tribulation and adversity that haply they might grow humble. (Sura al-A'raaf, 7:94)

[The State Of Tadharru or Humility is Essential for Isti'adha](#)

The thirtieth aspect of Isti'adha is *Tadharru*. Sometimes Isti'adha demands that man should be in a state of lamentation because otherwise Isti'adha remains ineffective.

Tadharru means expressing ones helplessness and weakness through lamentation and expressing the predicament that the person is in. We have already said during our earlier discussions that man is confronted with a very formidable enemy that he has to escape from his clutches and the enemy perpetually keeps chasing him. Man is absolutely incapable of confronting the enemy nor can he guard against his onslaught. Therefore he has to look elsewhere for help to ward off the evil adversary. In this situation he is like a small child who is chased by a venomous snake. The child runs scared and falls in the lap of his mother for help and protection from the reptile. This state is called the Isti'adha or the act of seeking help and protection to ward off the enemy!

Therefore when man understands that the accursed Satan, who is his mortal enemy, is about to attack him and he is all alone, helpless and utterly incapable of protecting himself, then he cries and laments for help from the Almighty Allah (S.w.T.). He says, "O Beneficent Allah (S.w.T.)! I plead that the accursed enemy is barking like a wild dog and attacking me!"

Tadharru Through Ma'thura or Transmitted Prayers

Whenever a situation presents itself that a person has to seek Allah (S.w.T.)'s Protection against the evil advances of Satan, then the importance of *Tadharru* is highlighted through the transmitted supplications. One of these supplications is *Du'a Hifdh min Sharri Iblis* (*Dua for Protection from the Evil of Satan*) that runs like this:

“O Allah! Iblis is one of your creatures who is focusing his sights on me from such a place that I cannot see him. But You see him very well, while he is not empowered to see you! You have control over all his faculties. While he cannot interfere with what Your Wish and Will! O Allah (S.w.T.)! I, therefore, plead with You and seek Your help against him. O Sustainer! I don't have the capability to ward him off other than Your Help! O Allah (S.w.T.)! If Iblis sets his sights on me, You must take care of him! If he plans to cause me harm, You inflict Your curse on him! Save me from his plots. Make the burden of his enmity fall on his own neck! I am seeking Your munificence! O most Beneficent of those who do kindnesses! And the blessings of Allah be on Muhammad and his purified progeny.”

Allah (S.w.T.) is Sufficient for His Creatures

There is no doubt that if someone presents himself with total *Tadharru* as an insignificant and hapless creature and seeks only His help, accepts Him as the sole deliverer and seeks deliverance through Him, then seeks His protection from Satan's evil acts, Allah (S.w.T.) will definitely take him in His Protection. After assuring Allah (S.w.T.)'s Protection, deliverance is assured! Therefore Allah (S.w.T.) Himself says:

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

Is not Allah sufficient for His servant? (Sura az-Zumar, 39:36)

Recognizing the Enemy from Signs

Recognizing the enemy and being aware of his existence doesn't depend only on visual observation. But definite signs too are instrumental in this recognition. For example: If in the darkness of night, a stone comes from one direction and hits his face, and if there is a shower of arrows on the person, then he knows for sure that the enemy is trying to hurt him and is after his life and property.

In such a situation, before investigating about the existence of the enemy, the person first tries to reach someplace of safety. If there is a house nearby, he knocks at the door and asks for shelter from the householder and trusts himself totally to his care and seeks his help against the aggression of the unknown enemy. Therefore, if any person has the fear of Satan's attack, although he cannot see him, he searches for refuge from him.

Satanic Attacks

If one says that neither Satan can be seen nor his attacks witnessed, then how could one expect to escape from his attacks? How could he seek protection from others against a seemingly non-existent enemy!

The reply to this is that Satan's attacks don't go unnoticed. They are manifested through the fears, doubts and restlessness that confront the hearts of people day and night. He doesn't refrain a moment from this nefarious act of his.

Some Humor

Someone asked a wise person whether Satan too sleeps like men. The reply was that if that were the case, he would have given some respite to men while he slept and in that period they would be safe! But we observe that man is not free from Satan's attacks. The educated reply is that Satan is not a physical being and it doesn't need any rest or sleep.

The Signs of Satanic Attacks

How would one know that the fears and doubts in the human hearts are the creations of Satan?

