

6. Hopes

Allah, the Wise, has said

ذَرَهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا وَيُلْهَمُ الْأَمَلُ

*(Leave them that they may eat and enjoy themselves and (that) hope may beguile them, for they will soon know.)*¹

Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

الْأَمَالُ لَا تَنْتَهِي

*(Hopes never come to an end)*²

Short Explanation

People who are not content with what they possess of this world and crave for things which they do not possess, will keep chasing high hopes and lofty aspirations. A person, who imagines that he will always remain young, becomes heedless of death and goes after huge ambitions.

The majority of the inmates of hell would have gone there as a result of their procrastination. Instead of contending themselves with what they possessed, they kept deferring the rectification of their souls and the repayment of their debts for later, and postponing their acts of worship for their old age.

Indeed, a person must lower his hopes and aspirations, perform every act at its appropriate time and occasion, and refrain from trusting the ‘tomorrow’, something that is entirely unknown and uncertain.³

1) Prophet Isa and the Farmer

It is reported that once, Prophet Isa Ibn Maryam (a.s.) had been sitting and intently observing a farmer who, with a spade in hand, was hard at work in his field.

At that moment Prophet Isa prayed to God:

“O’ Lord! Take away from him his hopes and aspirations.”

Suddenly, the person flung his spade aside and sat down in a corner.

“O’ Lord! Return his hopes and aspirations back to him” Isa (a.s.) prayed once again.

The man moved from his place, picked up the spade and began working again.

Isa (a.s.) approached him and asked, “Why did you behave in such a way?”

The farmer answered, “I said to myself: *‘You are an old man whose life has almost come to an end; how much more do you wish to work and exert yourself?’* And so I flung the spade aside and sat down in the corner. But after a while, I said to myself: *‘Why don’t you work? You are still alive and in need of livelihood’* and so, picking up the spade, I returned to my work.”⁴

2) Hajjaaj and the Milk Seller

Once, *Hajjaaj Ibn Yusuf Thaqafi*, the brutal tyrant, (and the minister of the Abbasid caliph, *A’bd al-Malik Ibn Marwaan*) was sauntering in the market when he witnessed a milk-seller talking to himself. Whilst standing in a corner, Hajjaaj overheard him say:

“If I sell this milk, I shall earn a good income. I shall save the profit from this and future sales till I have sufficient money to buy a goat. I shall then purchase an ewe and utilize its milk to increase my capital and within a few years, I shall become a wealthy person, possessing several goats, cows and (other) assets.

“I shall then seek the hand of Hajjaaj’s daughter in marriage, after which, I shall come to acquire great importance and significance. And if, on any occasion, Hajjaaj’s daughter were to exhibit disobedience, I should kick her so hard that her ribs would break.”

As he said this, he kicked out with his leg, which unfortunately struck his milk container, spilling its entire contents in the process. Hajjaaj came forward and ordered two of his soldiers to force the milk-seller onto the ground and strike him a hundred lashes.

The milk-seller wailed, “But for what crime are you punishing me?”

Hajjaaj replied, “Did you not say that if you married my daughter, you would kick her so hard that her ribs would break? Now, as a punishment for that kick, you must taste a hundred lashes.”⁵

3) Desire for Martyrdom

A'mr Ibn Jamuh, an inhabitant of Madinah and from the tribe of *Khazraj*, was a generous and magnanimous person. The first time the people of *Khazraj* arrived in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.), he sought to know who the leader of their tribe was. They informed him that he was a person by the name of *Jadd Ibn Qais*, a miser by nature. The Prophet (s.a.w.) said:

“Your chief should be A'mr Ibn Jamuh, the white-complexioned, curly haired person.”

A'mr was lame in one foot and as per Islamic laws, exempted from *jihad*. He had four sons and when the time for the battle of *Uhud* came, all of them prepared themselves to fight.

“I must come too and attain martyrdom,” said Amr eagerly.

However, his sons stopped him and said, “Father, we are going for battle. You stay in the house for it is not obligatory for you to fight.”

The old man refused to budge and insisted on participating in the battle. The sons gathered their relatives in an effort to get him to change his mind, but to no avail.

Amr approached the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) and complained to him, “I yearn to attain martyrdom. Why do my children prevent me from going for jihad and getting martyred in the way of Allah?”

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) said to the sons:

“This man seeks martyrdom and although it is not obligatory for him to fight, it is not forbidden for him to do so.”

Overjoyed, Amr armed himself and set off for battle. During the battle, his sons kept an eye on him as he valiantly thrust himself into the heart of the enemy ranks, fighting heroically, till he was eventually martyred.

Before leaving for the battlefield, he had prayed: *O' God! Grant me martyrdom and do not return me to my house*. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.) stated that his prayer had been answered. Amr was finally laid to rest in the cemetery of the martyrs of the battle of Uhud.⁶⁵⁸

4) Jo'dah State of Disgrace and Humiliation

Imam Hasan (a.s.) was extremely good-looking, possessed great forbearance and generosity, and was very kind and affectionate towards the members of his family. After the martyrdom of Imam Ali (a.s.),

Mua'wiyah, for a period of ten years, embarked upon a mission of hatred, deception and enmity with respect to Imam Hasan (a.s.). He subjected the Imam (a.s.) to harm and injury on several occasions, but did not achieve anything. He therefore resolved to use the Imam's wife *Jo'dah*, the daughter of *Asha'th Ibn Qais*, to poison him.

