

Unexpected Success

The system of the universe is based on the law of cause and effect. Even the minutest happening is not an exception to this universal law.

The roaring of the ocean, the falling of the leaves, snowfall, rain, the difference in palm lines, variance in the faces, rise and fall of nations, social good and evil; in short each and everything is bound by this law of cause and effect. Sometimes the reason is apparent and sometimes it is hidden from us. Therefore there is no place for a 'chance'. No philosophy of the world can prove the existence of 'chance'. To rely on chance is, in fact, to repose trust in an imaginary thing, which is far from reality. Unwise and ignorant people think that good or bad luck is connected with this unbecoming imagination.

Luck, accident, chance and fortune etc. are, really speaking, superstitions. Only people who are unaware of the underlying causes of various happenings mention them. They tend to believe in such things just to please their condemning conscience by trusting such unreal causes.

If at all, we have to trust in 'chance' then we should say that only endeavor, work, struggle and activeness provide the basis of 'chance' and 'good luck'. This invisible cause lies behind activeness and hard work.

Trust in luck is only an instrument for remaining idle and for misleading the mind. It is a tranquilizer for soothing the heart of idle and inactive persons. In other words, reliance on luck is a cover to conceal the conscience of sinners and wrongdoers.

If a player loses a game and the medal is awarded to someone else, he comes out of the playground with a dark face and a forehead wet with perspiration and, in order to retrieve his loss tells his friends something like, "The luck of my rival was better. Hence he won. This time my fortune was not favorable and therefore I lost." What is pitiable is that, for avoiding a future defeat, he does not find out the real causes of his failure. Rather he resorts to imaginary causes, which have no basis from the viewpoint of knowledge, intelligence and philosophy or logic. He wants that he should not be held responsible for the defeat.

The fact is that there is an incorrect tradition in our society according to which they make luck or fortune the basis of life with regard to family affairs, educational matters and trade etc. Parents, teachers and traders create such conditions whereby people automatically attribute success and defeat to be the effect of chance and luck. The harmful effects of this wrong tradition fill the minds of people during childhood, youth as well as in old age.

A little verse in Quran, which is small in words but very great in meaning, has refuted all such imaginary things. It declares:

Man gets only that for which he strives.

Like lottery, gambling and such other things resorting to luck harms our society grievously by making our youths believe in such imaginary things and thus deprive them of an enthusiasm for work and struggle. Thereafter, instead of utilizing their mental and physical powers, they begin to rely on imaginary things, like luck, for attaining success, position and wealth etc. in life.

Only those ladies and gentlemen are successful in whose dictionaries there are no words like chance, star, palmistry etc. because they are like iron chains binding the hands and feet of people.

Youths who want to attain progress and perfection and utilize their capabilities should know that the real reason and cause of the success of any student, inventor, military officer or diplomat is that he has realized the reality of life and has adopted the true tools of success the list of which is headed by work, endeavor, steadfastness and discipline. He must understand that no star, magic or chance can ever be the cause of any success or victory.

One of my friends has recently returned from Germany. Regarding the success of the German people he says, "Within a very short time, this community has, sparing very few things as memorials, destroyed every sign showing the devastation caused by the World War in such a way that now, it seems, no loss was inflicted on them by the enemy bombs a few years ago."

The lively soul and strong mind of this community proved to be the cause of its success. They never relied on chance and luck. They relied only on their mental and physical abilities. They knew very well that if there is anything like luck it is hidden behind the mental and physical capabilities.

Luck, stars and predictions etc.

A wise man has said, "Only a nation which has not realized facts takes shelter behind futile and imaginary things."

A loss-making businessman makes himself happy by dreaming success. A defeated nation hopes for victory by looking at palm lines and lucky draws. Sick womenfolk, instead of going to a physician, fall in the trap of magicians and fortune-tellers.

Superstitious and unwise ignorant parents fill the minds of their children with futile and imaginary things.

They think that the Wednesday following marriage and the rituals performed on the fourteenth day after the Navroz festival are steps to success. On the thirteenth day after Navroz they take their children to a forest and ask them to tie knots on long grass leaves so that their ambitions may be fulfilled and the luck which has become angry at them may return to their lives.

