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Part 3

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَغُضُّونَ أَصْوَاتَهُمْ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ امْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ
لِلتَّقْوَىٰ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

Surely those who lower their voices before Allah's Apostle are they whose hearts Allah has tested for guarding (against evil); they shall have forgiveness and a great reward. (49:3)

God, for maintaining discipline and respect when facing the Prophet, says:
When you talk to the Messenger, never raise your voice over his voice.

Normally, while talking, when one wants to show superiority, he raises his voice. All of you, in front of the Prophet, are in a lower rank. All of you are like slaves who must obey him. He is sent by the Lord of the universe. Whenever you want to say something to him. Keep your voice low, lower than his voice. Do not raise your voices, as you do while talking with one another, when you are facing the Messenger of Allah. Know his dignity. It is a sign of your own greatness. Just see who is facing you? Whom you are addressing? Realize your limits. If you make your voice louder than the Prophet's, all your deeds will go in vain. It means, We order you to maintain the respect of Muhammad. If you show disrespect to him you spoil your own deeds.

Deprivation of bounties of the presence of the Prophet

They have described the meaning of 'Spoiling of deeds' in two ways: One is what the author of *Tafsir Majmaul Bayan* has written. He says: What is meant is the deed (or act) of talking with the Prophet and of sitting in his company. If it becomes spoiled or destroyed it is not a trivial matter. How many bounties and benefits are there for one who sits with and speaks to the representative of God. How many benefits are there in such a great meeting!

The Holy Prophet is the source of all knowledge. Sitting for an hour in the meeting of a scholar is better than reciting Qur'an twelve thousand times. Then what if this hour is in the company of the head of all the scholars? All the scholars of the world have learnt everything only through him, from Muhammad Mustafa. Summarily speaking, if one is in a gathering of Muhammad and does not maintain respect and discipline, his presence will not be regarded as worship. God forbid, if he makes the Prophet unhappy through any kind of disrespect, he has committed a Greater Sin. It is like blasphemy. God's curse rains on him.

O Muslims! If you do not maintain respect and discipline in front of the Prophet, your deeds become null and void. Here deed means your worship through your presence before the Holy Prophet. If you have hurt him, it is a great sin that equals disbelief or blasphemy. You have destroyed your deed with your own hands.

Apostasy nullifies deeds

Another probability, described by some of the commentators of Qur'an is that it means total nullification. Nullifying of a deed by another deed is something not easily understood. Whatever Qur'an says must be accepted. The Holy book clearly states that there are some sins, which if committed, nullify all previous good deeds. Foremost among them are disbelief and apostasy. May God save the one who offers prayer till the age of thirty, observes fasts and even performs Hajj.

Then if he gets a lot of money and travels to centers of sin and evil, after being lured by them and says, "We were mad that we observed fasts in hot summers and deprived ourselves from drinking, enjoyment and gambling. Why did we go for Hajj and spend a lot of money? The Arabs ate our wealth." If he utters such words then his previous good deeds go in vain. If he dies in this condition, he will not have in his credit even a two-unit prayer. It is as saying goes; the cow gave milk but also kicked it and spilled it all. If one turns away from his religion (apostatizes), definitely there is a permanent chastisement for him. There is no way of salvation for him. All the deeds which he had done have gone in vain.

He himself has nullified them. A man's turning apostate! What it means? He himself says: I did it unnecessarily; I prayed prayer uselessly. Is there any more prayer for him? He himself says: I performed Hajj needlessly. Is there any Hajj for him or at his credit any more? Woe unto such a fellow who ruined his future. In short, if one reverts to disbelief his good deeds are gone.

One who hurts the Prophet nullifies his good deeds

Among other sins, which nullify good deeds and amount to disbelief is harming or hurting the feelings of the Prophet. Qur'an mentions it very clearly that one who annoys the Prophet and hurts him, each and every good deed of his would go in vain. This is very clear. If one hurts the Prophet it is as if he denies his Prophethood and Messengership. So every good deed performed by him earlier is now null and void. Except this misdeed, there is no other sin, which washes out previous good deeds completely.

It means, if one has done several good deeds and has also committed some sins, both remain at their place. It is not that all sins wipe out good deeds, but apostasy indeed does. Yes, it is possible that some of the good goes in vain due to some sins. For example, if someone annoys his mother, it results in the nullifying of his previous good deeds. But his prayer and fast etc. do not go away.

