

Part 14

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ، وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِنْ نِسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ، وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ، وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ، بِئْسَ الْإِسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ. يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِنَ الظَّنِّ، إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ﴾

“O you who believe! Let not (one) people laugh at (another) people perchance they may be better than they, nor let women (laugh) at (other) women, perchance they may be better than they; and do not find fault with your own people nor call one another by nicknames; evil is a bad name after faith, and whoever does not turn, these it is that are the unjust. O you who believe! Avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin. (49: 11-12)”

Today is Friday of mid-Ramadhan. By the Grace of God, we have succeeded in fasting for the first half of the holy month. Let us hope further that Almighty Allah will make us succeed also in fasting for the another half of this month and also in benefiting from the recitations of the Holy Qur'an and in spending for His pleasure in various ways.

Friday is the spring season of sending Salawat:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا﴾

“Surely, Allah and His angels bless the Prophet. O you who believe! Call for (Divine) blessings on him and salute him with a (becoming) salutation.”¹

It is mentioned in the book *Kashful Ghummah* that Imam Hasan said, “My father Amirul Momineen said that the Holy Prophet has said, ‘At any place and in any time you may be. Do not stop sending Salawat on me as your Salawat reach me.’”

As per the Holy verse, anyone who does a good deed gets a tenfold reward for it:

﴿مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ أَمْثَالِهَا﴾

“Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it,”²

Anyone who sends Salawat on the Holy Prophet once, the Messenger of God will remember him ten times and prays in his or her favor. What a dealing full of profit this is!

Salawat and rescuing in times of trouble

Once a believer, in Mecca, instead of every Dua, sent Salawat on the Holy Prophet during Tawaf (circumambulating) of Ka’ba. What he recited after concluding a prayer of Tawaf was Salawat. During his Saee between Safa and Marwah was Salawat. Everyone else was reciting particular supplications in Wuqoof at Mashar at Arafat and Mina but he was busy sending Salawat. People asked him, “How is it that we do not hear anything from your mouth except Salawat.”

He said, “There is a story behind this. I had my father who fell ill and almost fainted during this very journey for Hajj. I saw that his condition was very serious and hard. His face had darkened like a grave. I sought refuge in God and prayed: O My Lord! Please do not make my father die in this condition (which shows Your anger). He (father) is weeping and crying: I am burning. It is a terrible fire. I took refuge in Almighty Allah and said: O My Lord! Please do not make my father die in this condition. It is disgraceful for me. Before long, I could see that in the last moments, his condition changed.

His face slowly–slowly turned bright showing signs of relief instead of distress. Then he departed from this world with ease and in tranquility. Then I said: O My God! Shall I know how this change came about? Then I saw my father in a dream that he was very happy. I asked about his condition. He replied: My deeds and manners were the cause of my condition, which you saw earlier. But then came a voice from the Holy Prophet of the last age: O the one who sent many Salawats on me during his life! Now is the time for me to recompense you. So all this rewards from Muhammad in return of Salawats.”

From where and for what I came here and where I am going?

These are the first questions, which are asked by the original nature of human being. These questions arise in everyone’s heart. What is the aim of our life? For what are we created? What is the way of our

happiness? But most of the people have stifled this human nature. They have engaged in other things. Otherwise all seek happiness, by nature.

What is the aim and goal of human life and of the creation of entire universe? There is no way of knowing it except by asking the Lord of the worlds! Who is the Owner of the universe? If all the people together put their minds and brains for searching a reply to this most important question, the aim of creation, they cannot succeed. Minds of all are similar in this matter. The brain is imperfect. We must ask the Lord and Owner of the universe. The One Who created says: It is only He Who knows.

﴿أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ؟﴾

“Does He not know, Who created?”³

So ask the Lord: O Lord! For what You created me and this universe too? What is the aim of creating us? What is the way of our success and happiness?

Knowing God and worshipping (serving) God, aim of creation

The Holy Qur’an says in clear terms: We did not create Jinn and men but only for serving (knowing and then worshipping) Me:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

“And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me.”⁴

A Hadith Qudsi says: Whatever you see, We created it for you, various fruits, many kinds of vegetables and different animals... Every bounty is for man and man is for Allah. Man has been created for God, for recognition and for serving (worshipping) and for loving, for recognizing God and for befriending God and for worshipping (serving) God. This is the aim.

