

[The Twelveth Talk

1 Love And Blessings At Home

Our discussion today will be on love, affection and generosity. Perhaps this is the best topic amongst the topics discussed so far in this series of talks. Therefore I intend to analyze and discuss this subject in more detail. I pray to Allah for His help so that I am able to do justice to the discussion.

In this world love is like the gravitational pull. Just as the world exists in a stable condition because of the gravitational pull, so do the families stay together because of the love amongst their components, the members! In this universe, from small particles to the Milky Way, all the things are in their places because of the gravitational pull. If this pull is removed for one moment, the entire solar system will go haywire! Similarly, if there is no love in a home, it will scatter into small nondescript entities. We can say that a house where love doesn't exist is like a grave, whose dweller is being punished. A house devoid of love is like an abode of the living dead! Without love, life is akin to a slow death accompanied by troubles and tribulations. But it is Allah's kindness that when a family is formed, He bestows the natural instinct of love to its members.

The Holy Quran says:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً وَرَحْمَةً

And of His signs is this: He created for you helpmates from yourselves that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy..... (Sura ar-Rum, 30: 21)

The Holy Quran says that among the signs of Allah in this world, one of the signs is that He has created woman for man, so that they can join together to establish a family. They also provide comfort to each other. To help the formation and growth of the family Allah has endowed the instinct of love and affection to human beings. As you know, for every foundation there will be the Need of cement and concrete. No building can be constructed only with stone and steel. With stone and steel the correct quantities of sand and cement have to be used to provide the right binding quality to the structure. The matrimonial

foundation too has similar requirements. If you can recall, in one of my earlier talks I had narrated a tradition of the Prophet (s) in which he has said:

"In the eyes of Allah, the foundation of matrimonial alliance in Islam is the most likeable." (Wasailus Shia, Vol 14, page 43)

The sand and cement to bind this foundation are the instincts of love and affection between man and wife. If there is no concrete in the foundation of a building it will be weak, similarly if there is no love among the inhabitants of a house it will be desolate. Two things require our consideration in this connection. The first is to find out what is the thing that is harmful to the formation and growth of the family. The second thing is the consideration of the factors that promote love and affection in marital lives of people.

2 Actions That Reduce The Love – Anger

The first thing that harms love is misbehavior and anger. If the wife uses coarse language and gets angry with her husband, then her words will be like a slap on the husband's emotions. Similarly, if the husband is ill-mannered, his initial misbehavior will strike a blow to the love of the woman. And if the trend continues for long it will destroy the love between them, and then love will turn into abhorrence and hate. It is very important that we refrain from tongue-lashing at home to maintain the atmosphere of love and affection.

3. Abusive Language And Beating

I have said repeatedly that if a man or a woman has the habit of using offensive and abusive language, then they have no character. Allah, the Prophet (s) and the Imams (a.s.) have strongly disapproved of this habit. One person was a constant companion of Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a.s.); wherever the Imam (a.s.) went, the person followed him. One day the Imam (a.s.) was traveling and the person was with him too. Due to the fatigue of travel, the person's slave was falling behind. He called for the slave, but he didn't hear the master. Even when he called for a second time the slave didn't hear him. Now the person got angry and shouted profanities at the slave calling him the illegitimate issue of his parents. When the Imam (a.s.) heard the use of foul language, he sat down and pressed his hand to his forehead as a mark of displeasure. Then he said, "You have accused the slave's mother of adultery! I was thinking all the time that you are a good person while, in fact, you are not!" The man said, "O son of the Prophet (s)! The slave's mother is a foreign idolatress!" The Imam (a.s.) said, "Every nation has some norms of matrimony. From today you have no right to be with me or travel with me!" The narrator said that from that day he never saw the man in the company of the Imam (a.s.). What lesson do we draw from this narrative? When someone abuses his child or wife in anger, even if they are at fault, he will earn the displeasure of Allah. This abuse takes a terrible human form and will be with the person in the Barzakh, and on the Day of Reckoning and put him to shame!