The parents tell their children that if they sit on a tablecloth full of seven kinds of food while holding a red colored purse in hands would surely become wealthy.

Our beloved Prophet (s.a.w.a.) always opposed such beliefs in all the fields of life and at every stage. One day, his foster mother sent him for a walk in the forest with her own sons and hung a small Omani green stone in his neck so as to protect him from calamities. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) removed it and said, Mother, what a superstition is this. My protector is someone else (Allah).”

Sometimes, a van driver, instead of taking care of the break, tires etc., and instead of replacing old parts with new ones, takes shelter behind superstitious matters. He fixes horseshoe at the back of his vehicle and believes that it would be safe from mishaps.

An armed dacoit gets ten years’ rigorous imprisonment. When he enters the prison he blackens the walls with couplets like this:

No astrologer could recognize the star of my luck. O God! What a kind of luck I am born with!

He is so unaware, and his own words show that while suffering the torments of the prison he is not prepared to understand the reality. In order to satisfy his chiding soul he attributes his crimes to stars and luck. He does not understand that he has misused arms and endangered public peace; that shops and business establishments closed down due to his mischief and that he deserves this punishment.

Instead of the above quoted couplet he should have written these couplets of Nasir Khusro:

Do not blame the blue sky. Drive out the wind of carelessness from your head. If you spoil your luck by your own carelessness, you should not hope for success from the sky. The wood of a leafless tree is being burnt down by people. This indeed is the punishment of not taking care of the tree of life. If the fruits of knowledge and intelligence grow on the tree of your life, such a tree can even bring down the sky.

He alone is successful who marches forward on the path of his aim and refrains from entertaining all kinds of superstitions and baseless things.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) strived hard, especially to free the people from the bonds of superstitions. Even if a baseless thought was in his favor he used to tell the people, “Such a belief is baseless.”

For example, the Holy Prophet’s son Ibrahim expired. There was a solar eclipse that day. Superstitious people went to the Holy Prophet and said, “The calamity, which has befallen you, is so great that the sun too is mourning. This eclipse is due to the death of your dear son.”

In response, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) uttered this historical sentence, “O People! Sun and moon do not mourn anybody’s death. Rather, the lunar and solar eclipses are the signs of Allah’s power. (Eclipse

has a special reason. It should not be attributed to my son's demise).”

Superstitious people of the West

Some Westerners are so superstitious that they are afraid of engaging a room numbered 13 in a hotel. Therefore the hoteliers do not use the number 13 but make it “12+1” or 14 and completely omit the figure of 13! It is said that in United Nations headquarters the lift reaches floor No. 14 after floor No. 12; that there is no floor No. 13; that in fact floor number 13 is called floor 14!!

These people do not think, or do not want to think at all that if the 13th floor is inauspicious and dangerous, that thing would not change merely by changing its name.

Shaikh Saadi relates a beautiful story in one of his poems:

The donkey of a villager died.

He cut off its head and hung it on a grapevine.

When an experienced old man passed by it, he told the gardener of the villager laughingly:

“O dear! Do not think that this donkey will protect the garden from an evil eye?

While alive, it could not prevent the charge of a stick on its head from the hand of a weak man.

So, how can it, after its death, save the garden from an evil eye?”

A same type of man had such deep belief in luck that he used to say, “I have come in this world with a bad fortune. It is so bad that if I been a cap-maker people would be born without heads!”

If such superstitions spread in any society, particularly among the youth, it should be considered as one of the causes of that society's decline.

Blaming the Stars!

Some people keep on complaining against stars and some throw the blame of their bad conditions on the outer space. Some writers even blame the sky in their books!!

However the fact is that the sky has been helpful to man since Allah has created it for the benefit of mankind. For example, the sun nourishes the animals through its golden rays. The moon spreads freshness in the atmosphere and provides cool light. So the things, which serve man, should not be called oppressors.

There is no inauspiciousness in the sun, the moon, the stars or the sky because, God has sworn by them in the holy Quran thus showing us their importance.

We must keep in mind that if some authors and intellectuals have ever complained against the sky, they have, thereby, meant the men living under it. Otherwise the sky and the stars revolving therein are never at fault.

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