The reply is that every thought that a person gets that creates doubts and fears about Allah (S.w.T.), the Prophet (S.), about the Day of Reckoning and makes the person restless is the creation of Satan. As against this, every thought of trust on Allah (S.w.T.), belief on the eternal life, peace of heart and mind is *Rahmani*, or Godly, in origin. Every doubt that takes one away from Allah (S.w.T.), deprives one of rewards, causes the visitation of Allah (S.w.T.)'s wrath is definitely the work of Satan. As against this, every thought that gives him the feeling of nearness to Allah (S.w.T.) and gives him the hope of Reward is purely *Rahmani*.

The Rahmani Thoughts

There are three types of thoughts that encompass the human mind on a continuous basis. The first are those about which the person has definite information that they are legitimate and therefore *Rahmani*. For example: When the time for prayer arrives, the thought comes that he must pray. Or, when an opportunity comes for him to spend in the way of Allah (S.w.T.), the thought comes that he must do the good turn, *Silat ar-Rahm*, that someone has come to him asking for monetary help. Forgive such persons who have harmed him. Be fair in transactions. In short, he gets thoughts about acts that are legitimate as per the commands of Allah (S.w.T.).

The Satanic Thoughts

The second category is composed by the thoughts that can be defined without any doubt of being satanic. They are all the exact opposite of the first category that we mentioned just now. In this category are all those fears and doubts that are contrary to the *Shari'ah* and wisdom. For example: While spending in the way of Allah (S.w.T.) getting doubts that there is paucity of means for personal needs, Or he thinks whether it was necessary to incur the expense at that time.

Perhaps a more essential need for spending might crop up later on. He may also think that another person is richer than him and more competent to provide help to the seeker than himself. If someone harmed him, he thinks of harming the person more in return. If some relative hurts him, he thinks of breaking all relations with him. If he heard that someone has done backbiting against him and revealed his faults to others, he thinks of revealing all the weaknesses of the person to others. Even he would think of making false allegations against the person. On the whole, in human affairs the satanic thoughts seem to play a dominant role and the person who practices the norms of – *Awamir wa Nawahi* – do's-and-don'ts takes care of them in minute detail.

Thoughts to Be Considered Seriously

The third category of thoughts that are not definitely satanic but they are proved to be so when the person suffers because of them.

Satan intends to make the person forgetful of Allah (S.w.T.) through the medium of these thoughts. He attacks the person while in prayer. If the person gets shorn of dedication of the heart in the prayer, then it becomes the playground of Satan. We present a fable here to illustrate the point.

The Dreaming Milkman

It is said that a milkman was carrying a pail full of milk on his head from his village to the town. He thought how long he would carry this heavy burden every day. He decided to save a portion of the earning everyday in the future. When sufficient fund were accumulated, he would buy a pair of sheep. The sheep will multiply and he would have many lambs. These will form a good flock. He would take them daily to the forest for grazing. In the forest he might be forced to pick up a quarrel with another person. If the man hurt his son, he would box the person. His imagination was so fertile that he thought the scene was really happening. So he raised his fist to box the head of the person. But, in fact the fist hit the pail of milk with a thud and the earthen pail fell off his head and shattered spilling all the contents on the ground.

Fear of the Past or Future

Sometimes Satan tries to bring back the thoughts of past events in the mind of a person to make him sad. His plan will be to make the person bitter about Allah (S.w.T.)'s Wish.

Worse than this, Satan puts all sorts of negative fears in the mind of the person about a bleak future. For example: What will happen tomorrow? Things may go topsy-turvy. What would he do about it? He will neither have interest in prayer nor in any other virtuous act. He forgets that before these depressing feelings leave him, he might die. In that event he would be guilty of forsaking the mandatory acts.

Pitiable

Some years ago a person sold a piece of real estate at thirty times its purchase price. After some days the buyer resold it for a price as high as ten times the price at which he purchased from him.

The person became a victim of satanic thought of disappointment and jealousy. He started cursing himself for hurrying with the sale. He cried and worried for most of a week. When the pressure became impossible to bear, he mixed lime with sulphur and committed suicide by eating it.

Another person sold his property for good price and invested the proceeds on another property. Later on he found that his deal was not good. No one was willing to buy his new acquisition even at a third of its value. As a result the person succumbed to the pressure of the loss.

