

## Thirty-Second Hadith: Conviction In Faith

بِالسَّنَدِ الْمُتَّصِلِ إِلَى مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ يَعْقُوبَ الْكُلَيْنِيِّ عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنِ الْمُعَلَّى بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ  
الْوَشَّاءِ عَنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سِنَانَ عَنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: مِنْ صِحَّةِ يَقِينِ الْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ أَنْ لَا يُرْضِيَ النَّاسَ  
بِسَخَطِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَلُومَهُمْ عَلَى مَا لَمْ يُؤْتِهِ اللَّهُ. فَإِنَّ الرِّزْقَ لَا يَسُوقُهُ حَرِصٌ حَرِيصٌ وَلَا يَرُدُّهُ كَرَاهِيَةٌ كَارِهِ. وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ  
فَرَّ مِنْ رِزْقِهِ كَمَا يَفْرُ مِنْ الْمَوْتِ لِأَدْرَكُهُ رِزْقُهُ كَمَا يُدْرِكُهُ الْمَوْتُ. ثُمَّ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَعْدَلِهِ وَقَسَطُهُ جَعَلَ الرُّوحَ وَالرَّاحَةَ  
فِي الْيَقِينِ وَالرِّضَا، وَجَعَلَ الْهَمَّ وَالْحُزْنَ فِي الشَّكِّ وَالسَّخَطِ.

With my continuous chain of transmission reaching up to Muhammad ibn Ya'qub al-Kulayni, from al-Husayn ibn Muhammad, from al-Mu'alla ibn Muhammad, from al-Hasan ibn 'Ali al-Washsha', from 'Abd Allah ibn Sinan, from Abu 'Abd Allah (A) that he said, "Among the things pertaining to the soundness of a Muslim's certitude [in faith] is that he would not please people while displeasing God, nor blame them for something that God has not given him. For, verily, [God's] rizq (provision, sustenance) is not brought about by anybody's greed, nor is it withheld by anyone's disapproval, and were anyone of you to flee from his rizq like lie flees death, his rizq would overtake him in the way he is overtaken by death." Then he added, "Indeed God, with His justice and fairness, has put joy and comfort in certainty (yaqin) and satisfaction (al-rida) and He has put sorrow and grief in doubt and dissatisfaction. [1](#)

### Exposition

Al-Jawhari says, *sakhal* (vowelized like *faras*) and *sukht* (vowelized like *qufl*) are the opposite of satisfaction (*rida*). Hence, *sakhita* means '*ghadiba*' (i.e. 'he became angry' or 'indignant') and such a one is *sakil* (angry). *Al-qist*, with *kasrah* of the *qaf*, mean justice ('*adl*'); hence its mention along with '*adl*' is for the sake of elucidation.

*Al-rawh* and *al-rahah* are synonymous, meaning comfort, as mentioned by al-Jawhari. Hence their mention alongside is for the sake of elucidation. Or that *rawh* means the peace of the heart and *rahah* signifies the ease of the body, as stated by Majlisi. [2](#)

As to *al-hamm* and *al-huzn*, al-Jawhari considers them as synonymous, on which basis their mention by side of one another would be elucidatory. And Majlisi says that *hamm* probably means the agitation felt by the soul at the time of experiencing (doubt and dissatisfaction), and *huzn* is the sorrow and anxiety felt after its passing away.<sup>3</sup>

## Section 1

As to the statement *وَلَا يَلُومُهُمْ عَلَى مَا لَمْ يُؤْتِهِ اللَّهُ* it has been considered to have two probable interpretations. First, that he would not blame the people and complain for their refraining from giving him something, as it is a matter subject to Divine power and providence, and God, the Exalted, has not decreed that gift as part of his provision, and one who is a man of conviction knows that it is an act of Divine providence and so he would not blame anyone. This interpretation has been suggested by the *muhaqqiq Fayd*<sup>4</sup> (M) and the learned traditionist, Majlisi, has also affirmed it.<sup>5</sup>