Hadhrat Ayesha was once sitting with the Prophet (s). Two or three Jews came there with the purpose of ridiculing the Prophet (s). One of them passed near him and mispronounced the greeting as “Asam alaikum!” meaning, "death on you." The Prophet (s) replied, “Alaikum!” Meaning, “I wish the same for you!” Hadhrat Ayesha was upset at the impudence of the Jew but kept quiet. After a while another Jew came and repeated the same act. When the third Jew came and did the same thing, Hadhrat Ayesha lost her cool. When someone gets angry, it becomes difficult to be patient and just. In her anger she said, “What are you saying you sons of pigs!” She had remembered from the Holy Quran that the Jews are the people whose ancestors had become pigs. The Prophet (s) was angry at her utterance. He said, “Ayesha! What have you done?” She said, “You are seeing what these mischievous Jews did?” The Prophet (s) said, “Whatever they said was properly replied to by me. There was no need to abuse them!” He then added, “Ayesha! Don’t you know that an abuse, if it takes on a form, it will be a very ferocious thing and will chase the person in the grave, in Barzakh and on the Day of Reckoning.”

يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُحْضَرًا وَ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَ بَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا

On the day when every soul will find itself confronted with all that it hath done of good and all that it hath done of evil (every soul) will long that there might be a mighty space of distance between it and that(evil) (Sura Ali- Imran, 3: 30)

This means that all the good deeds that you do during your lifetime will accompany you on the Day of Reckoning and your bad deeds will accompany you too, but they will have such terrifying forms, that the person will be ashamed. The Holy Quran says, on that Day these persons will utter, “How I wish there was a great distance between me and my foul deeds!” Therefore, a Muslim has to take care to control his angry outbursts and abusive language.

Among the maxims of Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (a.s) there is one that he has specifically said about the Shias. He said, “O Shias! Be upright in your morals! Your behavior should prompt others to say in appreciation that you are the followers of Imam Sadiq (a.s.)! It is not befitting for a lady to use abusive language against her children and the husband or others. Similarly a teacher should always speak softly in the class. Corporal punishment and beating is such a sin that the Prophet (s) used to announce from the pulpit that if a person slaps his wife, he will go to the Hell with shame on the Day of Judgement! The caretaker of Hell (*Malike Jahannum*) will be ordered to slap the person 70 times with Hellfire! A good Muslim and a decent person never beats anyone. And if there is a woman who beats her husband, then she deserves to be called a witch and not a wife!

4. Insulting Talk

Another thing that destroys love is hurting people with ones talk. The retribution for such acts is so much that Imam Jafar al-Sadiq has said that Allah says:

"A person who insults any of my 'wali', wages a war against Me."

Everyone knows the consequences one has to face in this world as well as the Hereafter for waging a war against Allah.

If a husband praises the looks of a stranger woman in front of his wife and a wife praises the handsomeness of a stranger man in the presence of her husband, then there is no chance of virtue prevailing in that house.

The Prophet of Islam (s) says that if a woman says to her husband that she has not found anything good in his house, then all her good deeds will become null and void. Similarly if a husband tells his wife that he has found no good in her, his good deeds too will become null and void.

We must take care that we don't insult or ridicule anyone. The wives must exercise special care that they don't talk against their husbands in front of others. Similarly men should not talk ill of their wives in front of others, because these acts invite great punishments. Injury through words is of two types. Some injuries heal quickly. This means that someone does strike a blow through his tongue, but it does not injure the heart much. Now this assumes the form of a scorpion, which goes with that person to his grave, and troubles him for some time. Then this punishment is withdrawn. However, if the injury inflicted by the tongue is deeper, it assumes the form of such a scorpion that will not only trouble him till the Day of Judgment, but also keep stinging him in Hell.

Someone saw a pious old person in a dream. When asked about his condition, the old person said that he was very comfortable, he owned gardens, had palaces and *Hoorul Ein*; the angels visited him and he had many servants to work for him. His only problem was that a scorpion bit his foot every morning. When asked why he was continuously suffering this bite, he said that during his life he had hurt someone with his talk and had not bothered to apologize. He said that he had assumed it to be a trivial matter and so had not repented (tauba) for it. By not repenting, he had let the scorpion remain alive. The water of repentance (tauba) can clean everything and can repel every danger. Unfortunately, some people actually feel relieved after having insulted someone. Some people say that they will feel at ease only when they have given a thorough verbal thrashing to those with whom they have some differences! What they are actually saying is that they will not be at ease until they have produced a hoard of scorpions which will keep biting them from the first day in the grave to the Day of Reckoning.

