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Part 29: The Imams are 'those who examine'

The Imams are 'those who examine'. They can glance at a person and come to know whether he is a believer or not

The Almighty Allah says:

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ.

Surely in this are signs for those who examine. (Surah Hijr 15:75)

The above verses are mentioned after the story of Lut (a.s.). The commentators have said it means: We have mentioned about the destruction of the people of Lut, in which there are signs for those who thinks and ponder and those who derive lesson from it. Some of them said that 'those who examine' are those who recognize things through signs and marks and understand the things through intelligence and insight.

There is a tradition from the Holy Prophet (S) that: Beware of the sagacity of a believer because he sees with the Light of Allah.

It is narrated from the Prophet that he said: There are some servants of Allah who know people through their knowledge and insight then the Hazrat recited this verse:

وَأَنَّهَا لِبَسْبِيلٍ مُّقِيمٍ.

And surely it is on a road that still abides. (Surah Hijr 15:76)

It means that the town of the people of Lut which is between Medina and Syria is on your straight path.

Kulaini, *Basair*, *Manaqib* and the *Tafsir* of Ayyashi and Ali Ibne Ibrahim and all the books quote many traditions from the Infallibles (a.s.) that: We are ‘those who examine’ and the way of Paradise and till Qiyamat we are the ‘road that still abides’ and is firm.

In *Uyoon Akhbar Ridha* it is narrated that people asked the Imam that what is the source through which you make people aware about the things that are in their hearts. He said: May be you have not heard that the Holy Prophet (S) said: Be afraid of the sagacity of the believer as he sees through the light of Allah.

The narrator said: Yes O Hazrat I have heard it. He said: There is no believer but that there is a sagacity in him and through whatever amount of light of faith and intelligence that he possess he sees by the light of Allah. And the Almighty Allah has gathered all the sagacity in us that is distributed to all the believers in small measure and has said in the Quran:

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّلْمُتَوَسِّمِينَ.

Surely in this are signs for those who examine. (Surah Hijr 15:75)

So the first of ‘those who examine’ was the Holy Prophet (S); after him was Amirul Momineen (a.s.) then Hasan (a.s.) and Husain (a.s.) and after Husain (a.s.) the purified Imams (a.s.) from his descendants, till the day of Judgement.

In *Basair* and *Ikhtisas* Abdul Rahman bin Kathir has narrated, that: I went for Hajj with Imam Sadiq (a.s.). On the way the Hazrat went on a mountain and looked towards the people and said: So many people are reciting the ‘talbiya’ but of them there are very few whose Hajj is accepted. Abi Sulaiman said: O Son of the Messenger of Allah (S) would the prayers of all the people that we see be accepted by Allah? Hazrat replied: Allah will not forgive the sins of those who have committed polytheism, and the one who denies the Wilayat and Imamate of Ali (a.s.), is like an idol-worshipper.

The narrator said: May I be sacrificed on you, do you recognize your friend and your enemy? Hazrat replied: Woe upon you, when a child is born, it is written between his two eyes. And whoever comes to us with our Wilayat we see on his forehead where ‘believer’ is written and when a person comes to us with our enmity ‘disbeliever’ is written on his forehead, which we can read. We are ‘those who examine’, and Allah has said in our praise:

Surely in this are signs for those who examine. (Surah Hijr 15:75)

And we recognize our friends and foes by this very sagacity.

Also in *Basair* and other books it is narrated that a person came to Imam Sadiq (a.s.) and posed a

question. The Hazrat gave him the answer, then another person came and asked the same question and the Hazrat gave a different answer. Then a third person came and the Imam give him a reply different from the first and the second one, then said: The Almighty Allah has left upon us the affairs of the creatures on us and we give them the reply according to their capability and understanding, in the same way Allah had given Hazrat Sulaiman the authority over the world and had said:

This is Our free gift, therefore give freely or withhold, without reckoning. (Surah Sad 38:39)

The verse is in this way in the recitation of Ali. The narrator asked that whether Imam knows about the religion and capability of each person due to which he gives the suitable answer. Hazrat asked in surprised: Glory be to Allah! May be you have not read the book of Allah that says:

And surely it is on a road that still abides. (Surah Hijr 15:76)

It means that these signs are on the path that abides and they remain established that no one could go out of their circle, that is they are with Imamate and Imamate can never go out of the circle of Ahlul Bayt. Then he said: When the Imam sees anyone, he recognizes him. He knows his colour and type, if he listens to his voice from behind the wall, then also he recognizes him and comes to know who and what it is. He knows his qualities because Almighty Allah says:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالاخْتِلافُ اَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَاللّوَانِكُمْ اِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ
لآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ.

And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colors; most surely there are signs in this for the learned. (Surah Rum 30:22)

The Imam said: The Imams are the 'learned' whom Allah has mentioned in this verse and the Imam knows the language of all the tribes and communities and also knows whether the person who is speaking would get salvation or go to Hell. That is why he gives a reply according to the capability and condition of that person.

Also in *Basair* there is a tradition from Imam Ridha (a.s.) that he said: We have eyes which are not like those of the common people. There is a light in our eyes, in which there is no partnership of the Satan.

Ayyashi has narrated from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) in the explanation of this verse that he said: Surely in the Imam there are certain conditions for 'those who examine'. The Imam is firm on the right path and sees through that Noor (light) which Allah has bestowed to his eyes and he speaks from Allah and things are not concealed from him for whatever he intends.

In *Basair*, *Ikhtisas* and other books there is a tradition from Imam Baqir (a.s.) that one day Amirul

Momineen (a.s.) was present in the mosque of Kufa when suddenly a woman arrived, who had had a fight with her husband. The Hazrat judged in favor of the husband. The woman (may curse of Allah be upon her) said: By Allah! It is not like a right judgement that you have given. You have to be equitable and must not do injustice in your kingdom. Your judgement was not liked by Allah.

Ali (a.s.) became angry and glared at her once and said: O audacious woman! O the abusing one! O one that utters nonsense! O one that does not menstruate like other women. When that cursed woman heard these words, she turned and ran away saying: Woe upon me, woe upon me. The son of Abu Talib revealed the things that were concealed and insulted me.

Seeing this Umar Ibne Harith, a leader of the Khawarij who was present there ran after her and said: In the beginning I was pleased when you spoke to the son of Abu Talib in that manner, but when he told you something you started making a hue and cry? The woman said: By Allah, he said those things about me that no one knew. I always menstruate from behind.

After listening to this the cursed man came to Amirul Momineen (a.s.) and said: O son of Abu Talib what was this fortune-telling that you did to the woman? Hazrat replied: O son of Hurais it was not fortune-telling, that some Jinn has informed. Indeed, two thousand years before creating this world the Creator of the spirits before He placed the spirits in the bodies, He wrote between their two eyes whether it is a believer or a disbeliever and has also written all that which would afflict him and all their good and bad things, also their record of deeds has been written; whether that person is a believer or a disbeliever and all those things that will afflict him. Then He also revealed upon His Messenger the following verse:

Surely in this are signs for those who examine. (Surah Hijr 15:75)

The Holy Prophet (S) was of 'those who examine' and after him I am of 'those who examine'. That is why when I looked at the forehead of that woman her all conditions were revealed to me. 1

1. The writer says: There are many traditions on this topic and they are all explained in Biharul Anwar. According to most explanations 'this' denotes Quran. Sabeel points towards the Imam and in some instance it is the way towards Paradise.

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