Whoever does good God sees his good and whoever does evil shall see his evil. One does not remove another.

What happened when they obstructed the burial of Imam Hasan beside the Prophet's grave? Imam Husain complained from the depths of his heart regarding oppression and injustice pertaining to the behavior of Ayesha. He said, "Umar brought the body of Abu Bakr at the grave of my grandfather and hit the holy ground with a pick-axe." Thus they showed a serious disrespect. God says in the Holy Qur'an: Do not raise your voice over the voice of the Holy Prophet. You came and hit a pickaxe over his grave. You dug a grave to bury Abu Bakr by the side of the Prophet.

Thereafter Umar also made a will that he also be buried there.¹ He too showed such disrespect. They are too small too hitting a pickaxe on the grave of the Holy Prophet. Of course, I have said this in the face of what the Sunnis say. They say that being buried by the side of the Holy Prophet is enough to show their greatness. This is a disgrace, not gracefulness. Disrespect has been shown to the holy grave. Their place was certainly not here. The next verse says:

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Surely, those who lower their voices before Allah's Apostle are they whose hearts Allah has tested for guarding (against evil); they shall have forgiveness and a great reward. (49:3)

Piety of the heart and the body

Piety sometimes belongs to the physical organs and sometimes it is in the heart. Importance is for the piety of the heart. The piety of the body and physical organs is temporary and always in danger. Its value is less compared to the piety of heart. For instance, it is the outward (physical) piety because of which most of the people observe Ramadhan fasts under the influence of what their parents told them; that if you do not fast purposely you will have to observe fasts for sixty consecutive days.

If one eats openly during Ramadhan on the first instance, he should be given 20 lashes. On the second occasion fifty lashes and for third or fourth the sentence is killing or death. This punishment may be given in this world or not his chastisement in the Hereafter is definite (in hell). The parents told these things to the child and therefore one observed fasts of Ramadhan. He also heard that the one who does

not perform prayer passes away from this world as a disbeliever. One who does not pray does not get the intercession of the Holy Prophet and the Ahle Bait. Whoever does not pray will burn in hellfire, as Qur'an says:

﴿...مَا سَأَلَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ؟ قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ﴾

How is that they brought you to hellfire? They reply: We did not pray.

In brief, what made them tremble is what they heard from the pulpit or from their parents or what they read or heard from Qur'an. This is an impossible piety. The inner or the piety of the heart is that a man understands and is convinced of what God wants him to understand, as to know God and to know the status of man. Some years pass by and, by the Grace of God, a light is lit up in his heart and then he understands the greatness of God. This is the piety of the heart. Such understanding makes him shiver.

They tremble on hearing the Name of Allah.

If piety does not reach the heart, the Name of God is just like all other names for him.

Remains careful like a cat but...

In order to make you understand the meaning of the Piety of heart and the compelled Piety, I give you an example, there are some who are much forward in the matter of showing their saintliness like a cat. You have seen that when it rains, a cat slips away from the side of a wall as a precautionary measure, fearing to become wet. Woe unto the cat. A splash of rain makes a cat unhappy. But where does this holiness of the cat go away when it jumps into a pond to catch a fish? It drowns half of its body in the water of the pond. When it is the turn of desire and passion, it forgets all piety.

In the book *Oddatutdai*, a narration is quoted from the Holy Prophet, the last messenger of God: In the Hereafter, on the Day of Judgment, a group from my Ummah (community) will have a lot of good deeds, like pieces of Egyptian cloth in whiteness and brightness but "It will be ordained: Throw all of them in hell." It will be exclaimed: O Prophet of God! All these people were performers of prayer. The reply will be: Yes, they did not give up prayer. They will again say: They had observed fasts too.

The reply: Yes, they did fast. They will ask: O Messenger of God! Then what has made them to be thrown into hell? The reply will be: These performers of prayer and observers of fasts were such that when they saw unlawful wealth, they fell on it head on. (Here the Arabic word 'Wathaba' means jumping). Just as a cat jumps on a fish these 'pious' people also jump upon unlawful wealth. For example: His father died. His wealth came in his hands. He is told: This is the portion of your brother and this of your sister. Give it to them. Why do you not observe your father's will? He says: Leave aside such

things. He does not possess the Piety of the heart. Come; now let us find out the path leading to the Piety of the heart.