The Fear for Tomorrow

Thirty years ago a stock trader became insolvent due to the slump in the market. Because of this shock he stopped going out of his house. Whatever assets he had left with him, he was gradually liquidating to eke out a frugal existence. He was worrying that if things continued the same way, how long he will continue to provide livelihood for himself and his family. He estimated the value of his remaining assets and divided that by the amount required for a month's expenses. He arrived at the conclusion that he could carry on for the next three years with the current monthly expenses. He started brooding as to what will happen after three years. He was wondering that he might have to come on the road begging. All his life he was a respectable trader. How will he be able to extend his hands before others for help!

Getting overwhelmed by satanic fears and doubts he consumed poison and committed suicide.

There are umpteen such examples that can be recounted. One instance is sufficient to impress that Satan influences the human heart during such adversities.

Generally we hear that a particular student has committed suicide because of failing his examination. We also hear that a youth ended his life after losing an important competition.

We might say that man is under the pressure of satanic fears and despite all efforts he is unable to catch the devil by his horns. He is literally helpless. .

But we say that this weakness is because of the total absence and lack of faith, or paucity of faith, on Almighty Allah (S.w.T.). Such persons don't have total faith that Allah (S.w.T.) is the Absolute Sustainer; all the bounties of this world have been provided by Him. Man grabs these bounties with both hands, but instead of thanking Him, he generally is ungrateful. He values causes more than the circumstances and instead of depending on Allah (S.w.T.) (*Tawakkul*) he pursues the causes and forgets that death and destruction are obvious.

Angel Versus Satan

When on the one hand Satan introduces thoughts in the heart of a person that are destructive of the faith, on the other hand the angels appointed by Allah (S.w.T.) to keep company with the person give him thoughts of benevolence and virtue. Definitely if Satan tells a person to commit suicide to rid himself of the unbearable cares, the angels warn him not to do such a precipitate act that he would render himself unfortunate and his Hereafter would be destroyed. But a person who had been following Satan all his life will not see reason.

There is another way Satan overwhelms people. In the beginning he encourages them to do good deeds. But in fact they ultimately lead to evil. For example: He introduces a *Mustahab* (desirable) thought in a person's heart to nullify some of his *Wajib* (mandatory) acts. Satan even tempts the person to commit some sinful act in the process. Even he misguides the person to wrongly consider a sinful act as prayer. The man in his ignorance carries on these sinful acts. Satan persuades the man to do the mandatory things and keeps domineering him to convert virtue into vice.

Since these machinations of Satan are very subtle and secret, man generally falls into the trap. Therefore one has to be alert to these things. To explain this aspect a few examples are given.

1. In Nahi Anil Munkar (Denying The Forbidden), Irtikab Or Commission Of Munkar Or Forbidden

A person sees someone urinating in the direction of the *Qibla*. Instead of politely advising the person that the act is prohibited (*Haram*) and impressing upon him the sanctity of the direction in which the *Ka'aba* or *Qibla* is situated, he starts haranguing him. He sees another person urinating in a standing posture and tells him angrily that he was doing it like a dog instead of politely telling him that this way the urine, which is unclean (*Najis*) would splash on his trousers and limbs and the right way is to do it in a sitting posture. If the person thinks that by such impolite and hurting behavior he is doing *Nahi 'anil Munkar*, stopping someone from doing the prohibited (*Haram*), he is the guilty of the *Munkar* himself by adopting the impolite and hurting manner of trying to reform the persons.

2. Theological Education of Children

The son of a person doesn't offer his mandatory prayers. His first duty is to advise him nicely and affectionately to cultivate the habit of regularity in prayer. If from the beginning the father adopts harsh measures of reprimanding and bodily punishments, or stopped his pocket money, then the child would turn stubborn and might also start stealing money to meet his needs. In this situation the father will be a sinner from the point of view of *Nahi 'anil Munkar*.

3. Reducing the Recitation of The Holy Qur'an to a Show

A person has good voice and is also conversant with *Tajweed* or the right way of intonation of the text of the Holy Qur'an. Satan induces him to recite loudly that people listen to his reading and both will derive felicity from the act. But the main intent of Satan here will be to dominate his psyche to make a show of his good voice and prowess at the recitation of the Book and feel proud at the appreciation and accolades from others. This way, instead of earning the Goodwill of Allah (S.w.T.), he will become the subject of His ire and deprive himself of the Reward for the *Mustahab* act!