The honorable Fayd (M) has also suggested another interpretation, which is that one would not blame them for something God, the Exalted, has not given them, for God, the Exalted, has gifted the people differently and no one should be blamed for it [i.e. for not possessing something]. And this is like the tradition, which states that “Had the people known how God has created men, no one would blame another.”<sup>6</sup> The honorable traditionist Majlisi (M) has said, “The improbability of this interpretation is not hidden, especially on consideration of the following explanatory phrase:

...فَإِنَّ الرِّزْقَ لَا يَسُوقُهُ

...for, verily, [God’s] provision is not facilitated by...<sup>7</sup>

In the opinion of this author, the second interpretation is more appropriate than the first one, especially in view of the aforementioned explanatory phrase. That is because one may blame people in the state of need and straitened livelihood only if their livelihood (*rizq*) is under their own control and one’s effort and endeavor are the [efficient] means of its increase. Then one may say [to another], “[Look] I have tried and made effort, whereas you have not done so, and therefore you are afflicted with straitened livelihood.” However, the people of certainty know that livelihood is not obtained by one’s greed and effort, and so they do not blame others.

## Reconciling Traditions Concerning Livelihood Being Apportioned And Traditions Exhorting Effort

It should be known that the like of these noble traditions whose literal import is that the *rizq* is apportioned and predetermined—something which is also indicated by the noble verses of the Qur’an—do not contradict the traditions which command one to seek livelihood and exhort one to make effort in one’s occupation and trade, and even consider the lack of effort as reprehensible and blameworthy.

Thus, they consider one who fails to make an effort to seek livelihood as one whose prayers are not answered and whom God does not provide with livelihood. There are many traditions on this topic and it will suffice here to cite one *hadith*:

عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ شَيْخِ الطَّائِفَةِ قُدَّسَ سِرُّهُ بِإِسْنَادِهِ عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الصَّادِقِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَا فَعَلَ عُمَرُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ؟ قُلْتُ: جُعِلْتُ فِدَاكَ، أَقْبَلَ عَلَى الْعِبَادَةِ وَتَرَكَ التِّجَارَةَ. فَقَالَ: وَيْحَهُ! أَمَا عَلِمَ أَنْ تَارَكَ الطَّلَبَ لَا يُسْتَجَابُ لَهُ؟ إِنَّ قَوْمًا مِنْ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ لَمَّا نَزَلَتْ: ﴿وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ﴾ أَغْلَقُوا الْأَبْوَابَ وَأَقْبَلُوا عَلَى الْعِبَادَةِ وَقَالُوا: قَدْ كُفِينَا. فَبَلَغَ ذَلِكَ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ فَأَرْسَلَ إِلَيْهِمْ فَقَالَ: مَا حَمَلَكُمْ عَلَى مَا صَنَعْتُمْ؟ فَقَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، تَكْفَلْ لَنَا بِأَرْزَاقِنَا فَأَقْبَلْنَا عَلَى الْعِبَادَةِ. فَقَالَ: إِنَّهُ مَنْ فَعَلَ ذَلِكَ لَمْ يُسْتَجَبْ لَهُ. عَلَيْكُمْ بِالطَّلَبِ.

From Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, the Shaykh al-Ta'ifah al-Tusi (Q) who narrates with his isnad from 'Ali ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz that he said, "Abu 'Abd Allah (A) asked me, "What is 'Umar ibn Muslim doing?" I said, "May I be made your ransom, he has devoted himself to worship and he has abandoned his trade." He said, "Woe to him! Doesn't he know that the prayer of one who abandons the search (of livelihood) is not accepted? Indeed a group of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (S) locked their doors and turned to worship when this verse was revealed, 'And whosoever fears God, He will appoint for him a way out, and He will provide for him whence lie never reckoned (65:3).' When the Prophet (S) came to hear about it, he summoned them and asked them, 'What prompted you to do what you have done.' They said, 'O Messenger of Allah, God has guaranteed our livelihood and so we have turned to worship.' He said to them: The prayer of one who does that would not be accepted. You ought to seek livelihood."<sup>8</sup>

The reason for the absence of contradiction between the traditions is that livelihood, and all matters for that, are subject to God's power even after one's effort. Our effort is not an independent agent in the acquisition of livelihood. Rather, to make effort is a duty of the creatures, and the ordainment of the affairs and all apparent and non-apparent means, most of which are beyond the control of the creatures, is by the determination of the Exalted Creator.

