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Ill-Temper

Ill-temper is a mental aberrance that causes depression and truculence. It is the opposite of moral conduct. Often the repercussions of ill-temper intensify to the degree that it results in a variety of tragedies and physical and mental crises. The meanness of ill-temper appears clearly through God's words addressed to the Prophet (S):

“And had you been rough, hard-hearted, they would certainly have dispersed from around you.”

Let us now refer to some texts in this regard:

The Prophet (S) said: “Hold fast on moral conduct, for it will unquestionably be in Paradise. Beware of ill-temper, for it will unquestionably be in Hell.”

“Allah does not allow the ill-tempered to repent whenever the ill-tempered repents from a sin, he engages himself in another greater one.”

Imam as-Sadiq (a) said: “If you want to be respected, you should be lenient, and if you want to be disrespected, you may be severe.”

“Ill-temper ruins good works, in the same way as vinegar ruins honey.”

“The mentality of the ill-mannered individuals is always bad.”

Morals between Rectitude and Deviation

In the same way as bodies are subject to illnesses that cause certain symptoms, such as paleness and weakness, morals are subject to definite illnesses that cause certain symptoms in a form of moral frailty and mental collapse that vary according to the dimensions of the symptoms. The ailed bodies are treated so as to regain activity. The ill morals, too, are treated so as to recover and resume moderation.

Had it been impossible to treat the morals, all the efforts of prophets would have been meaningless, and,

furthermore, man would have been just like animals or even worse. Animals, in fact, could be tamed. The unruly horse, for instance, could be made docile through taming, and wild beasts could be domesticated by means of taming, too. How is it then impossible for man, who is the noblest creature, to be disciplined? It happens that the moralities of an individual are ailed, and change him into a frowning, quarrelsome person. This occurs because of:

1. Either feebleness that is resulted from a physical ailment or symptoms of senility or the like, and cause the infected person to be weak-nerved, intolerant, and unable to treat people courteously,
2. Grievances and distresses that astound the intelligent and the well-mannered and take them away from noble traits,
3. Poverty that causes frowning and rudeness,
4. Office that may cause loss of good temper and impudence against people, or
5. Isolation that results in feelings of disappointment and humility. Such feelings are the causes of frown and grimace.

Treatment of Ill-Temper

The disadvantages and gross damages of ill-temper should be kept in mind. It should be always remembered that ill-temper brings about the wrath of God.

Self-control should also be practiced, and the motives of ill-temper should be suppressed through taking enough time before saying or doing anything. The Prophet (S) said:

“The best jihad¹ is self-control.”

¹. Jihad is religious warfare or a war for the propagation or defense of Islam.

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