4. The Pulpit & Arch: the Playfield of Satan

A person is well versed in the knowledge of the Faith. Satan persuades him to guide the people and answer their difficult questions. But at the same time he introduces the element of pride in their hearts for their erudition. The person writes a book that is definitely a service to the community. But in the eyes of Allah (S.w.T.) his effort is negated because of the pride the person feels for his scholarship.

Another scholar, who is a person of great power of speech and oration, is told by *Iblis* that the pulpit and the arch (*Mihrab*) are the rightful places for the Prophet (S) and the Imam and that he is their successor. He must guide the people, instruct them about the rewards for prayer and supplication and encourage them to adopt piety and *Tawakkul*. But at the same time Satan introduces the instinct of pride, greed and urge for having sycophants around him. As the interest of the person in the pulpit and the arch increases in the person, in the same proportion his status diminishes. As a result the steps of the pulpit become the way to Hell for him and the arch the pit of Hell.

5. Alone With a Stranger Woman

Stranger (*Non-Mahram*) man and woman being together in privacy can be a precursor to many a sin. Satan is always on the lookout for such situations. This sort of a situation is ideal for him to cause the destruction of the parties concerned.

Man should know that loneliness and privacy with a non-Mahram, even if it is for the purpose of prayers, is not only the cause of disputes but is *Haram* (forbidden) too. Even in such a situation prayer too is void.

To understand the problems related with privacy and loneliness with strange women, we refer you to our eighth talk pertaining to *Barseesa*.

The Acid Test For Good & Evil is the Holy Shari'ah

One might say that whenever a doubt comes across the heart of a person about a certain act, he should as well abstain from it for the fear of it being satanic, and even if it is legitimate, the doubt might turn it sinful.

Our reply to this contention, may Allah (S.w.T.) forbid, is not that the virtuous acts and prayers to Allah (S.w.T.) should be avoided. What we mean is that one should try to be in a state of *Isti'adha* to the Almighty.

To further illustrate our point, it is necessary to say that every thought that comes to the heart of a person should be weighed in the scale of *Shari'ah*. If it is proved to be in accord with the Commands of Allah (S.w.T.), then he should beware of satanic doubts and perform the act purely for the pleasure of Allah (S.w.T.). This is very necessary because Satan is always on a lookout for opportunities to disrupt the prayers of the person for coming near to Allah (S.w.T.).

Treatment Through Isti'adha is Essential

The only remedy for the person is to keep at arm's length from Satan and seek Allah (S.w.T.)'s protection against his intrigue. Therefore it is binding on man that at the beginning of every virtuous act, whether *Mustahab* (optional) or *Wajib* (mandatory), he must do *Isti'adha* by saying *audhu billahi min ash shaitanir rajeem* in such a manner that the heart is totally with the tongue. To be precise, every good act, about veracity of which the *Shari'ah* approves, should be performed implicitly but during the performance he should continue seeking Allah (S.w.T.)'s protection against Satan that the task is accomplished without any blemish and gets Allah (S.w.T.)'s approval and acceptance.

Identity of Satan in the Holy Qur'an

Allah (S.w.T.) has introduced Satan at many places in the Qur'an as the enemy of man. He has also warned man to beware of Satan's intrigues and to keep away from him.

إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

He only enjoins you evil and indecency, and that you may speak against Allah what you do not know (Sura al-Baqara, 2: 169)

أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

Did I not charge you, O children of Adam! that you should not serve the Shaitan? Surely he is your open enemy (Sura Ya Sin, 36:60)

Therefore, one who has Faith in Allah (S.w.T.), His Prophet (S) and the Qur'an, should deem it necessary to be a sworn enemy of Satan and abhor friendship with him.

It is very clear from these discussions that friendship with Satan means getting dominated by the doubts created by him and following his dictates. Enmity of Satan means defying his temptations and keeping steadfast on the Commandments of Allah (S.w.T.).

Defying Satan is a Difficult Task

Since Satan's temptations and intrigues are all compatible with the sensual desires of human beings, they are very difficult to be contended with.

