

The Twenty Ninth Talk

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

قَالَ فَبِعِزْتِكَ لَا غُوَيْنَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

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)

Incidental Motivations Explained

Last evening we have said that presence of incidental motivations does not affect the quality of the main acts provided the main purpose of the act is to seek Allah (S.w.T.)'s rewards and the fear of retribution. Today we discuss further on the subject.

One person, with true spirit, *Qurbatan ilallah*, wants to go on *Hajj* this year. He also has the fear that he might expire before the time for *Hajj* arrives, and his end might be like that of *Yahood* and *Nasara*. Incidentally he also wishes that one thing that is rare in his place, and available in plenty at the

Haramain ash-Sharifain he would like to buy and bring along or he would take a Persian carpet along with him while going for the *Hajj* and sell it there for profit. These thoughts and acts will not affect the quality of his pilgrimage that the motivation is incidental

As against this, another person who wants to transact worldly business and his motive is only to acquire monetary gains through his journey for the *Hajj*, his trip will not be acceptable as a pilgrimage. From such an effort one cannot expect to get Allah (S.w.T.)'s Rewards. In a nutshell, for every act we have to understand the true motive behind it.

Compensation is not Justified

Now that the talk has reached this stage, I shall recount what is said in *Urwat al-Wuthqa*. We have already said that if prayer is accompanied with fear of retribution and expectation of Allah (S.w.T.)'s rewards, then it is correct. The only condition is that it should not be with a desire for worldly compensation as is generally with the *Mustahab* (desirable) acts. Briefly, every act that is for commercial transaction of give and take is not counted as a prayer.

For example, we hear that someone offered the prayer of *Sayyida az-Zahra* for the dissolution of his difficulties and he was successful, then it will be considered as compensation for his labors. It will not be termed as prayer and the reward he got was like the return for his labor in this world. He imagines that after fulfillment of his worldly desire he has to offer two genuflections of *Salat ash-Shukr* as if Allah (S.w.T.) is needy of this prayer!

On What Support?

Considering oneself owner of something in competition of Allah (S.w.T.) is a falsehood. What do you have that you would give to Allah (S.w.T.) and seek something in return from Him? For example: Consider the two genuflections of prayer that we have referred earlier in this talk. You stand up, you bend, then prostrate your forehead on the ground and with your tongue you do the *Dhikr*. Now, think for a while: Who has given birth to you, who made your limbs, who has provided equity to your limbs and other parts of the body that you are capable of performing every action with ease? Who has provided the faculty of expression to the little clump of flesh in your mouth?

As a matter of fact besides the motive of performing an act nothing is your own; even that faculty has been provided to you by Allah (S.w.T.)! What is it that you can give to Allah (S.w.T.) and claim something from Him in compensation? Whatever animate and inanimate things exist in the universe are His. This hand that you extend towards Him for help is His ! From your head to your toe, your entire existence, and your capabilities, and all your faculties are gifted to you by Him! He has made them subservient to you at His Will. When you make the intent for prayer, you are able easily to stand up. Who motivated your heavy body to become alert?

More Fascinating than a Magnet

Abu ‘Ali Sina says that people are fascinated with the magnet that pulls the needles towards it. But they are not surprised at the fact that how Allah (S.w.T.) has made the heavy body subservient to the categorical psyche (*Nafs al-Natiqa*).

Have you ever acted as a pallbearer? Carrying the dead is not possible for a single person all alone. It is necessary to have a few persons for the task. Is the dead person not the same body that moved as he wished?

Your wish to act and do certain things too has been endowed by Allah (S.w.T.). You cannot do anything against the Wish of Allah (S.w.T.):

وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ

And you do not will anything except that Allah wills (Sura al-Insaan, 76:30)

Nothing Fights for Nothing!

Whatever is there in the world belongs to Allah (S.w.T.). He has provided the norms of rights and duties for the angels, *jinns* and men with His wisdom in His Holy Jurisprudence (*Shari’ah*). Everything that you give and whatever you take is only at His discretion. Everything, in the end, is destined towards Him.

You should therefore be careful in making transactions and seeking compensations in your prayers, lest all your efforts go in vain. Don't imagine for a moment that you have given money or taken money and strived hard for your goal. This will be tantamount to thinking that you have given a certain thing that belongs to you and now you expect to get rewards or retribution in return!

Remember! Man is just a creature of dust who exists for a fixed tenure in this world with the will and wish of Allah (S.w.T.). Don't value this temporary respite very much. After a very long time of death when his grave would go asunder, he will know that he was a creature of the dust.

