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The Twelfth Talk

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَواْ إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِّنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُواْ فَإِذَا هُم مُّبْصِرُونَ

Verily those who guard (themselves against evil) when an evil thought from Satan afflicts them, they become mindful (of God and get awakened) then lo! They see (aright). (Al-Aaraf 7:201)

The Reality of Isti'adha is in This Verse

If this Holy Verse (7:201) is considered with attention and thought is given to the facts, we will comprehend that the real spirit of *Isti'adha* is reflected in it.

Those who have abandoned lascivious desires and turned their attention towards Allah (S.w.T.), they have come out of Satan's abode and entered Allah (S.w.T.)'s sanctuary. Those in whose hearts Satan doesn't live, whenever he hovers around their heart for a chance to enslave them, they busy themselves in the Remembrance of Allah (S.w.T.). Thus their hearts are illumined, they become aware of Satan's trickery and with the power of *Isti'adha* chase him away.

The Supplication of Imam Sajjad (a.s.)

Hadrat *Zayn* al-'Abidin (a.s.) submits to Allah (S.w.T.) in *Sahifa as-Sajjadiya:*

"O Allah (S.w.T.)! When we have two desires and only one of them is to Your liking and the other might win your displeasure. Then turn our hearts towards the desire that is to Your liking that pleases You. Deny us (even the thought of) the desire that displeases You."

When Allah (S.w.T.) diverts people's hearts in a certain direction, their thinking changes drastically. As far as we don't make piety our way of life the hearts are controlled by Satan. In such a condition there will be no use of remembering Allah (S.w.T.). When the heart is in the clutches of Satan, how could a person charter his own plan of action?

To illustrate this point I am relating another fable.

The Thief Who Put off the Lamp

In the olden days when wax candles or fat wicks were used in homes for lighting purpose in homes, a thief entered a house in the night and started gathering things to take away. The owner of the house heard some noise and got up from his bed to light a lamp. When the thief realized that the master was up and trying to light a match, he slowly blew air at it to put it off. In the time that the person could light another match the thief put his fingers in his mouth and with his saliva moistened the wick of the lamp. Thus the house owner could not put on a light.

The foolish house owner couldn't realize there was someone there who was playing a trick on him. Hence, he gave up his efforts and retired to sleep again. The thief then did his work and departed.

A Thief in the Heart

Believe me, even of the esoteric world the same is the condition. If Satan comes to live there, he doesn't allow the person to remember Allah (S.w.T.). If a man has no piety, any amount of talking and remembrance of Allah (S.w.T.) will be of no use.

You might have noticed that during times of strife, despite remembrance of Allah (S.w.T.), man doesn't realize that he is completely in the clutches of Satan. In such a situation, however much one sermonizes about Allah (S.w.T.), the Prophet and the Imams (a.s.) he will not see any reason. Satan will not allow the litigant to mend his attitude more because he is not a man of piety.

Refrain from Fights Even if you Are Right

The Prophet (S) has said that a person who refrains from fights even if he is on the side of the truth, he would guarantee a high place in the Heaven for such a person. When a person is not on the right, but avoids fights, his place will be in the lowest stage in the Heaven.

Avoiding fights is possible only when a person is free of greed. Otherwise Satan will not ever allow him to live at peace with others. If a person dies in that condition, he will be termed as a man of Satan.

It is quite possible that there are persons who offer prayers, even in the mosque, under the control of Satan. Do these persons really come to the mosque in obedience to Allah (S.w.T.)? If they have come with Allah (S.w.T.)'s call, then why are they so self-conscious? If they refrain from fights and adopt piety, then only they will have vision and get deliverance.

The Patience Of Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.)

Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) was among the Prophets of the past. His grave is near Hilla in Iraq and mention has been made of him in the Holy Qur'an. In *Bihar al-Anwar* there is a narration about the reason for his naming as Dhul Kifl (a.s.). There was a prophet prior to him, whose name was Yasa'a (a.s.). His mention is also there in the Holy Qur'an. - *Wal Yasa'a wa Dhal Kifl* (*Sura Saad, 38:48*).

Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) was among the companions and disciples of Hadrat Yasa (a.s.). In his last days Hadrat Yasa (a.s.) told to his companions, "Of you the person who promises to abide by the oath that I intend to take from you shall be my successor and vicegerent after me. The oath I want you to take is that you will not get angry under any circumstances and will not become a victim of Satan's instigation." Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) made a promise to the effect that he would never yield to the satanic instinct of anger. This was the reason that he was appointed to the august position of prophet and successfully faced the events that followed.

One should know that when a person is steadfast in his resolve to keep on the right path, Satan strives with equal tenacity to break his resolve. Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) was resolved to prevent the thought of anger ever crossing his mind. He stood like a mountain against all the efforts of Satan to provoke anger in him.

Satan Seeks Help

One day Satan got together a meeting of his retainers. He said, "I am tired of the tenacity of Dhul Kifl (a.s.). Whatever effort I make to break his resolve of not becoming angry, I fail utterly." One Satan whose name was *Abyad* said, "I shall provoke Dhul Kifl (a.s.) to get angry!" Satan appointed him to this task. One regular habit of Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) was that he used to be praying and supplicating the whole night. During the day he kept himself busy attending to the tasks of people till *Dhuhr* prayer. He used to sleep at this time and awake at the time of *Asr.* Thereafter he used to busy himself in the service of people.

Satan Knocks At The Door

One day, when Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) was asleep, as usual, after *Dhuhr,* Satan knocked at the door and the janitor asked him, “What brings you here!” Satan said, “I have to make an appeal to him!” The Janitor said, “Come in the morning. Now he is sleeping.”

Satan started shouting, crying and pleading aloud. He said that he lived at a distant place and he couldn’t possibly come again the next day. Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.)’s sleep got disturbed in this hubbub. He asked him to go away and return with the respondent to his complaint next morning. Satan said that the other person would refuse to come. Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) gave him his ring and asked him to show it to the person and tell him that he was summoned to attend the hearing.

Satan went away but came back next day at the same time as he came on the previous day. Again he cried, shouted and disturbed Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.)’s sleep. Hadrat (a.s.) woke up from his siesta, talked calmly to him and gave a letter in the name of the respondent.

Abyad went away and Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) was unable to sleep even on that day.

Satan Gets Frustrated

Imagine the condition of a person who has not slept for three consecutive nights and days. On the third day too Satan came to the door of Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) at the same time that he did on the previous two days. He disturbed his sleep and said that the respondent did not bother to give any cognizance to his letter. Then he started shouting ferociously to arouse anger in Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) The accursed one said, “If you personally come along with me now, perhaps my work can be attended to!”

It is mentioned in the narration that the day was so hot that if a piece of meat was kept out it would become a kebab instantly. Satan made so much noise that Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.) agreed to go with him. When he traversed the way coolly in that scorching condition, Satan knew that it was impossible to disturb Hadrat Dhul Kifl (a.s.)’s resolve to keep his anger in control. Therefore he fled from there!

There Will Be Negative Effect of Supplication on a Heart Devoid of Piety

Sometimes remembrance of Allah (S.w.T.) has a negative effect on a heart devoid of piety.

Haven’t you heard that while the accursed Ibn Ziyad was handling the severed head of Imam Husayn (a.s.), a drop of blood fell on his thigh and pierced to the other side of it. He put the head on the floor and touched the teeth of the Imam (a.s.) in a blasphemous manner with a stick.

Zaid Bin Arqam, a companion of the Prophet (S), was present at that moment. He told Ibn Ziyad that he had witnessed the Prophet (S) kiss these teeth affectionately that he was blaspheming against. The accursed person, instead of repenting his foul act told to Zaid Bin Arqam, “It is a pity that you are an old man now! Otherwise I would have severed your head immediately!” Then he sent Zaid out of the court.

It is not only Ibn Ziyad who perpetrated such foul behavior. Anyone whose heart is blind and deaf will have such tendencies. Any talk of remembrance of Allah (S.w.T.) will fall on the flat ears of such persons.

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