This is the happiness of human beings. If man walks on this way, every good luck and happiness is for him. The path of knowing and serving God can make man benefit from a pious life. If he does not deviate from this right path, he tastes the sweetness of this path. But if he does not tread this path and goes after lusts and desires he gets nothing except misery, regrets and ill luck. His life becomes worse than that of an animal. Every animal’s life is better than his as he distanced himself from the aim of his life.

The aim of life is to see the bounties, to recognize the One Who provided these bounties and to befriend

Him. So, open your eyes. Do not consider yourself away or apart from God. Do not imagine that you are independent and self-sufficient. Do not be in illusion that the burden of life is borne by you. Know that you have God; that you have a Creator and the One Who brings you and takes you away and Who protects you. Your life is being directed by God. Lest you associate yourself with God. The life of man is sweet only when he understands that God is there; that the Lord Creator of the universe is his helper and protector that He is his life's Director.

His reliance must be on Only One God. Woe unto man who distances himself from God and imagines that he himself is bearing the burden of his life and that he must manage his affairs himself. At that time, many doubts and superstitions and aspirations and sorrows overtake him. How then can he taste the sweetness of life? A man's life is tasteful only when he sees and knows that every bounty is only from God, if he praises and glorifies only God, be he on his own dining table or on that of anyone else.

Reflection of his radiance, wherever you see

In some of the villages they cultivate paddy. You can see as if there is a divine dinner-cloth of several square yards area, which provides good rice to His servants. How much pleased is a monotheist believing in Only One God looking at this grand gift for millions of His servants. Likewise are the growing of wheat and barely and other food grains in every season.

Meaning: I am very much pleased with the universe as the universe is pleased with Him. I love the entire universe because the entire universe is from Him.

Take up some earth and kiss it and put it on your eyes as it is a divine bounty. How much water God Almighty has provided for His servants. A true Faithful person drinks this water with happiness and thankfulness. To suck (drink it slowly) it is recommended, that is, to drink a glass of water in several phases slowly – two or three phases and to say: Al hamdu lillaah (Thanks to God) every time.

Truth and reality about bread is also known. A believing (believer) person eats every piece of it with a profound feeling of gratefulness and happiness. This is the life of a man. If man lives like this and, especially, follows the recommended hints while eating and drinking, it also ensures his health and safety. If you do so you will not fall ill. Insure yourself in this way: Until you are hungry, do not eat anything and stop eating before you are fully gratified, that is, eat two or three morsels less. Similarly it is mentioned in the manners of eating: The morsel must be little in size. Secondly, do not make haste in eating and chew the morsel well.⁵

The longer food is in mouth and the more it is chewed the better for digestion. Firstly, the food is in mouth. The more saliva mixes with food the better for its turning into strength of body through digestion. Make no haste. Sit respectfully and with discipline on the ground on the dinner spread of God Almighty without any show of pride or arrogance as it is seen in modern manners, as they eat standing. God's bounty is very great. If something is placed on bread, lift it up. Bread is respected do not cut it with a

knife. Kiss it.

Consider God's bounty precious. It is undesirable to cut. If man follows these manners of discipline and eats food with a feeling of profound gratitude towards Allah, it is better both for his this worldly life and also for his eternal life in the Hereafter. Both his body and his soul will be restful. But if there is not attention and gratitude, he is like a four footed animal, like a cow,

﴿... وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ﴾

“...and eat as the beasts eat...6

How does a donkey eat? Same is the manner of these people on their dining tables. Only belly – nothing else! Woe unto them if there is extravagance also. They hurl down morsels after morsels chewing less. Then they vomit – sour taste. It is due to deteriorating of food (undigested) in stomach. His body suffers. His head turns giddy. He does not understand things for some days.

By the way, the remedy of such condition of stomach is, according to Avicenna, not to eat anything for a period and to eat fragrant things like pear, sweetbrier.

Man's prosperity is in knowing Almighty Allah

If man walks on the path of humanity he fully tastes the sweetness of life. The path of humanity, the aim of man's pure life is that he must be serene and sincere towards his Lord. He should be pleased and happy with his Lord, he should not have any bad opinion in the matter of his Lord's decisions and decreases. The path of man's success and welfare is such knowledge. See God along with every existing thing and realize that you and everyone and everything is subject to Him:

Meaning; O the One Who is the creator of everything. Humble earth became strong with Your Power. The entire universe is under Your Sight. We exist because of You and You exist by Yourself.

