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The Second Level of Pretension

From what we have stated, it is learned from our greatest professor and best teacher of ethics, Imām al-Khomeini, may his shade be prolonged, that [the above-stated level of] pretension occupies in the principles of beliefs the first, the most intense and the ugliest of all.

As for the second level of pretension, it lies in the virtuous demeanors and the commendable ethics. It, too, according to what is stated by the imām, may his shade be prolonged, has two stations: The first is that a person demonstrates the commendable characteristics and the virtuous demeanors in order to attract people's hearts towards him. The second is that he declares he dissociates himself from the contemptible characteristics and ugly demeanors for the same purpose.

Our professor has said the following in this regard: "Pretension in this level, although it does not lie in the intensity of ugliness as is the case with the first station, but after attention is drawn to something that may drag the pretender in this level, too, to what places him in the first level. There is an image for man in the spiritual world that could be non-human because it is connected to the domain of the *nafs* and to its faculties. So, if it has virtuous human faculties, these faculties would make your spiritual picture human, if you are gathered in [the form of] these faculties once you do not get out of moderation; the faculties are virtuous when the evil-insinuating *nafs* does not play havoc with it, nor the path of the *nafs* interferes in forming it.

Actually, our professor/mentor, may his shade be prolonged, used to say that the scales in the wrongful practice and in the right legitimate practice is actually the path of the *nafs* or the path of righteousness: If the one treading the path does so seeking what is right, going in the direction of Allāh, his practice is right and legitimate, and Allāh, Praise and Exaltation belong to Him, will help him in his effort according to the text of this sacred verse:

"(As for) those who strive in Our (cause),We will certainly guide them to Our paths, for truly Allāh is with those who do what is right" (Qur'ān, 29:69).

He will thus be attracted towards happiness, abandoning the insinuations of egotism, leaving behind the will of the *nafs*. It is well known that one who demonstrates to people his good manners and virtuous

demeanors is prompted thus by his egotistical impetus, feeling conceited, loving and adoring himself. Loving All⍰h can never coexist with egotism. Seeing Him can never coexist with seeing the *nafs*; it is simply impossible, a mere fancy.

So long as the domain of your presence is represented by your egotism, as you love power, prominence, fame and dominance over All⍰h's servants, your faculties can never be virtuous, nor can your manners be divine because the real factor in the domain of your existence is Satan; neither your angelic aspect nor your inner-self reflect those of a human. After the angelic *barzakh* eye opens, it will portray you not as a human being but, say, as one of the demons.

It is impossible for the divine norms of knowledge and the sound belief in the Unity of the Almighty to exist in a heart that is an abode for the demons. If your domain does not become human, and as long as your heart is not purified of such crookedness, from any form of conceit, your heart will never be an abode for the Truthful One, the Almighty. One *qudsi* tradition states the following: "My earth has no sufficient room for Me nor my heavens, but there is room for Me in the heart of My believing servant."

So, there is none in existence that is a mirror reflecting the beauty of the loved One except the heart of a believer. The One Who fares with the believer's heart is the Almighty, not the *nafs*, and the factor in its existence is the loved One. The heart of a believer is not one of a person who sticks to his view no matter what, prattling; the heart of the believer is in the fingers of the most Merciful One, turning it however He pleases. The One who fares with the domain of a human heart is All⍰h. Turning and alternating it is done through the will of All⍰h Almighty.

You, poor soul, who is worshipping himself, with whose heart Satan and ignorance fare, having put an end to the faring of the Truthful Almighty with your heart, through what belief do you expect to be a source for the manifestation of the Truthful One and of [His] absolute domain? Be informed that as long as you remain thus, as long as this vice, the dominance of the will of the *nafs* over you, you are a disbeliever in All⍰h, treading the path of the hypocrites even if you imagine yourself as being a Muslim, a believer in All⍰h.

Wise Admonishment from the Professor of Theology, Imam-Al-Khomeini, May his Shade Last

Wake up from your sleep, dear one, abandon negligence and tardiness, let your eyes abstain from indifferent sleep, and be informed that All⍰h Almighty created you for Himself as the *qudsi* tradition

states:

***"O son of Adam! I created all things for your sake and created you for Myself." In the* [*divine*] *address whereby Moses was honored, the Almighty said, "... And I chose you for Myself"* (*Qur'n, 20:41*).**

Turn your heart into an abode for Him, as He has also said, "My earth and heavens do not have room enough for Me, yet the heart of My believing servant does." So, you and your heart are among the divine canons. Allh Almighty is jealous; therefore, beware of daring to cause your own perdition and be exposed to the law of the Truthful One, the Almighty.

Fear Allh's jealousy lest He should expose you in this world to a scandal which, no matter how hard you try to rectify, you are unable to rectify it. You are within the domain of your own self and in the presence of the honored angels and great prophets, yet you dare to violate the divine canon and the virtuous manners whereby the friends of Allh try to imitate Him!

You hand them over to someone else other than the Truthful One; you grant your heart to the enemy of the Almighty, committing *shirk* in your inner-self and in its domain; so, beware lest the Almighty should expose the domain of your own self and expose you before the angels near to Him. Moreover, He will expose you before this world, afflict you with a scandal that can never be rectified, scandalize you with a rift that can never be sewn together again. Allh, Glory to Him, covers shortcomings, but He also is jealous.

He is the most Merciful of those who show mercy, yet He also is the most tough when it comes to penalizing. He covers faults so long as they do not go overboard. When a fault does, God forbid, due to such a momentous act and ethical scandal, His jealousy overshadows his covering as you heard in a sacred tradition. Be aware, then, of all of this and go back to your senses; express your regret to Him for He, the most Exalted One, is Merciful and tries to help people obtain His mercy.

If you return to Him, He will hide your past shortcomings, not acquainting anyone with them, vesting virtue upon you, personifying in you the commendable manners, making you the mirror of His attributes, carrying out your own will in that world; His will is effective in all worlds, according to the following tradition about the people of Paradise: "An angel comes to them [to the residents of Paradise] seeking permission to enter. Once he enters, he will hand them over a letter from Allh after having conveyed the greeting of the Almighty to them. In the letter there is an address to everyone. Everyone is addressed thus: 'From the Ever-living, the Sustaining Who never dies. I say to a thing BE, and it is, and I have made you this day able to say BE to a thing, and it is.'"

The Prophet (ص) goes on to say that it is then that whatever a resident of Paradise commands, it comes to be[1]. The command there will be yours if you want to achieve such a status. If you submit your will to Allh, He, Praise to Him, will make you the manifestation of His will, faring with the affairs; the domain of creating will be at your disposal in the Hereafter. This is different from the impossible false authorizing.

You, dear one, ought to choose for yourself one of these two matters, for Allah Almighty is independent of us, of the entire creation, of our sincerity and the sincerity of everyone and everything in existence.

1. I would like to add to this what the knowledgeable sheikh, who is familiar with the Ishaqi precious stone, one of the precious stones of wisdom, has said: "He creates, through His determination, anything that can have an existence from beyond such determination, while the determination itself keeps safeguarding it." This is recorded on p. 124 of the Message of Unity by Hassan Zadeh Amuli. The tracing of the narrative in the said book, Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya [the Meccan campaigns], Vol. 2, p. 150, at the end of Chapter 73, Query No. 154, Bulaq Press edition.

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