Hence a human being of sound conviction and informed of the courses of matters—while he does not refrain from effort and performs his duties as prescribed by reason and revealed law, and not closing the door of effort with false excuses—still considers everything as being derived from the sacred Divine Being and does not consider anything as having any efficiency on the plane of being and its perfections. The seeker, the seeking, and the sought derive from Him. That which this noble tradition says, that the man of sound conviction does not blame anyone for the lack of increase in the people's livelihood, means that if they make the usual amount of effort they are not to be blamed. Moreover, to blame those who do not make the effort is preferable in order to induce them to effort—a point which is asserted in the noble traditions.

In fine, this theme is one of the ramifications of *jabr* and *tafwid* (predestination and free will) and one who

has studied that issue can discover the underlying fact of the matter, whose elaboration is beyond the scope of our discussion.

## **Section 2: The Signs Or Soundness Or Conviction**

In this noble tradition, two things are considered the signs of the soundness of one's conviction. First, that one should not seek the pleasure of the people at the cost of God's displeasure and wrath. Second, one should not blame people for what God has not given them. These two are the fruits of perfect conviction, and their opposite qualities are due to the weakness of conviction and an ailing faith. In these pages, whenever appropriate, we have explained faith, and conviction, and their fruits. Here, too, we shall briefly mention these two qualities in their state of soundness and health as well as their opposite condition.

One should know that a man seeks the pleasure and satisfaction of people and tries to win their hearts and to be in their good graces because he considers them to be effective in matters that are of his interest. For example, one who loves money and wealth feels humble before the rich; he flatters them and is obsequious in front of them.

Those who seek position and outward honor, flatter the subordinates and obsequiously seek to win their hearts somehow or another. The same thing goes on in a circle. The subordinates flatter men of position and the seekers of position flatter the mean subordinates, except those who, on the either side of the matter, have trained themselves through spiritual discipline and seek the pleasure of God. The world and its adornments do not shake them, and they seek the pleasure of God in leading, and seek God and truth in following.

### **The Twofold Classes Of The People**

The people of the world are briefly divisible into two classes. They are either those whom certitude has brought to the point that they see all the outward means and apparent agents as being subject to the perfect and eternal will of the Necessary Being. They see and seek nothing except God, and they believe that lie is the sole Master and Agent in the world and the Hereafter. Finding a certitude unmarred by deficiency, doubt, and hesitation, they have true faith in one of the noble verses of the Qur'an, which says:

﴿قُلْ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ﴾

**Say: O God, Master of all sovereignty, Thou givest sovereignty to whom Thou wilt, and seizest sovereignty from whom Thou wilt... (3:26)**

They consider God, the Exalted, the Master of the kingdom of being and all gifts to be from that Sacred

Being. They consider all the ebbs and flows of being and all the existential perfections to be derived from the Sacred Being in accordance with the [best] order [of existence] and the [universal] good. Of course, the doors of gnosis are opened for such persons and their hearts become divine. They do not attach any worth to the pleasure and displeasure of the people and seek nothing except God's good pleasure. Their eager eyes do not seek anything except God and in their hearts and with their entire being they murmur the melody, "My God, when You grant us, who can intercept Your favor? And should You deprive us [of anything], who can restore it to us?"

Hence, they close their eyes to the people, their favors and their world, opening the eyes of their need on God, glorious is His Majesty. Such persons would never exchange the displeasure of God, the Exalted, with the pleasure of the entire order of beings, as stated by the Commander of Faithful (A). While they attach no significance to anything except God, the Exalted, and consider all existents to be in need of Allah, nevertheless, they view all with the eyes of wonder, mercy and compassion, and do not blame anyone for any matter except in order to reform and educate him.

