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Generosity

Generosity is part of the nature of the prophets, and the buttress of belief. A person cannot be a believer unless he is also generous; he must also have certainty and high aspiration (himmah), because generosity is a ray of the light of certainty. Effort is easy for him who knows his objective. The Holy Prophet said, 'The friend of Allah is but naturally disposed to generosity.'

Generosity is bestowed upon everyone beloved of Allah who has little of this world. One of the signs of generosity is a lack of concern with the wealth of this world, and with whoever owns it, believing or unbelieving, obedient or rebellious, noble or low. The generous man feeds others while he himself is hungry; he clothes others while he is naked; he gives to others while he refuses to accept the gifts of others. He is favoured by that, and does not indebt others by his graciousness. If he were to possess the entire world, he would see himself merely as an alien in it. If he spent it all for Allah in a single hour, it would not be irksome for him.

The Messenger of Allah said, 'The generous person is near to Allah, near to people, near to the Garden and far from the Fire. The miser, however, is far from Allah, far from people, far from the Garden and near to the Fire.' The only person who can be called generous is the one who expends himself to obey Allah and for the sake of Allah, even if it is only by a loaf of bread or a drink of water.

The Holy Prophet also said, 'The person who is generous is generous with what he owns, and through it desires the face of Allah. As for that person who pretends to be generous and rebels against Allah, he is the recipient of Allah's wrath and anger. He is the most miserly of people towards himself, so how must he be with other people, when he follows his own passion and opposes the command of Allah?' As Allah said.

وَلَيَحْمِلُنَّ أَثْقَالَهُمْ وَأَثْقَالًا مَّعَ أَثْقَالِهِمْ

Most certainly they shall carry their own burdens, and other burdens along with their own burdens. (29:13)

The Holy Prophet said, 'The son of Adam cries out, "My property! My property! My wealth! My wealth!" O Wretch! Where were you when there was the Kingdom, and you were not? Is there anything more than what you eat and consume, or what you wear and wear out, or what you give in charity and what you make last?' Either you are shown mercy by it or you are punished for it; therefore use your intelligence, and understand that you should not love the property of others more than your own.

The Commander of the Faithful said, 'What you have already given was destined for those who now own it; what you have held back is for those who will inherit it, and what you have now you have no power over, except to become arrogant by it. How much you strive to seek this world and to make claims! Do you wish to impoverish yourself and enrich others?'

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