

Gradual Progress

We should start working on a small scale. But this does not mean that we should begin with little courage.

What we mean is that we may prepare an elaborate and lengthy program and also start working on it with great courage but we should not try to hurry through all the things simultaneously. Rather we should advance little by little and achieve our goal gradually.

Why should we draw a big program?

Because those who have lofty thoughts and high intelligence cannot limit their courage in small circles. They intend to pursue a new aim as soon as they achieve the first one. Therefore it is necessary to make a big program right from the beginning.

Human psychology also demands it. Unless a man does not ready himself for a big goal he cannot attain his aim and sometimes he is unable to obtain even half of it.

Narrow-minded and coward people remain content with their present condition and want to remain where they are, but people having high ideals and foresight begin their job with lofty thoughts and always try to improve their condition.

Saduddin Taftazani was one of those great Islamic scholars who founded the art of eloquence in Islam. Once intending to gauge the courage of his son he asked him, “What is your aim in acquiring knowledge?”

“I want to acquire as much knowledge as you have.”

He was sorry to see this low aim of his son and told him regretfully, “If your courage is only this much then you will not reach even half of it. Your thinking is very narrow. I am your father Saduddeen. I had heard about the marvelous knowledge of Imam Ja’far Sadiq (a.s.) and was appreciating his high position through his memorable narrations of Hadith. From the beginning of my primary stage it was my endeavor to reach the standard of knowledge of this great man. Despite such a high ideal. I could attain only the position, which you are now observing, while this is nothing compared to the knowledge of the great leader. Therefore, if your aim is so low, you will attain very little knowledge and one day you will

give up the pursuit.”

Hence it is necessary for us to begin with great courage. A Persian couplet of admonition says: Always cultivate great courage because the great men of the world have reached some status only due to great courage.

Rumi says: If there is continuous hunger and thirst and the water in the stomach is continuously boiling therein up and down.

Why to begin at a low level?

The initial stage of any job is an experimental one wherein the exact idea about its benefits and harms is not quite clear. Maybe there are some obstacles in the path of the aim, which may require a long time for their removal.

It is also possible that we have adopted a path, which may not be leading to the goal we have in mind. Perhaps we have made some mistakes in drawing the program. Therefore, if we begin our work on a high level it might become difficult to correct our mistakes to remedy the situation by changing the strategy.

We oriental people have this defect that we begin our jobs on a high level with much pomp. In such a condition it is quite difficult to change the path leaving the wrong road. As a result we may lose both, precious years of our life as well as our money, become disappointed and courage-less and remain where we are.

We read in the diary of Nasiruddin Shah that he had gone on a tour of Europe. In London he met the British Queen. He wanted to know the reason of a British bank's successful functioning in Iran. Hence he asked the Queen, "When this bank had opened its branch in the capital of Iran it began to function with a very little investment. How did it achieve so much progress so soon?"

The Queen replied to the effect, "Britishers do not reveal the secrets of their success to others. But due to our respect for you I shall mention one point. We, the westerners, especially the British, begin our work always on a low scale, so that in case we do not succeed, we may have an avenue for return and we may be able to change our strategy with a little loss. And if we achieve some benefit we expand our field at once. In this respect we are totally different from eastern people."

We ourselves have seen people who invested money without keeping the aforesaid point in mind and, consequently suffered much loss. They were then engulfed in difficulties and economic crisis.

Now we may look at the success of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.). Millions of Muslims are proud to follow him. At the beginning of the call of Islam their number could be counted on ones fingers.

The Holy Prophet's program was so vast that it covered all the field of human life, be it politics or economics, morals or anything else. Moreover his program was perfect in every respect.

In the beginning the Holy Prophet did not demand from the people except the acceptance of belief in the 'Two witnesses' that is, belief in Only One God and in his being the prophet or messenger of Allah.

The Holy Prophet's great work had started on a little measure. He created the atmosphere little by little and issued commandments one by one for each and every aspect of human life and guided the entire humanity with such a great program that it changed the course of their life tremendously.

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