Hence such were the prophets (A) who viewed everything as belonging to God and as manifestations of His Beauty and Glory. They did not view God's creatures except with love and compassion, not blaming anyone in their hearts for any inadequacy and weakness, though they did blame them outwardly for the sake of the general good and the reform of the human family. This was among the fruits of the immaculate tree of certitude and faith and their understanding of the Divine laws.

However, as to the second group, they are those who are oblivious of God, and if perchance they attend, it is an inadequate attention and an incomplete faith. As a result, since attention to multiplicity and the outward causes and means has made them neglectful of the Cause of all causes, they seek the pleasure of the creatures.

At times, they are such that they seek to acquire the goodwill of the weakest of creatures while preparing the means of God's displeasure and wrath. Thus they are led to accommodate to the sinners, or neglect the duty of *amr bi al-ma'ruf* and *nahy 'an al-munkar* when conditions call for its performance, or they give decrees (*fatwa*) permitting what is unlawful, or are guilty of false testimony, or backbite and slander the faithful to please worldly people and men of outward status and position. All such conduct is due to the weakness of faith, or rather it constitutes a degree of idol worship (*shirk*). Such a view makes man prone to many fatal traits, including those mentioned in this noble tradition. Such a person has a bad opinion of God's servants and he treats them with enmity and hostility, blaming them and vilifying them in matters, and so on.

### **Section 3: The Views Of The Mu'tazilah And The Asha'irah And The Correct Position**

Majlisi, the traditionist (M) in *Mir'at al-uqul*, has a discussion under this noble tradition concerning

whether the *rizq* apportioned by God, the Exalted, is confined to what is lawful and whether it includes the unlawful also. He has cited the conflicting opinions of the Ash'arites and the Mu'tazilites on this issue and the recourse taken by the two sides to traditions and narrated texts. He considers the Imami position to be in accord with the view of the Mu'tazilites that the apportioned sustenance (*rizq al-maqsum*) does not include the unlawful and is limited to the lawful. He also cites the arguments of the *Mu'tazilah* that take recourse to the literal meaning of some verses and traditions and are based on the literal meaning of '*rizq*'—as is the practice of the Ash'arites and the Mu'tazilites.<sup>9</sup>

He has approved of the arguments of the *Mu'tazilah* and, apparently, finds their statements to be in accord with the dominant opinion of the Imamiyyah. However, it should be noted of that this issue is one of the corollaries of the problem of *jabr* and *tafwid*, and the Imami position in this regard neither conforms to that of the *Asha'irah* nor to that of the *Mu'tazilah*. Rather, the *Mu'tazili* position is more worthless and degenerate than that of the Ash'arites, and if some Imami theologians (R) have inclined towards it, that has been due to the neglect of the truth of the matter.

As referred to earlier, the issue of *jabr* and *tafwid* has remained much vague in the discussions of most of the scholars of the two sects, and the controversy has not been resolved on the basis of right criteria. Hence, the relation of this issue to the problem of *jabr* and *tafwid* has gone mostly unnoticed, although it is one of its major ramifications.

Briefly, the Ash'arite belief that the lawful and the unlawful form part of the apportioned sustenance implies *jabr*, and the Mu'tazilite belief that the unlawful does not form part of the apportioned sustenance implies *tafwid*. Both of them (*jabr* and *tafwid*) are invalid and their falsity has been made evident in its appropriate place.

We, in accordance with established and demonstrable principles, consider the lawful and the unlawful as apportioned by God, in the same way as we consider sins to be by Divine determination (*taqdir*) and decree (*qada'*), though it does not lead to *jabr* and invalidity. These pages are not appropriate for setting forth the proof and I have set a condition with myself not to discuss technical matters, myself being ignorant of their core reality.<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, we shall confine ourselves to this passing reference, and God is the Guide.

*Marhum* Majlisi has opened another discussion under this noble tradition, as to whether it is absolutely obligatory upon God, the Exalted, to provide the sustenance of His creatures or only in the case of effort on their part.<sup>11</sup>

This is a topic which is more appropriate to the principles of the theologians and one must proceed in these discussions, in general, with another approach based on metaphysical criteria and definite principles. What is preferable is to abstain right away from this kind of discussions, which are not entirely fruitful, and we have pointed out earlier that the apportioning of sustenances in accordance with Divine ordainment does not contradict with the making of effort and endeavor in seeking it.