Look at your own self fifty years back. What were you a hundred years ago? Say: A handful of dust in wilderness. Is it not true? These dusts, by and by, became rice or gram or bean or wheat. Father and mother devoured it. Particles gathered and, finally, man was born. After all, who brought them? Whose powerful hand collected these particles from forest then brought them from fathers back to mother's womb? What a wonderful construction? O the intelligent man! Tell justly. Did you yourself made these changes from beginning to end? What is happening constantly at every instant in your body...Who brings about all these functions? Then what has God held up from you? What defect you have? Look at your teeth. When you came out of your mother's womb your stomach had no strength to digest any solid food. What food for you lighter than milk and that too from the breasts of your mother! That too is such

an astonishing manner where by it does not pour out of breasts despite a number of holes! Who made all these provisions?

Water carrier recognized God through his water skin

Once a water carrier brought water to the late Hakim Bashi, the great. You know, in olden days, there were no water taps. A water carrier, with his water bag made of leather, came to the late Hakim. The latter asked the former, "O gentleman! How did you recognize God?" The water carrier replied, "Through this watering which is on my shoulder." They asked, "How?"

The water carrier replied, "This bag has not more than one hole, the only one from which water goes in it and comes out of it. I tie up this mouth firmly, after tightly wringing it up. Yet some water seeps out of it. But when I look at my own body, I see that there are several outlets both up and down in it. My belly is full of water and food and air. Yet nothing ever seeps out of it!" Say: Allah is the best Creator – Glory to Him.

Female breast is full of milk. Yet no drop comes of it though there are several holes in it. Why? It is so, so that the breast may be useful for the baby. Whenever it wants to suckle, it sucks the breast and gets milk. When it does not, the holes close up. The milk never spills out, nor is it stifled!

Pessimism and mistrust destroys mans life

I want you to know that a man's way to be happy is that he should have always a good opinion about his Lord. He should be happy with Him. He must acknowledge His bounties. He must be extremely drowned in thankfulness to Him. If he has a bad opinion about God, he is deviated and he will have nothing but grief, ill luck and misfortune. The reason why the man of today has become so miserable and restless is that he has distanced himself from his Lord. He looks at everything but not at God. He trusts everyone and everything except God. He says: I have this and that.

What he never says is that 'I have my God with me'. That is why his life does not become better. Rather it is likely to become worse. By way of example, today, Switzerland is on top of all the countries of the world from the viewpoint of security, liberty and civilization. So naturally, people over there should be most happy and peaceful. But, as is reported by the press, there are a record number of suicides in that country! So, something is wrong somewhere. There are no apparent reasons for such suicides. It is not due to lack of money or power or independence. The defect is somewhere else. It is their distance from God. As man here has gone away from his Lord, he feels that he is alone and without any support. There is no other cause for this pitiable condition. He has a bad opinion about the universe. He has considered life aimless. A man who has such opinion about this world and Hereafter cannot get anything but ill luck.

﴿... الظَّالِمِينَ بِاللَّهِ ظَنَّ السَّوْءِ، عَلَيْهِمْ دَائِرَةُ السَّوْءِ، وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَنَهُمْ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ، وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾.

“...The entertainers of evil thoughts about Allah. On them is the evil turn, and Allah is wrath with them and has cursed them and prepared hell for them, and evil is the resort.”⁷

They have bad opinion about God’s messengers about the goings on in the world of existence, about the creations of God and, let me say, above all, they have a bad opinion with regard to themselves also. They have no good opinion about fellow human beings. What do they think about themselves? They have considered themselves animals. What do animals do? Eat and mate! Another passion for man is to gather wealth and seek beautification. Such animal-like inclinations have made man consider himself a miserable. He has forgotten himself because he has forgotten God.

﴿وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنسَاهُمْ أَنفُسَهُمْ﴾

“And be not like those who forsook Allah, so He made them forsake their own souls...”⁸

Everyone considers others as dishonest and they only look at the dark side. No one thinks of virtues. It has become their habit to find faults in everyone because of the misconception mentioned in the verse under discussion. Here is an amusing example.

A Melancholic youth turns into a cow

It is written that during the rule of Izzud Daula Dailami, a youth belonging to the tribe of Diyalama, connected with the ruling powers, suffered from melancholy, which is an illness of psyche and which is connected to both brain and body. It alters the temperament, increases ones anger and intensifies the emotions. He regards whatever comes to his thought as reality. It is indeed a serious and troublesome calamity.

What is real appears to him as imaginary and imaginary things appear real. For example, suppose he is sitting in a garden. Suddenly a thought comes to his mind that all the trees, plants and greenery have caught fire and going up into flames. Thus his mind makes him see that everything is burning before his eyes. This poor youth had become melancholious and he imagined that he was a cow. Then he began to moo like a cow as he remembered that sound well.