For example: A person is very fond of honey and has sufficient quantity available with him. But an eminent physician is present there and tells him that honey is harmful for him and that he should abstain from consuming it. Another person tells him that the physician is a quack and therefore he is advising you not to take honey. In fact he is envious of you that you possess a lot of honey and he doesn't have any himself. In such a situation how can we expect the person to give ear to the physician?

Or, a youth sits at a lonely place with a young damsel and the accursed Satan upbraids them to commit a foul deed. With this end Satan uses all his powers of persuasion to involve them in the sin and it will be very difficult for the persons to defy and keep to the legitimate (*Rahmani*) path.

'Umar Ibn Sa'd and Satanic & Rahmani Thoughts

'Umar Ibn Sa'd, who was a worldly person greedy of power, committed the satanic act of fighting with Imam Husayn (a.s.) to get the emirate of Rayy as reward from the accursed Yazid. But he refused to accept the *Rahmani* thought conveyed by his father Saad b. al-Waqqas through his friend Kamil. The details of this are mentioned in the books of *Maqatil*.

Satan's Task is to Tempt

As a hungry dog doesn't leave a place where there are bones, Satan doesn't go away from hearts that have the filth of carnal desires. Satan will not allow that person to perform any act properly.

Our statement proves that the cause of ruination of men is their own carnal desire and their temptations of Satan. He works as a catalyst for these activities in the minds of men.

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعَدَ الْحَقُّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ وَمَا كَانَ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ إِلَّا أَنْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ فَاسْتَجَبْتُمْ لِي فَلَا تَلُومُونِي وَلُومُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مَا أَنَا بِمُصْرِخِكُمْ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِمُصْرِخِيَّ إِنِّي كَفَرْتُ بِمَا أَشْرَكْتُمُونِ مِنْ قَبْلُ إِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ

And the Shaitan shall say after the affair is decided: 'Surely Allah promised you the promise of truth, and I gave you promises, then failed to keep them to you, and I had no authority over you, except that I called you and you obeyed me, therefore do not blame me but blame yourselves: I cannot be your aider (now) nor can you be my aiders; surely I disbelieved in your associating me with Allah before; surely it is the unjust that shall have the painful punishment.' (Sura Ibrahim, 14:22)

On the Day of Judgement, when the people destined for the Hell complain to Satan about the way he tempted and misled them, he will say, "Whatever promises Allah made to you were right and whatever I promised was absolutely wrong but it was your mistake that you trusted my promises. I have never forced you into anything but only invited you to sin and you complied with the invitation. Why do you now make me the target of your complaints? Today neither can anyone help you nor do I have any use of you. In the world you treated me equal to Allah and now your fate is to bear the hardships of Hell."

Satan thus played a dominating role in the destruction of man by tempting him to yield to the carnal desires. In other words, the internal enemy of man, the desires, and Satan, the external enemies join hands and render him helpless.

The Poor Complainants

If man turns towards Allah (S.w.T.) in this predicament and pleads with Him for his helplessness and seeks His Protection against the intrigue of Satan, Allah (S.w.T.) definitely listens to the appeals of the weak and relieves them from difficulties.

Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a.s.) says in one of his supplications:

"Only Your Munificence can save me from Your retribution, or my humility and lamentations would come to my rescue."

In another supplication the Imam (a.s.) says:

"We are those defenseless people whose protection You have made imperative on Yourself. We are the victims whom You have promised to relieve of their hardships."

Another supplication of the Imam (a.s.) goes like this:

"Because of suspicion and weakness of faith Satan took my reins in his hands. I am scared of his bad company and my psyche is in his evil clutches. I seek Your protection from his evil dominance and plead

humbly to free me from Satan's treacherous dominance.”

Humility & Obedience to Allah (S.w.T.)

The only source of getting oneself rid of the intrigues of Satan is the Court of Allah (S.w.T.) through prayer and lamentation. Allah (S.w.T.) definitely listens to one who laments with humility. Allah (S.w.T.) says:

فَلَوْلَا إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

Yet why did they not, when Our punishment came to them, humble themselves? But their hearts hardened and the Shaitan made what they did fair-seeming to them. (Sura al-An'aam, 6:43)

If they had remembered Allah (S.w.T.) at the time they became the victims of the calamity, and pleaded with Him with humility and lamentation, He would certainly have given them salvation. But Satan kept them away from Remembering Allah (S.w.T.) by engrossing them in carnal desires.

