

The Twenty Fifth Talk

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلِصِينَ

***He said: 'Then by Thy Might I will surely make them live an evil life, all, Except Thy servants from among them, the purified ones.'* (Sura Sad, 38:82-83)**

[Actions Depends on the Niyyah or Intention](#)

The basis of Faith is on the sincerity of the intention, otherwise all the actions are exercises in futility even if they are as huge as the mountains. If they are not performed with sincerity of purpose, their weight will be no more than a piece of straw. Prayer without sincerity too is not of any value because Allah (S.w.T.) says,

فَاعْبُدِ اللّٰهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ

so worship Allah, offering Him sincere devotion (Sura az-Zumar, 39:2)

The following tradition of the Prophet (S), quoted from *Us'ul al-Kafi*, is universally accepted by both Shi'a and Sunni jurists:

The Prophet (S) said: "actions depend on the intents" At another place the tradition is quoted as:

Innamal 'amaal bin-niyaat

Actions are judged by their intentions

Without sincere intent, any actions that are performed for show are of no use. Actions are effective, if intent is true. If any act is performed only for the pleasure of Allah (S.w.T.), then it is acceptable; otherwise it is senseless and useless. Sometimes such acts can be listed among the vices committed by a person for the Day of Reckoning.

The Intent of Closeness During Prayer

You know it well that any prayer without intent (*Niyyah*) is meaningless. In every mandatory prayer the intent of nearness to Allah (S.w.T.) is essential. The intent is not just saying a few words, loudly or in your heart, that you are praying, or fasting, or performing the *Hajj*. When you go to the place of ablution to perform the ablution, the intent of going there to perform the ablution is in itself the intent for that act.

Now, who has motivated you to perform this act? In fact it is Allah (S.w.T.)'s Order to pray that has motivated you to do the ablution in preparation for the prayer. So, your *Niyyah* or intent to pray is in your action. You can repeat the wording of the *Niyyah* when you actually stand up for offering the prayer.

Now, who has motivated you to perform this act? The motivation is Allah (S.w.T.)'s Order to you to offer the mandatory Prayers. Repeating of the words of the *Niyyah* may be done. But it is the obedience of Allah (S.w.T.)'s Order and your intent to pray is the motivation. But if the motivation is something other than Obedience to Allah (S.w.T.) and the desire to be close to Him, then however much you say *Qurbatan il Allah*, it will not have any relation whatsoever with the truth. It will, in fact, be telling lies that will destroy all your actions. Therefore it is imperative that the prayer should be with absolute purity of heart and secondly, only for Allah (S.w.T.)'s pleasure. In His court only the truth is acceptable.

One person says the *Adhaan*, but his intent is not prayer but to show off his skill of good recitation or to project himself as a man of piety. Then this act is bad in view of the *Shari'ah*. Such acts might even be counted among the sins of the persons who perpetrate them.

Rain Falls When the Prophet (S.) Prays

It is narrated in the *Usul al-Kafi* that some companions of the Prophet (S) came to his presence and said that it didn't rain for a long period of time. They requested him to pray to Allah (S.w.T.) for rainfall. The Prophet (S) raised his hands for prayer and said, "O Allah ! Send rains!" The prayer didn't bring any positive result. The companions again came to the Prophet (S) and renewed their plea. The Prophet (S) again raised his hands skywards and prayed, "O Sustainer! The world is suffering for want of rains! Don't make the sins of the people the cause for their deprivation of Your Blessing!" Even before the Prophet (S) brought his hands down dark clouds gathered and it rained so much that it was stagnation everywhere. The companions asked the Prophet (S) why it didn't rain when he prayed for the first time. The Prophet (as.) replied, "I did pray then, but with not the fullest of intent."

Allama Majlisi says in *Sharh al-Kafi* that when the Prophet (S) prayed for the first time, to keep the word of the companions, and in view of Allah (S.w.T.)'s Wish, he had perhaps said some supplicatory words. It used to usually happen that for keeping the companions happy he used to agree to their requests. Therefore the first prayer was not from the depth of the heart and was just to satisfy the companions. But the second time the Prophet (S) bore witness to the people's difficulties and made a recommendation for them, although they were guilty of sinning and not deserving of the bounty! But even then if Allah (S.w.T.) Wished, He must save them by sending the rains. This prayer was from the depth of the heart and was duly answered.

Insincerity and Hypocrisy

These days insincere flattery is very much in vogue that is limited to lip service. For example: You know that a particular person is your veritable foe, but when he speaks with you, he attempts to falsely prove that he is your well wisher and friend. Don't you dislike his hypocrisy? Stealth and show is liked by none. The insincere show of friendship is not liked by anyone. Then how will Allah (S.w.T.) like this habit in persons? When you say "*Allahu Akbar*", there must be sincerity in your statement. This statement has to be made with utmost sincerity that Allah (S.w.T.) is the Greatest and has control over everything in the universe. Without this sincerity how one can expect that the prayers will be accepted by Allah (S.w.T.)? The same words repeated without sincerity might even earn the ire of Allah (S.w.T.)!