Then this devilish imagination turned more serious. People tried to give him food, but he resisted and said, “I do not want such food. You must, today, cut off my head and cook my flesh.” He obtained promise from the people that they will surely slaughter him and prepare various kinds of meat dishes.

The poor parents tried their best to give him human food but he just pushed everything back. By and by he became weak and thin. All the relatives feared that he would soon die. So they sent a word to Izzud Daula and sought his help in this matter. Izzud Daula asked Iran's best doctor to attend this case. The expert physician also accepted the job. The way in which the doctor treated the patient is also very interesting.

He (the doctor) said, "When I come to you, you people should not address me as a doctor. You must say that the butcher has arrived. I pretend to be a butcher. When the youth says, 'Slaughter me as I am a cow', tell him, 'All right, we have brought a butcher for you.' Then I know what to do." So the people said to that youth, "Today, the chief butcher is arriving to cut off your holy head, to divide your meat into two portions for making minced and roasted meat." This made the youth quite happy. He asked, "When will the butcher come?" They replied, "Today is the appointed day." So the youth was awaiting the butcher and the parents and relatives of that youth were anxious to see what the chief doctor would do.

Then came the doctor who had worn a butcher's dress and was holding a knife in each hand. He was rubbing the knives to sharpen them. On reaching them, he asked, "Where is the cow?" The youth himself mooed like a cow indicating that it was he. The doctor-turned-butcher said, "Very well, bring it to the open space in the garden." The youth came himself to the garden very happily and lied down at once with his head ready to be cut off. The butcher then said, "Very nice. Now tie up its hands and legs by way of precaution because, some cows fling their legs making our job difficult." The doctor was trying to convince the youth that what he wanted was about to happen soon, so that he may be treated in the way the doctor has planned.

Finally he repeated, "Tie up his hands and feet firmly." They acted accordingly. Then the 'butcher' knocked at the youth (cow's) back and also at his chest and shook him with a jerk. Then he asked, "Who is the owner of this cow?" The father of the youth came up and asked, "What is the matter?" The 'butcher' said, "Cow's meat is a nice food, but people usually feed it well to keep it healthy and get good beef. Only then do they slaughter it and benefit from its beef. This cow has no flesh. It is so weak! How should I slaughter it?" The father asked, "Well, then what should I do?" The 'butcher' said, "For the time being, take it back and give him food so that it puts on more flesh." The youth heard this and understood that the butcher was right. People do not slaughter a cow unless it is fat and fleshy.

So he said, "All right, bring whatever food is there so that I may eat." The doctor prescribed some medicine. The youth took hoping to become fleshy enough for slaughter. After a month or forty days, the medicine showed its effect and his melancholy decreased and then vanished altogether, and the youth realized that he was human, not a cow. That he was the eater, not an eatable. Man is not in the control of a cow. Cow is subservient to man.

Melancholy has overtaken most people today

You heard this story. Now, believe me. Today, most of the people are affected by a kind of melancholy, some clearly and some not so clearly, but all consider themselves animals. What is an animal? Its function is lust and passion, either stomach or that another inclination. It can do nothing beyond this. He says, "When I die, it's all over. What is hereafter and what is eternity, spirit, night in the grave, Paradise and hell? What is all this?" Are we different from cows? Cows and donkeys are free. Male and female animals confront each another in the streets. What happens when a female ass arrives and a male donkey's sees her? It is like some youths of today.

What is their behavior in gardens, on roads, in cinema houses? He says: Man must have liberty. Man is no different from a cow. Why? Why should there be any difference between the two? Have the female animals any hijab (veil)? All their bodies are bare. What is the difference between them and these two-footed animals? How are these women of today different from female donkeys? To what extent the melancholious man has advanced? They have missed their reality. For what are you created? In what type of a pit have you hurled yourself? They consider dancing as a perfect art! Monkey also dances. Is this the aim of creation?

O people! Why have you ignored and lost your reality? You must get treatment for this melancholy. Now let me show you the treatment.

I ask you: What is your play and pastime, your dances, your films? Is all this meant for you? They say: Well, we do not make any distinction between a man and an animal. We must be free and at liberty. We must have entertainment. We should have pastimes. We ought to have television. In reply they must be told: Well, gentlemen! It is nice what you say. Verily, man requires entertainment in the house from morning to evening. Outside, one should attend cinema at least for two hours every day to kill himself. Right. A cow must have some flesh so that people may eat its beef.