One who forgets Allah (S.w.T.), trusts only in the circumstances of acquiring benefits and warding off harms. He thinks it is unnecessary to plead with Allah (S.w.T.) lamenting humbly. Such a person will be deprived of the attention of Allah (S.w.T.) in times of difficulty and will be unable to protect himself from the intrigues of his enemy.

About Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.)

Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.)'s episode of getting forced into loneliness with Zulaikha is full of lessons for people. To save himself from the temptations of Zulaikha, Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.) lamented and pleaded with Allah (S.w.T.), and Allah (S.w.T.) saved him from the calamity in a wondrous manner. A complete Chapter of the Holy Qur'an has been earmarked to relate this episode that people take lesson from it and in times of difficulty follow the footsteps of Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.). This Chapter of the Qur'an is a beacon for achieving felicity and guidance for people

لَقَدْ كَانَ فِي قَصَصِهِمْ عِبْرَةً لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

In their histories there is certainly a lesson for men of understanding. (Sura Yusuf, 12: 111)

It is appropriate that we dwell briefly on the episode of Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.).

Love Renders Helpless

Although Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.) was bought by Aziz of Egypt as a slave, his personality and character impressed Aziz so much that he treated Yusuf (a.s.) with great respect and consideration. He was provided quarters in the palace of Aziz and it is there that he attained majority from childhood. Aziz had very strongly commended Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.)'s good character to his queen, Zulaikha.

Besides the specific recommendation of her husband, Aziz, Zulaikha was herself much impressed with the good looks and character of Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.). She admired him very much. She fell madly in love with him. This became a major and destructive scandal for the realm of Egypt. She was rendered helpless in front of her bondsman slave. She planned every moment to be in his company. But however much she tried, she did not meet with any success. She tried much to entice him with her charms and beauty. She only got back only quiet and disinterest from Yusuf (a.s.) in return.

The True Love

Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.) was free of the carnal desires and deeply in love with Allah (S.w.T.). He was so engrossed with the ultimate bliss that the transient beauty and charm had no meaning for him. Zulaikha, therefore, was defeated in all her attempts at tempting him. When it was unbearable for her, she decided to take the final step.

She converted a remote room of her palace as her private boudoir. She got it furnished with great care. She then dressed herself in a sensuous manner to enhance her charms and called Yusuf (a.s.) into her boudoir. She was sure that he would not be able to escape from her charms now and would fulfill her desires. She was also proudly confident that since he was her slave, he will have to comply with her wish.

As soon as Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.) entered the room, she shut the door and presented herself to him with all the charms at her command and said, "Come! Fulfill my wish!"

None Other Than Allah (S.w.T.) Can Help

Imagine the predicament of Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.) at this stage. He was confronted with such a huge calamity. Such a trial it was for him! On the one hand the charm of Zulaikha's profound beauty and on the other satanic temptations and environment. The Queen of Egypt was inviting, rather commanding, him to succumb to her charms. It is true that there was nothing to protect him other than Allah (S.w.T.)'s help !

But Yusuf, whose heart was full of Allah (S.w.T.)'s love, didn't comply with the carnal wish of the queen of Egypt and his feet remained firm on the path of righteousness. He pleaded with Allah (S.w.T.), lamenting, for His help against the machination of Satan.

Isti'adha With Allah (S.w.T.)

At this stage Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.) said:

قَالَ مَعَاذَ اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ رَبِّي أَحْسَنَ مَثْوَايَ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ

He said: I seek Allah's refuge, surely my Lord made good my abode: Surely the unjust do not prosper. (Sura Yusuf, 12:23)

Hadrat Yusuf told Zulaikha that his respect and value in the eyes of her husband, and her own, is because of Allah (S.w.T.)'s Wish that He made you favorably disposed towards me. Therefore, I shall have to obey Him and seek His help to save myself from your temptations. Since your desire and wish is satanic, my compliance with it would bring Allah (S.w.T.)'s Retribution on me! Therefore, I cannot accede to your wish and displease Allah (S.w.T.) who has endowed bounties on me directly or through you. Going against His commands is impossible for me!