Praise and Thankfulness for Bounties

Saying *Alhamdu lillah* is justified when it comes from the depths of the heart and with sincerity of intent for praising the Almighty Allah (S.w.T.). Whenever there comes any blessing from Him, one should say *Alhamdu lillah*. Sometimes the use of these words doesn't sound appropriate. Specially when they are used insincerely. When you accept that the *Mun'im al-Haqiqi* (the Real Benefactor) is Allah (S.w.T.), then what use flattering Zaid, 'Umar, Khalid etc. When Allah (S.w.T.) is all Praiseworthy, then why sing the praises of others? This only goes to prove that your saying *Alhamdu Lillah* is insincere. Allah (S.w.T.) is fully aware of the thinking of your heart better than you!

Unfounded Claims

If your son professes obedience to you in his talks but in reality he is very stubborn and disobedient and you are aware that his behavior is hypocritical. Will you be happy with such a son whose claims and actions are diametrically opposite? Orally he says that whatever he has is yours, but in the time of need he makes lame excuses. If you cannot be satisfied with such a son, then how can you expect Allah (S.w.T.) to be kind on us after all our insincerity.

Cheating Not Permissible

A wise person said that we dislike show and cheating in our mundane day-to-day affairs. For example: You have instructed the builder to construct the house of a certain design and should be strong and durable. But when he constructs and hands over to you, you find that instead of using properly tempered bricks, he had used weak and untempered bricks. Instead of steel he had used wood in the construction. But he has dressed the exterior very well with good paints. You will certainly tell him that you are not impressed with the outward show.

Or, for example: You have asked at home for the preparation of a sweet. When it was ready and you tasted it, you discovered that it was neither sweet nor good. However much the lady of the house praises the excellent color of the sweet, its good smell etc, you will not approve of it.

When you don't tolerate cheating in the worldly affairs, and don't accept things if they are not truly made to your specifications, then how can you expect that in the spiritual matters Allah (S.w.T.) will condone your hypocrisy.

The misfortune is that we are never ready to accept our failings. We like very much to be heaped with false praises by our compatriots. The human psyche is so lowly that it is happy with falsehoods and gets upset with the truths.

Reforming the Hearts is Necessary

Wise is the person who understands that he is unwell and then looks around for treatment. If the person is ignorant of his ailment, the wrong treatment might kill him. We must know that in the Court of Allah (S.w.T.) nothing is acceptable unless it is accompanied with true intent. "Allah sees your hearts and not your faces." If in your heart there is the ailment of the love for the world, you must arrange to cure it and reform its likings and inclinations. Beware! the selfishness and praise of self might spoil all your matters.

If you are the owner of a sincere heart and right intent, then the slip of tongue might not harm you. This is true in the matters of *Fiqh* too. For example: While offering the *Maghrib* prayer, the intent was to offer the same, but through a slip of the tongue, you have done the *Niyyah* for the *Isha* Prayer. Here, there is no problem because your intent was to offer the *Maghrib* prayer only. The reason for this is that the standard and the balance is your heart and your intent.

The Battle of Jamal and Imam 'Ali's Companions

It is narrated that during the Battle of Jamal, a companion of Imam 'Ali (a.s.) took a deep sigh and said, "How I wish my brother too participated in this Jihad!" The person's brother was known as a true friend of Imam 'Ali (a.s.), for some reason he was unable to join in the expedition. Imam 'Ali asked, "Is your brother desirous of taking part in the battle with sincerity of heart?" The companion replied in the

affirmative. Then Imam 'Ali said: "Don't worry! He is one of us in this expedition! Because of his true intent, he is as good as taking part in the battle." Then Imam 'Ali (a.s.) added, "There are lots of others, who will desire to participate with us in the battle of truth and falsehood. They haven't yet arrived in the world but are on the backs of their parents!" No doubt, this participation is because of true intent and desire of the heart.

[May Allah \(S.w.T.\) Give us True Intent](#)

We seek from Allah (S.w.T.) the truthfulness of intent. We follow our Imam az-Zaman (a.j.) and say in our supplication:

"O Allah (S.w.T.)! Give us the will for Your Obedience and endow us with the blessing of keeping distance from sins and have the right intents".

Sometimes it happens that man busies himself in the obedience of Allah (S.w.T.), but his activities are on the mundane activities. There is no doubt that he prays and supplicates, but his actions are not of true intent but are under the desires of his psyche. He thinks that he is doing things *Qurbatan ilallah.*, but in fact Satan is deceiving him.

O Allah! Save us from the machinations of *Iblis* and also from the desires of the psyche.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/istiadha-seeking-allahs-protection-satan-sayyid-abdul-husayn-dastghaib-shi-razi/twenty-fifth-talk#comment-0>