We also say so. We confirm it. O Man! You certainly do require entertainment, but healthy entertainment it should be. It should give true pleasure to your heart, not temporary and superficial. It should not fan the fire of passion inside you. These cinemas! Apparently there is pleasing entertainment therein, but it instigates passions and lusts in everyone. Consequently, a married man becomes disinterested in his own wife and runs after another woman.

What a disaster it brings. What dirty corruption! I have repeatedly said that women who get distanced from their own houses finally fall down in dens of vice, due to these cinemas and television shows! How many men are there who did have warm households, wives and children whom they have now discarded. What kind of entertainment is this? How much fiercely man burns from within after this entertainment?

Violence after watching films

A few months back there was a news report published in Iran. In a city, a ten-year-old boy killed his three years old sister in their house. He had killed her with a knife. Thereafter, police and court made inquiries to find out the motive. Finally, it was found that the child had seen a violent film on his home television and was influenced by the violence shown in it. O fathers! Bring televisions in your homes and turn your children into killers.

Is this entertainment? It inflames fury and frenzy of passion and lust. What a fountainhead of lust, greed, passion, desire and sin, the five fingers of the devil's hand! How does it drown you in a dirty well of misery and restlessness! Yes, you require entertainment, but it should be healthy entertainment.

Almighty God says in Qur'an:

﴿قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ، فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا، هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ﴾

“Say: In the grace of Allah and in His mercy- in that they should rejoice; it is better than that which they gather.”⁹

Be happy and experience pleasure when you spread your dinner-cloth, when you eat this precious bread. You are tasting God's bounties. Be happy with it. Where was this bread before it came into your hands? Thousands of hands had done their job before it reached you.

How tasteful is the morsel, which has reached my hand and mouth. The cloud, the wind, the moon, the sun and the sky all have performed their duty to provide me with this piece of bread!

God's grace in Marital life

Look at your wife and be happy and thank God Who made you contented lawfully in the matter of your natural sexual instinct and safeguarded your Faith. How has He made this lady a means of your rest, peace and gratification. God made her a means of rest and peace for you, through a permitted and lawful sexual benefit. This is entertainment. So be happy with the God-given grace.

O women! Be happy and pleased by looking at your husbands. God, through this man, protected your faith, your chastity and your honor. He brought you out of loneliness. The duty of you women is to adorn yourselves for winning the hearts of your husbands. The Holy Prophet has cursed those women who give up beautification for their husbands. You should behave in such attractive manner with your husband that he may never be inclined to look at any other woman. You must take care of your husband's attention through love, kindness, pleasing manners and adoration. There are numerous narrations regarding man's pleasure while meeting his wife and the wife's pleasure while meeting her

husband.

Children also are a bounty given by God. They take you out of loneliness. It is indeed God's great grace.

﴿قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ، فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا، هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ﴾

“Say: In the grace of Allah and in His mercy- in that they should rejoice; it is better than that which they gather.”¹⁰

It is also mentioned in narrations that Grace of God means Muhammad Mustafa and Mercy (Rahmat) of God is Ali bin Abi Talib. They show the path of humanity. They show how to attain the aim. It is being happy with God by looking at His bounties. Pondering over God's construction of the universe gives pleasure to a healthy heart and mind. O wise and intelligent man! You observe that a truckload of watermelons arrives in your town. It has come from quite a long distance. Say: O Lord! What a wonderful thing You did you for Your servants!

How pleasing it is in this terribly hot atmosphere and also so sweet. Bless also the cultivator who worked for its growth. Always look at the bright side of everything and feel happy. Do not find faults with everyone and everything. How much labor the farmers have undertaken in this hot season whereby this watermelon came to you at this time of breaking the fast. Now, while eating it, be mindful and think about the several hands, which toiled for this purpose. Under whose control all of them are? God and only God. It is You and You, O Allah! Who turned dry branches into green foliage to provide us with sweet grapes? How thankful should all of us be to Him!

Appreciate the bounties of hand and tongue. Is there anyone who offers due thanks and gratitude?
(Persian couplet)

O man! Whenever you face some difficulty, you forget all other positive points. Do not have any bad or adverse opinion about God's creation. Instead of 'Remembering God's favors' they distance themselves from God and say the days are now very difficult, the situation is very bad, the market is dull. He does say not even a single word of thankfulness to God and His favors. This is being away from God and having an adverse opinion about His creation.

It is mentioned in a tradition that some people told the fourth Imam (Ali Ibnul Husain), "O Master! There is much inflation." The Imam replied, "Let it be. What about it? God will give more."

