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Ayat no. 22–23

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

And what reason have I that I should not serve Him Who brought me into existence? And to Him you shall be brought back; What! shall I take besides Him gods whose intercession, if the Beneficent God should desire to afflict me with a harm, shall not avail me aught, nor shall they be able to deliver me? (36:22–23)

One who manifests is worthy of worship

The noble believer Habib Najjar argues before the community of polytheists, “What has happened to me that I should not worship the One Who made me manifest (created me) and also made me return towards Him?”

The messengers say, “You must worship the One Who brought you from non–existence into existence when, before that, you were nothing.”

There surely came over man a period of time when he was a thing not worth mentioning. (76: 1)

Thereafter He has, from a drop of sperm, manufactured this wonderful body and a strange structure. “**He created me**” is a proof showing the aptness of worshipping Only One God, Who is the Creator. He is the Owner and you are owned (by Him), a slave and a servant, and the Master is the Lord of the worlds.

For what did He create various kinds of woods, vegetables, stones, iron, angels, jinn's or man except that all should worship Him and Him alone? You must be humble before Him. Humility before and fear of anyone or anybody else is wrong. None of those others are creators; they have not created anything.

Is He then Who creates like him who does not create? Do you not then mind? (16: 17)

Fear of and hope from Only One God to Whom all have to return

And to Him you shall be brought back...

Commentators say that here is a hint at the degree or rank of fear and hope. O ignorant! When you die, you return to God. Therefore, you should worship Him with a hope to get reward from Him. O idol worshipper! Do you return to the idol after your death?

Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return. (2: 156)

Do something by which the One towards Whom you are returning may be pleased with you and not the created ones and created things that are as weak as you are.

It is the same with regard to fear. Your return is towards your creator. So fear Him so that you may not be a target of His displeasure. Let it not be so that when you die you may be like a runaway slave whereby you are dragged to Him with a blow and degradation.

How can I worship something that cannot make me needless?

What! Shall I take besides Him gods...

Antioch was the country of Sabean people, the worshippers of stars and angels. They had carved idols in the shape of angels for worshipping. He says, "Should I give up the worship of the Beneficent God? Should I adopt another god? Should I worship a star, angels or even a cow, as some simple fellows do?"

Whose intercession, if the Beneficent God should desire to afflict me with a harm, shall not avail me aught, nor shall they be able to deliver me?

That is if the Lord God wishes that I should suffer a loss or harm, all the false gods cannot reach me even if they desire. They cannot save me even if all of them help each other fully. Their recommendation cannot help me and they cannot give me salvation.

There is a story about the question that the late Shaykh Ahmed Bahraini put to a Zoroastrian, "Why do you worship fire and prostrate before it?" That fire worshipper replied, "So that tomorrow, on the Day of Judgment, it may not burn me."

The Shaykh said, "Very well, now here am I who never cared for fire. I am putting my hand in it. You also may do so. Let us see whose hand this fire does not burn? Fire has no conscience whereby it may differentiate between the one who worshipped it and who did not."

Things worshipped by polytheists are also like this and so are animals and angels. They can never do anything against the Will of God.

In that case I shall most surely be in clear error...

That is, I will be falling into a clear waywardness if I worship them despite seeing that they are unable to do anything. We can say the same for those who worship the rulers.

“I entrust my daughters to God”

Muslims should not claim, “By the grace of God, we do not worship idols.” Because if you consider anyone or anything other than God as able and mighty, then you also are like those polytheists.

It is written in *Layaliul Akhbar* that: A great monotheist scholar was about to breathe his last. The ruler of the time came to see him. He stood near his head and inquired about his condition. The scholar said, “My departure is very near.” The ruler said, “If you need anything, tell me so that I may fulfill it.” The scholar said, “You cannot fulfill my need.”

The ruler said, “I have heard that you have some teenaged daughters. Allow me to admit them to my harem.”

“How can I entrust them to you when God, Who created them is there, asked the scholar, “Perhaps you may die earlier. Then what is the use?”

What! Shall I take besides Him gods...

That is in spite of the ever-existent God, should I make anyone else my support and make him a center of my hope, fear and trust?

Husain (‘a), while departing from his women and children, had said, “Allah is my successor for you.” Anybody who makes anyone or anything, except Only One God, a center of his hope and support, be it wealth, position or a friend, is totally deviated.

Habib Najjar dies in torture

To the best of his ability Habib Najjar helped the messengers but the people pounced upon him. Some have written that they threw him down and kicked him so much that his entrails and intestines came out. Then they suffocated him, threw him in a well and filled it up.

Others have written that they stoned him and hit him so much that he died. Some say they pierced his shoulder and hanged him by the wall of a well until he died gradually under torture.