The Real Succour

Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.), who was a dedicated creature of Allah (S.w.T.) and His true lover, sought Allah (S.w.T.)'s help and protection in the matter which was full of dangers. Allah (S.w.T.) too had filled his heart with the light of faith and had given him strength of conviction that he refrained from the sin and protected himself from all the temptations of Zulaikha. In fact to save himself against her advances, he ran towards the bolted door. Zulaikha at the height of her carnal desire pulled at the shirt of Yusuf (a.s.) from behind. Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.) was successful in getting out of the door but his shirt was torn from the back because Zulaikha was pulling it with extreme ferocity. When both of them emerged from the room, they found Aziz standing in front of them.

Zulaikha took the initiative, to prove herself innocent, told to her husband, Aziz, that Yusuf (a.s.) was trying to molest her and that he should be put into prison.

Now Yusuf (a.s.) had to tell the truth. He told Aziz, the King of Egypt that Zulaikha herself was nursing foul intentions.

A babe in the cradle spoke, with the wish of Allah (S.w.T.), and said that if Yusuf (a.s.)'s shirt was torn from the front then he is guilty of what Zulaikha is accusing him of. But he was running away from her to save himself, and she was trying to prevent him from going away by holding his shirt from the back then it would be torn only at the back. In this event, he is not guilty of the act that Zulaikha is accusing him of. This witness went in favour of Yusuf (a.s.) and Allah (S.w.T.) has relieved him of the trouble.

كَذَلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلَصِينَ

.. Thus (it was) that We might turn away from him evil and indecency, surely he was one of Our sincere servants. (Sura Yusuf, 12:24)

Further Trial

Certain ladies of Egypt upbraided Zulaikha for falling in love with a slave. Zulaikha tried to convince them that they could not possibly imagine the temptingly handsome looks of Yusuf (a.s.). She told them that the proudest of women would surrender to him without a whimper of protest.

She invited all these ladies for a meal and in the midst of that, she summoned Yusuf (a.s.). When he came, all the women fell in love with him at the first sight. They were so much engrossed in looking at him that the oranges they were about to cut with the knives in their hands, fell off and they cut their own fingers in utter confusion. This was a very difficult situation for him.

Prior to this he had to face only Zulaikha. But now there was a bevy of beauties, who were after him. They too made the same demands as Zulaikha did earlier. In his helplessness, Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.) appealed to Allah (S.w.T.) with humility and lamentation to protect him from the intrigue of the women. He pleaded with Allah (S.w.T.) that if He didn't protect him, he would join the ranks of the ignorant people.

Allah (S.w.T.) protected him from Satan's machination and gave to his heart the light of faith. He gave him such strength that Hadrat Yusuf (a.s.) overpowered all the women and their intrigue became ineffective. He agreed rather to go into prison rather than succumbing to their overtures. Allah (S.w.T.) answered his prayer and saved him from the intrigue of those women.

A Tale of Admonition

If this story is properly understood, every person who has total faith in Allah (S.w.T.) will seek His Protection whenever he is under pressure of carnal temptations. Allah (S.w.T.) will definitely answer his prayer and protect him from satanic temptations.

In conclusion of this discussion we are recounting here a recommendation of Amir al-Mu'minīn, Imam 'Ali (a.s.).

Isti'adha of Imam 'Ali (a.s.)

Nawf al-Bikali said that he saw Hadrat Amir al-Mu'minin (a.s.) going out of the city and proceeding swiftly towards the desert. Nawf asked him, "O Maula! Where are you going?" He replied, "O Nawf! Let me go. My wishes and my needs are calling me towards my true love!" Nawf asked, "O Master! What are your wishes?" He replied, "Allah (S.w.T.) knows very well the center of my wishes and it is not necessary to tell anyone else about my desires. Man has to take care not to tell others about his desires

and wishes lest he make others partners to Allah (S.w.T.).”

Then Nawf said, “O Amir al-Mu’minin! I am worried that at all times striving to accumulate worldly wealth, I have made the world as the sole axis of my activity and am depriving myself of the preparation for the Hereafter!” Imam ‘Ali (a.s.) said, “Get attached to Allah’s Munificence. He is the protector of the helpless and succour of the pious.” Nawf said, “O Maula! Kindly guide me to that Court.” Hadrat ‘Ali (a.s.) said, “Allah is Beneficent and Great. He doesn’t disappoint anyone. With a true heart and total dedication think of Him and you can achieve your desires with His help.”¹

¹. Ref: Bihar al-Anwār, Vol 9, Kitab ad-Du’a, Chapter: Ad’iyaa wa munajaat.

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