## Last Section

This section pertains to the explanation of the statement that God, the Exalted, has placed joy and comfort in certitude and satisfaction and sorrow and grief in doubt and displeasure and that this is in accordance with Divine justice. One should know that the joy and comfort (*rawh* and *rahaḥ*) mentioned in this noble tradition, and so also the grief and sorrow mentioned therein, as they are mentioned in relation to the determination and apportionment of sustenances, pertain to worldly affairs and the search and acquisition of livelihood, though in accordance with a certain interpretation their relation to affairs of the Hereafter is also correct.

Here, we intend to expound this [part of the] noble tradition. One should know that a human being possessing convinced faith in God and His ordainments and reliant on the firm pillar of the Absolutely Omnipotent, Who determines all the matters in accordance with what is best for the creatures (*masalih*) and possesses absolute and perfect mercy and is absolutely All-compassionate and All-munificent, will of course find all difficulties become easy for him by virtue of such a conviction and to him all hardships become easy to bear. His effort in search of livelihood is very different from the quest of the worldly people and those who are afflicted with doubt and *shirk*. Those who rely on the apparent causes and means are continuously shaky and anxious in their pursuits. And if they face any adversity they find it very unpleasant, for they do not consider them to be accompanied with hidden benefits.

Also, one who considers his felicity to lie in the attainment of the world is afflicted with pain and misery in its pursuit, losing comfort and happiness. All his attention and care is spent in that pursuit. Thus, we see that worldly people are perpetually in a state of anguish and they do not possess the peace of mind or of the body. Similarly, if the world and its ornaments are taken away from them, they become subject to endless sorrow and grief. Should an affliction visit them, they lose all forbearance and strength and they have no fortitude in the face of events. The reason for it is nothing except their doubt and shaky belief in Divine ordainment and its justice, and its fruits are such matters as these. We have offered an explanation earlier in this regard and so it will be inappropriate to repeat it.

As to the explanation of the dependence of these effects on certitude and satisfaction, and of those effects on doubt and anger, of their being such by Divine ordainment, and that this ordainment is just, that depends on the explanation of the sway of the efficiency (*fa'iliyyah*) of God, the Exalted, throughout the planes of being, without its leading to *jabr*, which is invalid as well as impossible. It also depends on the causative explanation of the perfection of the order of being, and both of these theses lie outside the scope of these pages. And all praise refers to God, at every beginning and end.

[1.](#) Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, ii, p. 57, "Kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab fadl al-yaqin," hadith 2.

[2.](#) Al-Majlisi, Mirat al-'uqul, vii, 359, "Kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab fadl al-yaqin," hadith 2.

[3.](#) Al-Majlisi, Mirat al-'uqul, vii, 359, "Kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab fadl al-yaqin," hadith 2.

[4.](#) Al-Fayd al-Kashani, al-Wafi, iv, 269.

[5.](#) Mir'at al-'uqul, vii, 356, "Kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab fadl al-yaqin," hadith 2.

[6.](#) Al-Wafi, iv, 270.

[7.](#) Mir'at al-'uqul, vii, 357, "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr;" "bab fadl al-yaqin," hadith 2.

[8.](#) Al-Hurr al-Amili, Wasa'il al-Shiah, xii, 15, "kitab al-tijarah," "abwab muqiddimat al-tijarah," hadith 7.

[9.](#) Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, al-Tafsir al-kabir, ii, 30.

[10.](#) Author's Note: However, as the hand is subject to His power, we have briefly offered a study of this problem in the exposition of the thirty-ninth tradition. [As stated by Imam 'Ali, may peace be upon him]:

عَرَفْتُ اللَّهَ بِفَتْحِ الْعَزَائِمِ وَنَقْضِ الْهَمَمِ.

I knew God [i.e. His omnipotence] through the annulment of decisions and the breaking up of resolves.

[11.](#) Mirat al-'uqul, vii, 358 "kitab al-iman wa al-kufr," "bab fadl al-yaqin," hadith 2.

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