Mua'wiyah lured her by promising her that if she poisoned Hasan Ibn Ali, he would give her a hundred thousand dirhams and, in addition, he would marry her to his son Yazid. In the hope of acquiring wealth and with the aspiration of becoming the wife of Yazid, she agreed to comply with his request. Mua'wiyah handed her the poison that he had acquired from the Roman Emperor.

On a very hot day, Imam Hasan (a.s.) had observed a fast. At the time of *Iftaar*, the Imam (a.s.) was extremely thirsty. Jo'dah brought him a drink of milk in which she had mixed the poison.

As soon as Imam drank the milk, he experienced the effect of the poison. He realized what had happened and cried out aloud: *Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raajiu'n*. After praising God that he would now be moving from the ephemeral world towards the eternal world, he turned towards Jo'dah and said to her:

“O' Enemy of God! You have killed me, may God kill you! By God, you shall not come to acquire the slightest of that which you hope and aspire for. That person has deceived you. May Allah humiliate you and him by means of His chastisement!”

The forbearance of Imam Hasan (a.s.) can be gauged from the fact that when Imam Husain (a.s.) sought to know the identity of his murderer, Imam Hassan (a.s.) refused to divulge Jo'dah's name.

According to one tradition, for two days (and according to another, for forty days), the Imam suffered from the ill effects of the poison, till eventually, on the 28th of Safar 50 A.H., he bid farewell to this material world at the age of 48 years.

As for Jo'dah, she carried her hopes and desires to her grave for Mua'wiyah reasoned that if she could not be faithful to Hasan Ibn Ali (a.s.), how could she be expected to be faithful to Yazid; and so he refused to fulfil any of his promises. As such, she died in a state of disgrace and humiliation.⁷

5) Mughirah Becomes Governor of Kufah

Mughirah Ibn Sho'bah, who was originally an inhabitant of Taaif and had embraced Islam in the 5th century A.H., was a deceitful, devilish and power-loving person.

When he heard that Mua'wiyah had arranged for *Ziyaad Ibn Abihi* to settle in Kufah so that he could later take the governorship of Kufah away from him (Mughirah), he quickly appointed a deputy in Kufah and set off towards *Shaam* to meet Mua'wiyah. He expressed his wish to be transferred from Kufah, explaining to Mua'wiyah:

“As I have grown old now, I have to request you to place a few small villages of *Qirqisiya* under my control, so that I can rest myself.”

Mua'wiyah realised that one of his opponents, by the name of Qais, lived in *Qirqisiya* and if Mughirah were to go there, he might form an alliance with him against Mua'wiyah.

“We are in need of you and you must remain in Kufah,” said Mua'wiyah.

Mughirah declined the offer, but Mua'wiyah's insistence persuaded him to give in. It was midnight when Mughirah returned to Kufah. He immediately ordered his associates to dispatch Ziyaad Ibn Abihi towards *Shaam*.

After a period, Mua'wiyah appointed Sa'eed Ibn A'as as the governor of Kufah in place of Mughira, who incited Yazid (son of Mua'wiyah) by telling him:

“Why is Mua'wiyah not thinking about you? It is imperative that he nominates you as his successor and the crown prince!”

Yazid found the idea so appealing that he presented it to his father, Mua'wiyah. With Mughira's support, Yazid was eventually proclaimed successor to Mua'wiyah.

In the meantime, Mua'wiyah appointed A'mr A'as as the governor of *Misr*, while placing Kufah under his son, A'bdullah Ibn A'mr A'as.

When Mughirah came to know of this, he warned Mua'wiyah, “By this act, have you not placed yourself between the mouths of two lions?”

Having grasped the message of this statement, Mua'wiyah deposed A'bdullah from Kufah and once again placed Mughirah at the helm of affairs in Kufah.

Thus, by means of two cunning plots (Yazid's succession to the caliphate, and the scheme of ‘between the mouths of two lions’), Mughirah became the governor of Kufah. After ruling for seven years and a few months, he died of plague at the age of forty–nine.⁸⁶⁰

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1. Holy Qur'an, ch. Al-Hijr (15), vs. 3.
 2. Ghurar al-Hikam, pg. 629.
 3. Ihyaa al-Quloob, pg. 167.
 4. Namunah-e-Ma'arif, vol. 1, pg. 298; Majmua'-e-Warraam.
 5. Pand-e-Taareekh, vol. 3, pg. 150.
 6. Daastaan-ha-e-Ustaad, vol. 1, pg. 48.
 7. Muntahal Aa'maal, vol. 1, pg. 231.
 8. Paighambar Wa Yaraan, vol. 5, pg. 272–275.

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