When a pound of bread cost one rial, God was giving us one rial. When it became costly He gave a Tooman to us. Now also he will give in proportion to it. The habit of having bad opinion about God must be given up soon, with the help of God, of course. Otherwise, I have no ability to make you look nicely towards God and know Him correctly. I cannot even make you have a good opinion about yourselves. This cynical pessimism of yours, this illness of melancholy can be cured with the Qur'anic medicine – the

spiritual medicine.

The dog's white and strong fangs

It is mentioned in narrations that some companions of Prophet Isa saw a dog, which looked very ugly and horrible. They expressed their hate towards that dog. Jesus Christ said, "Why do you not look at its fangs. How nice they are?" God Almighty put them in the mouth of a dog. How strong they are. They can crush hard bones by them.

O Muslims! How much grateful should you be to Almighty Allah! Do not, always, look at the dark side. Look at the bright side also. How beautiful is Nature! If you see a fault in someone, do not consider it absolutely bad. How do you know that he will not do a good thing, which may dwarf his shortcoming? For example, someone usurped your money. Yet you should never say: O God! What a bad person You created! Yes, he did a wrong thing to you. Yet it is quite possible that he has some hidden virtues, which may make him nice in the sight of God.

What you see apparently is that he is a sinner. Never look hatefully at anyone even if he is disbeliever, Jew, Christian or an atheist. We do not say that you should not act upon 'Nahy Anil Munkar' (prohibiting evil). Do prevent one from evil but do not think that he or she is absolute evil and that you yourselves are absolutely good. It is possible that, despite having drawbacks observed by you, that person may have some virtues, which are liked by God and may be their value is higher than what you imagined. You have remembrance and good attire. He may have generosity and charity. You may be reciting Ziyarat Ashura often and may be spending a lot in the path of Allah. Who is better? To spend money or to spend words! It is better that we understand this from a narration.

A Generous disbeliever is better than a miser Muslim

Three polytheists came to Mecca and swore before their big idol and swore among themselves that they will go to Muhammad and kill him. So, with a view to kill the Holy Prophet, they traveled from Mecca to Medina. Angel Gabriel informed the Messenger of God that such and such three fellows are on their way to kill you. The Holy Prophet, after the Morning Prayer informed the worshippers of Only One God of this matter.

Then he asked the gathering, "Who from you can suffice these three fellows?" No one uttered a word. Then the Holy Prophet himself asked, "Where is Ali?" They replied, "Ali is suffering from eye trouble." He asked them to inform Ali. So Ali was informed. He came up. In short, he covered himself with the armor of the Holy Prophet, took his sword and went out. After some stops, he met those three fellows. The one who was more robust and scurrilous than the other two asked, "Who are you?"

Amirul Momineen replied, "I am Ali bin Abi Talib, the cousin of the Holy Prophet of God." This abusive and ruffian fellow burst out, "I make no difference between you and Muhammad. We have decided to

finish Muhammad. So now let us kill you just as Muhammad.” Then he attacked Ali with his sword. Ali countered his attack with his sword. Suddenly, as per narrations, there flashed a lightning and the word of the Prophet of God reached the ears of Ali. It was a heavenly voice mentioning: O Ali! I have opened up the joint of his armor nears his neck. Hit him at this particular place.

Amirul Momineen also, accordingly, gave a hit at the said place, which was widened by a heavenly hand. Though hit badly the fellow did not fall down. Then came another heavenly voice: O Ali! Give another hit on his thigh. With this second attack the bully fell down. Without any delay, Ali cut off his head; the other two fellows finally understood that this was the courageous and the powerful Ali. They said, “O Ali! We have nothing against you and we submit. Our companion, whom you killed, was as strong as a thousand warriors. We have heard that your cousin Muhammad is a kind gentleman. Please take us to him.” Amirul Momineen tied them up and took the two along with the decapitated head of the third accursed to the Holy Prophet. Then he narrated the whole story.

The Prophet looked at one of the two and said, “Say: There is no god except Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah and believe in Islam and enter peace. Give up devilish thoughts and become Muslims.” No war, no killing! But see what ill luck man brings upon himself. The first of the two said, “O Muhammad! It is easier for me to place Mount Abu Qais on my head than leave my idols and say, ‘There is no god except Allah.’” The Prophet said, “Kill him as he is a fatal substance, a grave obstruction and extremely dangerous.” So he was executed.