Women can hurt people with their tongue-lashing as if it is done with a sword. Then she says: now I am at peace but she is mistaken. She is not at peace, because she is unaware of the type of snake her action has formed. These snakes and scorpions can only be seen by those people who have the insight to do so; they see these through the eyes of the heart. That snake has entwined itself around their necks. Do they not see it? But they will see it before going to the grave when Izraeel comes to take away their spirits. At that moment, according to the Holy Quran, their vision will become very sharp. Then the wife and the husband will see the verbal injuries they have inflicted on the other, in the form of

a black snake which will have wrapped itself around their necks. This black snake will go with them to their graves and keep biting them till Qiyamah. Then they will know how dangerous it is to inflict verbal injuries on others.

The husbands and wives should take care to abstain from tongue-lashing. They should not belittle each other, particularly in comparison with others. These acts strike such a blow to love, that sometimes love turns into hate. Kindness turns into hard-heartedness. Then life becomes a burden and the home appears desolate like the grave. I appeal to all the ladies and men to control their tongues and save themselves from such troubles.

The Prophet (s) once asked his companion about the strongest aspect of the *Iman* (Faith). What is the thing that can earn deliverance for a person? One person said, "O Prophet of Allah (s)! It is salah (prayer)!" Some said it is fasting, others said it is charity, fighting in the way of Allah, and so on. Everyone tried to mention something or other. The Prophet (s) said, "Everyone is right in his own way! But the thing that is very important for the deliverance of a person is that a person befriends his Muslim brothers for the sake of Allah and is the enemy of the enemies of Islam, for the sake of Allah! He should befriend his wife not for any carnal reasons but for the sake of Allah, because she is a Muslimah! If he befriends her only for his carnal satisfaction, it is not a sign of his masculinity, because then he is no different from an animal!"

As I have mentioned earlier, carnal satisfaction is a small benefit among the benefits of marriage. But a man should love his wife because she is a Muslimah. The wife should love her husband because he is a Muslim, she should be proud that he is a Muslim. In the same way, the husband should be proud that his wife is a Muslimah, recites salah and fasts,

Muhammad ibn Hakim says that he was seated with Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) when an old person, with bent shoulders and a staff in his hand came there and first greeted the Imam (a.s.) and then greeted every person present individually. Then he told to the Imam (a.s.), "O Son of the Prophet (s)! I am desirous of sitting near you!" The Imam (a.s.) replied, "You may sit!" The person sat down and said, "O Son of the Prophet! I accept what you have declared legitimate as legitimate; and the things that you term as forbidden, I consider them forbidden! I consider your friends as my friends not because they are my relatives, but only on account of their being your friends. I consider your enemies as my enemies. Am I among those who will get deliverance?" Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) was very pleased and said, "Definitely! I was once seated with my father, Imam Sajjad (a.s.) when a person came to him and talked the same way as you have done today. Imam al-Sajjad (a.s.) told him, 'May your heart always remain happy! At the time of your death the Prophet (s), Hadhrat Amir al Mu'minin (a.s.), Hadhrat Fatima Zahra (a.s.) and Hasnain (a.s.) will be there. Then your thirst will be quenched with the water from the pool of Kauthar. You will be in the company of these Five Infallible persons!' Muhammad ibn Hakim further says that when Imam Muhammad Baqir narrated this, the old person started crying with joy and said, "O Son of the Prophet! Kindly relate the tradition once again!" The Imam (a.s.) acceded to the person's request.

Thereafter the old man became restless and fell unconscious. The Imam (a.s.) revived him. After regaining consciousness the person touched the body of the Imam (a.s.) as a mark of respect.

The Prophet of Islam (s) used to milk the sheep, sweep the floor of his house and make bread. We will be truly respected men when we extend a helping hand to our wives with their chores at home. Similarly the ladies must take care of the husbands' comfort when they return home after a long day's toil to earn the livelihood for the family in the highly competitive environment. Earning a livelihood and dealing with all kinds of people in the workplaces is not easy. When he comes home in the evening, he needs rest, he needs a peaceful place. Your offensive language, stern talk, and unethical behavior will not provide him with the rest he needs. The wife should desire for her husband what she desires for herself. If the husband becomes irritable, the wife should respond with a smile.

When a husband returns home and finds that his wife is not dressed in the apparel of his choice, he should not express his displeasure. If the wife is short-tempered, despite the tiredness after the day's toil, the husband should enter the house with a smile to soothe her disturbed nerves. You should desire for her what you desire for yourself, and you should not desire for her what you do not desire for yourself. Inshallah, Allah's blessings will be upon you in this world and in the Hereafter.

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