Understanding the greatness of His creation results in the Piety of Heart

You look at the outer space and observe that there are stars and stars. In these galaxies there are millions of suns and other globes or spheres. They are like our galaxy. But they are not yet visible to us. In the second galaxy they have found out a star or planet with a diameter of one–billion and six hundred thousand kilo meters. If this star appears in our solar system, it will cover one–sixth of the entire sky. If it comes up here, there would never be night due to its brightness.

I mention this just by way of an example. How vast is the machinery of this creation of God! All these huge spheres are revolving and moving by the orders of Only One Might. Their Director is One. Their Manager is One. Just think about the movement of this our earth. In spite of its bulk it does not deviate from its fixed path even for an instant. Same is the case of the movement of the sun with all its mammothness.

They are, by nature, made to follow the path fixed for them. There are some among you who are sixty or more years old. Have you ever seen any such deviation till today? This twelve Signs of Zodiac! God is the Greatest! You see that it is at its original place. The length of days and nights increase and decrease regularly every year. Throughout your life span have you observed even the slightest waywardness? How regularly the night continues to become shorter and shorter up to the start of spring. Then days and nights become equal. Again days become longer till the end of spring. Then it reverses. These changes take place with extreme precision. This is not so for the last sixty years but it might be for the last sixty thousand years and may continue for thousands of years. So say:

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ، ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ.

Allah is the greatest. Blessed be Allah the best of creators. This is the will of the most powerful and the wise.

Both an elephant and a mosquito are from one mechanism

A mosquito, which can be blown away easily is similar to an elephant in the mode of creation. The God who gave a trunk to the elephant has given it to a mosquito too. During some nights it sits on your body and awakes you, so that you may understand. Yet why do you not exclaim God is Great (Allaho Akbar)? O God! What is this sting, which made a hole in my body? What a wonderful sense of hearing have You

given to it.

As soon as you raise your hand it flies off. The hearing faculty of this mosquito is so great that it hears a noise, which you cannot. (like a radar). When you raise your hand, its noise is so faint that you cannot hear it but that mosquito does. O God! How astonishing is Your creation! You have given it ear, eye, hands and feet in addition to two wings. An elephant does not have wings. If a faithful person thinks and meditates he becomes enlightened under the influence of piety. God's greatness gets entrenched in his heart.

One of its signs is that he regards that thing great which makes him think and realize God's greatness. He realizes that the greatest of all human beings is Muhammad, the last Messenger of God, ever since the Lord of the Worlds created the universe. The more you realize God's greatness, the more you become aware of Muhammad who is God's representative. This universe is but an exudation from the exudations of Muhammad.

Imam Sadiq at the time of uttering the name of his holy grandfather 'Muhammad' was becoming so much respectful that his cheek almost touched, in humility, his knees on the ground. He never uttered the holy name without making or maintaining ablution. It is prohibited for every Muslim to touch this holy name without ablution. To do so is an insult to the Prophet.

By the way, it must be known that, this applies, when by this name, is meant the Holy Prophet, not anyone who has this name.

Signs of Muhammad are also honorable

To the extent the Holy Prophet Muhammad is respectable in your eyes, the signs of Muhammad are also similarly honorable. Anybody whom you see not respecting a Sayyid, know for sure that the Sayyid's grandfather is also not honorable in that fellow's eyes. He does not regard him great. If one has realized the greatness of Muhammad, even if a Sayyid hits on his head or gives him any hardship, that calamity should appear light to him because he regards that Sayyid as the prince. He is Sayyid and master. Shaykh Ja'far Kashiful Ghita has mentioned reasons for serving the Shaykh. Some money had arrived for distribution among the madressah students and it was distributed accordingly as he himself was busy in prayers.

When he finished the first prayer, there came a needy person between the two prayers. He (the needy person) was a self-respecting Sayyid. He stood exactly in front of the prayer mat of the Shaykh and said, "Give me my portion (Sahm)." He was told, "You have come late. Whatever we had has been already distributed."

The self-respecting Sayyid did not at all care for the Shaykh. He spat upon the face of the Shaykh. Spitting on someone's face is regarded worse than killing among the Arabs. But what did the Shaykh

do? (This argument is for the piety of the heart).

He spread the saliva with his own hand on his own face and beard and said, “I want that my face should appear bright in front of Sayyida Fatima Zahra on the Day of Judgment.” Thus did he realize the greatness of Fatima. He intends to swallow his anger in front of the offspring of Sayyida Fatima so that he may find a way whereby he may reach the Sayyida’s grandfather on the hardest Day of Resurrection. Unless one realizes the greatness of God he cannot realize the greatness of Muhammad and of Zahra.