Then the Prophet said to the second one, “Believe in Islam. You saw that your companion did not believe in Islam and was punished. Put faith in Islam and become a Muslim.” The man pondered for a while, and then said, “O Muhammad! The truth is that I do not like to live in this world, as my friend is gone. Make me also join him.” The Holy Prophet said, “O Ali! This man himself desires that we should make him join his friend.” When Ali took him, Jibraeel arrived and said, “O Muhammad! Do not kill him, because he has two qualities.” A note should be taken of these two virtues which God likes: First is his generosity and munificence – equity and bounty – that is, man does not consider that his wealth is of and from him only. He considers it as belonging to all, may he enjoy it or anyone else enjoys it. If someone else sits on his dining table he becomes happy thinking that someone is benefiting from his wealth. Woe unto a miser. It is mentioned in some narrations that a miser is near hell despite his worship and a generous person is near Paradise despite being a disbeliever.¹¹

Another thing is good behavior. God likes it very much that man must be nice while talking and be good while behaving with others, in his dealings, during his journeys, in his gatherings, with his friends and companions, with his wife, with his children, with his neighbors and in his society everywhere.

Finally the Holy Prophet said, “Ask Ali to release him soon.” When he was freed the disbeliever asked, “O Ali! How did this happen?” Ali replied, “God sent a revelation commanding us not to kill you.” He further asked, “Why?” Ali replied, “God has said that we should not kill you because you have two virtues: Good behavior with people and generosity.” That man said, “You are right. It seems Muhammad

is telling the truth. The Lord of the world says the truth. God is the witness that during my whole life I never considered even a dirham from my wealth as my own exclusively. I never considered myself the owner of anything. I never said, 'This is my property.' It seems Muhammad is absolutely right. I witness that: There is no god except Allah and I witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah." So, his good behavior and generosity led him to Paradise. O Muslims! Know that miserliness of a Muslim leads him to hell.

Therefore, O Muslims! Never look at anyone with contempt and hatred. How do you know that when you condemn someone for his dress he might be doing good deeds secretly which God likes!

Damascus Police Chief, a true Shia

Sayyid Jazaeri says: Some Iraqi Shias traders told me this story: During their journey to Damascus, after midnight, they had to go to a public bath. All had woken up and were intending to first go to the bath and then to the mosque for morning prayers. On their way, the night police patrol detained them and took them to the chief who asked them, "Where are you from?" "From Iraq," they replied. He said, "They must be Rafidi thieves; take them to my house. We shall condemn them tomorrow." These poor Shias did not know what they were facing. They were detained in the house of the police chief till morning next. They saw that the police chief, at dawn, dressed up, made ablution and recited Qur'an and supplications like a Shia and also offered prayer like them.

How strange! He was behaving like a great Shia scholar. He continued his rituals till sunrise. Then he called for these Shias. His men brought breakfast for all. Then he said, "Gentlemen! I tell you that I am a Shia and also I am not in need of the government salary. I am well to do and I own properties. I took up this post to help my Shia brothers because I know that these Sunnis have enmity against them. I bribe the authorities to hold this post so that, in case of need I may help people like you." Then he took breakfast with them and said, "Now you may leave safely." These people were very much surprised and they said, "Indeed we were astonished. We thought bad of this police chief but afterwards learnt that in fact he was gentle and good-natured person!"

Imam Sadiq's message a courtier of Mansoor

A man told Imam Ja'far Sadiq, "O Master! I am in trouble in Mansoor's court. What should I do?" The holy Imam said, "There is such and such man in that court. Whisper in his ears, 'Ja'far has sent me to you.'" This man came to the court next morning and saw that man matching the Imam's description. He was the favorite of Mansoor. The troubled man told softly in his ear, "Ja'far has sent me to you." He humbled himself the moment he heard the holy name of Ja'far Sadiq and asked, "What has troubled you?" "I am in serious trouble as people have complained against me to Mansoor and made false allegations against me."

The officer said, "Please be at ease, I will do the needful soon." Within a little time, he went to Mansoor

and told him that this gentleman is not at fault. So his matter was solved. Then that man came to the holy Imam and said, “O Master! This gentleman in Mansoor’s court has much respect for you. He expressed respect on hearing your holy name...So, O Master! Ask him to give up this job in Mansoor’s court. How such a nice man can serve in that evil court?” The Imam replied, “I myself have asked him to take up this job so that he may be able to help the oppressed.”