Those hands were very strong that crafted the doll out of dust, put life into it and gave it the faculty of speaking, hearing and seeing. Made it active and strong. And ultimately returned it back to its original state of dust.

مِنْهَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ وَفِيهَا نُعِيدُكُمْ وَمِنْهَا نُخْرِجُكُمْ تَارَةً أُخْرَى

From it (the earth) We created you and into it We shall send you back and from it will We raise you a second time. (Sura Ta Ha, 20:55)

When you recite the *Ziyarat Aashura* or *Ziyarat al-Jamia*, you must be aware of the fact as to who gave you the tongue and made it subservient to you. When we consider the causes of our optional acts, you surprise has no end that who gave us the wisdom and thinking for performing these acts? Who gave us the reasons to exist, gave us the capability to act and removed the impediments from our way?

First of all, there is no possibility of compensation for the acts. We neither have wealth nor anything belongs to us for which we might expect compensation. We only have a will that too is dependent on His Wish!

Then.....

How Much is the Return for Actions?

If return for actions is necessary, then let us see how much is our right for returns? O persons who pray, fast, perform the *Hajj*! If your actions are assessed, what should be the compensation in your view?

Or those who pray in the nights and proudly claim that they remain awake the whole night in prayer and tell that they are practicing *Tahajjud*! Do they know what is the wage of a janitor who remains awake the whole night to guard the properties?

Therefore, in accordance with your own decision that there must be compensation for your action, honestly calculate how much compensation you deserve for your acts. You had been to the *Hajj*. What is the return for this act? You might not have suffered any monetary loss during the *Hajj*. You fasted during Ramadhan, which means that you had postponed your lunch by a few hours! There are lots of other people in the world, although they are not fasting, have to skip lunch because of their duties and circumstances. So what compensation you expect for performing the act that had been mandated by Allah (S.w.T.)?

Unfortunate is the person who thinks that he must get returns from Allah (S.w.T.) for any act of his. He should hold the balance in his hands and do the accounting of plus and minus!

Expectation of Rewards

The motivation or otherwise of man's actions must be the promise of reward and punishment made by Allah (S.w.T.). Only in this situation his actions will be termed legitimate and he will get rewarded.

We should present our prayers in the court of Allah (S.w.T.) with extreme fear and dedication and with full knowledge that He is not needy of our prayers and the acceptance thereof is solely dependent on His Wish and Will!

To save oneself from selfishness and false pride in the court of Allah (S.w.T.), one should suppress the psyche to the utmost and adopt the feeling of utmost dependence and fear of Allah (S.w.T.) while in

prayer. He should think in such a way that he is present in the court of Graciousness and Kindness (*Lutf wa Karam*). Allah (S.w.T.) has promised recompense and is the motivator of his actions. All his hopes rest in Him only.

Wise Men are Not Proud of their Actions

The people of wisdom are never proud of their actions. A person is extremely ignorant and unwise who thinks of rewards for whatever good acts he does and keeps himself in the mirage of false hopes and expectations all his life. But while departing from this world when the sun of the reality dawns on him, then the truth gets revealed to him that what he thought was like a mountain was no more than a piece of straw! That Day all the hidden things will become evident.

The Glow Worm and the Diamond

A person was travelling through the woods in the darkness of night. His eyes fell on a shining object and he thought it was a diamond. He carefully picked it along with the soil in its vicinity and preserved it in a small box that he had in his pocket. The next morning he went to a jeweller and told him that he had an expensive diamond for sale. The jeweller asked him to fetch the diamond. The man said it is necessary to take utmost care and the jeweller must accompany him to his residence instead of fetching the diamond to the shop. The jeweller reluctantly agreed to go along with him. The man took out the small box with care from his safe. But when the box was opened there was only a small quantity of soil and a dead glow-worm. The man wondered, what had happened to his diamond?!

When the jeweller asked for the facts, the man related what happened to him in the night. The jeweller said, “You foolish person! You have wasted my precious time! You had picked up a glow-worm in the night and thinking that it was a diamond you went through all the trouble!”

Tomorrow When the Acts Will be Balanced

O wise man! The prayer that you were offering in the thought that Allah (S.w.T.) needs it, in what expectation you were doing it? When tomorrow the truth is revealed, you will not get anything other than disappointment and humiliation.

Consider how the Prophets of Faith used to present themselves to Allah (S.w.T.) with humility and submissiveness. Imam Zayn al-‘Abidin (a.s.) submits to Allah (S.w.T.) in *Du'a Hamza ath-Thumali* in this manner:

O Allah! What am I that my act is considered of any value.

O Allah! Give us knowledge and understanding of the facts before it becomes too late for getting this comprehension!

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