How then can he understand the greatness of a Sayyid? The said Shaykh did not suffice with this. He stood up and asked the audience, “Whoever respects the beard of the Shaykh should drop some money his lap.” The Shaykh spread his own skirt for begging. The faithful followers imagined that the Shaykh was collecting contributions for his pupils.

So they filled up his skirt with coins. The Shaykh gathered the amount, kissed the hand of the Sayyid and put the whole amount in his hand saying most respectfully, “Kindly forgive me and excuse me.” This was because he wanted to get near to God Almighty.² So, this is true piety. It means the heart should be aware of the Lord of the universe. Man must realize God’s greatness. If a man’s heart realizes the greatness of God, he becomes weak and low before Muhammad. He bows down before the Holy Qur’an, as it is God’s Word. But, if, God forbid, there is no piety in heart then he has no regard and respect for God and everything related to God.

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لِلتَّقْوَى﴾

Surely those who lower their voices before Allah’s Apostle are they whose hearts Allah has tested for guarding (against evil)... (49:3)

Those who lower their voice in the Mosque of the Messenger, due to fear, shame and modesty, God tested their hearts. Noise, shouting and complaints are signs of ignorance and unawareness because of the lack of piety in hearts. This is very strange and astonishing. In the Prophet’s mosque, there are guards who show their backs to the Holy Shrine of the Holy Prophet. What disrespect! They have no piety in their hearts. They do not realize who Muhammad is. Their Shaykh also does not know.

Do not say that I am making an allegation. Ibn Taiyminyah himself, who is their foremost peer, also does not know all this. He clearly says that the grave of Muhammad is no different from other places. Just think about whom you are talking? When have you realized the greatness God, by which you could realize the greatness of Muhammad? You turn your back to the grave of the Holy one. You extend your legs towards it. You come to the Prophet’s mosque for prayer but you have no respect for the Prophet! You say visiting the Holy Prophet’s grave is not permitted! All this is because of lack of piety in heart.

God has given the piety of heart to you Shias and may he multiply it manifold.

﴿...أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ أَمْتَحَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ لِلتَّقْوَى﴾

...are they whose hearts Allah has tested for guarding (against evil)...

Here the Arabic word 'Imtahana' means 'He tested'. He has tested the hearts regarding piety. In other words, it is that God expanded their hearts so that they may know His greatness. Expansion is the opposite of narrowness. Unless one recognizes the greatness of God and His Prophet, he does not become great. How can a twelve years old child realize the greatness of the King! How can he pay respect? Unless the feeling of greatness enters his heart he cannot realize greatness. Unless he goes to school and learns writing how can he realize the worth of a good writer? How can an illiterate person appreciate the value of a scholar? How can he pay respect to him! By God! I am telling you the truth. If man wants to pay respect to God he must realize His greatness. He must make himself small. You will certainly ask me what is highness and what is lowness?

When you were four or five years old, you used to get a two rial or a five qiran coins from your parents to buy a toy. Now you have become owner of thousands and millions. Yet you are as little as when you were four or five years old. The name makes no change. If you like, I may make it more clearly for you. You have already heard the story of Mulla Nasiruddin who said: Praise be to Allah! There has been no change in me though I have become old. People asked, "How can it be? You have become obviously old." He replied, "No. My strength and capability has not changed at all. There was a heavy thing in our house. I could not lift it in my youth. Now, when I am old, I cannot yet lift it. Thus, I have not been changed since my youth." There are some who have not changed ever since their childhood days.

One had a small house wherein he had opened a little shop. If any other child tried to kick it, he would catch the child's leg, saying do you want to destroy my house? In childhood, his house was of a few bricks. Now the number of the bricks is, say four thousand. Briefly, littleness is in not thinking and understanding. May God make man understand here, not in the grave! May God give us a house, which may not be destroyed, a house wherefrom man may not be driven out, a house that is forever strong. When man gives up his thinking about permanent matters he is still a child even at the age of ninety.

1. Usul al-Kafi, Tafsir Durre Manthur, vol. 5; pg. 80.

2. Manazelul Aakherah

<https://www.al-islam.org/moral-values-of-quran-tafsir-hujurat-ayatullah-dastaghaib/part-3>