Repent for the past

What I wanted to say is that you must not look at anyone with contempt and hatred. Do not mock anyone. Do not ever have a low opinion about any person. Rather say: How do I know what this person is beneath his outer appearance. May be he has some virtues which I do not have. Perhaps his rank might be high in God’s sight. It is possible that my own deeds may appear very good to me, yet I may be wrong and at fault. May be this person’s virtues are heavier than his drawbacks. How shall we know?

﴿...عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ...﴾

“...perchance they may be better than they... (49: 11)”

We have committed this sin of having a bad opinion about God and a low idea about His creation. Come, today is Friday, mid-Ramadhan. O men and women! Let us repent over our past and resolve to give up such habits in future. Let us hope that today’s gathering becomes a gathering of repentance for us all. Consider death very near. Let us try our best not to die with sins in our scroll of deeds. It is very likely that we sinned all twenty-four hours, day and night, with every breath. It is like that if we have bad and low opinion about God, destiny and creation. Whenever anyone from us dies, let us think over it very seriously how bad we are doing in this respect. Come let us ask for forgiveness through sincere repentance and make a decision to discard all such sins in the future. We may say: God willing, from today onwards we shall leave all such bad opinions about others, from now onwards we will become God’s lowly and submitting slaves.

This is the month of Ramadhan, the month of seeking forgiveness. This month of Ramadhan has many names. One of them is the month of repentance. Therefore, one day the Holy Prophet said, as reported by Imam Sadiq and narrated by Shaykh Saduq: Away from God’s mercy is one whose sins are not washed away even after passing of the holy month of Ramadhan. Thereafter he has no hope of being purified. The days and nights of this holy month are so graceful, full of mercy and full of bliss and bounty, especially the time after Friday mid-day, after offering prayers in congregation. The mid-day of 15th Ramadhan is also the birthday of Imam Hasan.

How bad if we do not repent even on this day! Say: For the sake of Hasan Mujtaba, O Allah! Recite the repentance of Imam Zainul Abideen. It is only two or three sentences in length. Recite: O Our Lord! I

make repentance and seek Your Forgiveness for my greater sins and also small errors, faults and hidden shortcomings, both past and future. O Lord! We repent and seek Your forgiveness for greater and lesser sins, those I remember and those I do not recall, both open and hidden ones, including bad intentions in my heart and evil utterances of my tongue and so also all wrong movements of my body, my dishonest glances and when I insulted someone and mocked anyone and when I looked down at a faithful believer.

Kindness of Imam Hasan while eating

It is mentioned in the book *Kashful Ghummah* that once Imam Hasan Mujtaba spread his dining cloth with an intention of taking food. A dog saw this from a distance, approached and sat in front of the holy Imam. The holy Imam was taking one morsel and giving one to that dog. One of his companions arrived and said, "O Master! Do you allow me to drive away this dog?" "No. Let it be." What I want to convey is the reply of the holy Imam. He said, "I feel ashamed before Almighty God if a living thing is before me when I take my food and that one does not, even if it is a dog. It is after all, God's creation. You must not belittle or humiliate it."

On another occasion, Imam Hasan passed by a group of poor people who were eating dry pieces of bread. The Imam greeted them and they responded. The Imam alighted from his horse, sat on the ground and ate with them. Then he invited them to his house for a feast.

Do not think yourself to be better than others. How do you know what is beneath the veil? All are servants of One God. Never imagine that you are aware and they are not. I am rich and they are poor? To whom does the wealth actually belongs?

Sit silently for a while facing the graveyard. Listen to the silent talks of those sleeping over there.
(Persian saying)

Millionaires are asleep in the graveyards. See what difference is there between them and the beggars. You should never say: My family is more respectable. Leave all such things. Such thoughts were vain. Do not repeat mistakes of others; take lesson from them.

﴿ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ﴾

"Surely, the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty)... (49: 13)"

The most honorable among you in the sight of God is the most righteous one among you and that too is hidden. He Himself says:

﴿فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ، هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ اتَّقَى﴾

“Therefore do not attribute purity to your souls; He knows him best who guards (against evil).”¹²

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1. Surah Ahzab 33:56
 2. Surah Anam 6: 160
 3. Surah Mulk 67: 14
 4. Surah Zariyat 51:56
 5. Safinatul Bihar, vol. 1, pg.27; Lughate Aql
 6. Surah Muhammad 47: 12
 7. Surah Fath 48:6
 8. Surah Hashr 59: 19
 9. Surah Yunus 10:58
 10. Surah Yunus 10:58
 11. Safinatul Bihar, vol. 1, pg. 607
 12. Surah Najm 53:32

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