After being attacked by the disbelievers, Habib Najjar knew that he was about to be killed. So he turned towards the messengers and said,

Surely I believe in your Lord, therefore hear me.

Some famous scholars say the messengers said this. Habib said, "O Sages! Be witness that I also, like your honors, worship your Lord Almighty. Thus his last word was faith in the Lord of the worlds, so he said, "Hear me and be witnesses."

Asking for testification of faith is desirable

The explanation of this verse is mentioned in some narrations of the Prophet and Imams ('a). They have recommended that when a believer falls ill and is likely to die he should open the door of his house for worshippers.

Then when he feels he is returning to his or her Lord the faithful person should reiterate his faith in "There is no god, except Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah", and in the finality of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet and in Ali being the friend (Wali) and vicegerent of Allah.

It is emphatically mentioned in traditions that one should say, "Hasan and Husain are the sons of the Prophet of Allah and the nine descendants of Husain are the saints of Allah and the Imams of the believers. And indeed the death is truth and the Paradise and the Hell is truth...These are my beliefs. So give witness tomorrow on the Day of Judgment."

Regarding the meaning of the verse:

They shall not control intercession, save he who has made a covenant with the Beneficent God. (19:87)

Some narrations on this are recorded in *Usul Kafi* and *Tafsir* of Ali bin Ibrahim Qummi. They asked, "How to make a will better?" The Imam replied, "First narrate your true beliefs clearly. At that time, if you have minor children, appoint a guardian for them, if you have a lot of money, make a will in respect of one third of it so that it may be given in charity after you pass away.

If you do not have much wealth then let the said one third remain with your legal heirs so that they may benefit from it.

If among your relatives there are some who are poor and also do not have heirs then fix something from the said one third for them."

In *Urwathul Wuthqa* it is mentioned in the chapter about the rules regarding the wills that the dying person should announce his beliefs.

It is written in Shaykh Tusi's *Misbah* that witness should be called from the audience around the death bed and a written testimony should be obtained from them that so and so, son of so and so, gives witness and testifies his belief in the Oneness of God and the messengership of Muhammad ('s) and the Imam of Ali ('a) and his eleven sons and about the truth of death and Resurrection on the Day of Judgment and paradise and hell...

The signed paper is then placed with the two green branches and buried along with the dead. I can't say what is the exact explanation for this.

An amazing story about testimony to faith

Haji Noori writes in *Darus Salam*: Once in Najaf-e-Ashraf a man named Syed Muhammad Faqih who was a good scholar, told me one night, "If possible please lend me the book *Misbahul Faqih* (by Shaykh Tusi)." I said, "Well, I will bring it for you tomorrow evening." Next day I brought *Misbah*, which is about supplications, and handed it over to that person. He came again the next night and said, "I request you to do something for me. Please do it." Noori said, "I am at your service."

He said, "Please you and the great Jurist (Maraja) come to my place and have breakfast with me tomorrow morning." I told this to the late scholar who accepted the invitation. When we arrived the next morning, I saw two great scholars, the late Shaykh Jawwad Najafi and Syed Muhammad Husain Kazmi and his two students sitting there. Thus we were six persons in all. After the breakfast, the host went in and brought the same book of Tusi (*Misbah*) and said, "Dear Sirs! Please hear these beliefs of mine and then be witnesses."

The late Haji Noori says, "I took *Misbah* from him and read." I said, "Imam has said, 'The one who is about to die should do this' while you are hale and hearty." Thus implying that he was not covered by this narration. But Shaykh Muhammad Tabrizi said very humbly, "Why do you restrain me from a good deed? May be this narration applies to me."

I said, "All right, you know better." Then he reiterated his beliefs one by one with such humility that it made all of us weep. Then he said, "Now it is your turn to give testimony." All those present there also gave witness.

That evening he returned the *Misbah* of Shaykh to me and said, "I am also giving you this letter. Please give it to the respected scholars and others to put their seals on it." I took the letter and had it attested by the respected scholars. The following night a man came and said, "Sir, your friend is not able to attend the dawn prayer, you should visit him." Next day, I went to see him with the scholars. He passed away on the seventh day.

Haji says, "I wonder how he knew that he was nearing his death!"

Today's death of adversity

Nowadays sudden deaths overtake more and more people and one is unable to make a will because of unexpected and sudden heart failure or accident etc. However, one must try ones best to act on this narration and keep the Hereafter in mind. If possible you may act as per this narration.

Majlisi (r.a.) acted cautiously and wrote down his beliefs while he was hale and healthy and asked forty people to witness it. They also endorsed his note by writing: There is not doubt in the faith of Majlisi.

In this age, is it done this way in our hospitals? How pitiable is this condition? Worse is that they expect health from the physician and medicines, that is, they die in polytheism.

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