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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ

The Rectification Programme for Mankind

وقال الله تعالى {إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ} [النحل: ٩٠]

Allah ﷻ has stated in the Holy Qur'an: 'Allah ﷻ enjoins upon you Justice, performance of good deeds, the assistance of relatives and those near to you. And Allah ﷻ forbids for you immodesty, evil actions and oppression. Allah admonishes you, that you may take heed.' (Surah An-Nahl 16, v90)

The above verse of the Qur'an is recited in almost every khuthbah on the day of Jummah. But very few of us understand the true meaning and message of these words that the Imam advises us of. The recitation of these verses in Jummah has been a practice that started from the time of Umar bin Abdul Aziz رحمه الله. This is due to the fact that within these verses there is concise advice which acts as a means of rectification for the entire human race. Sayyidina Abdullah bin Masood رضي الله عنه stated: 'These verses of the Qur'an are so complete and concise, they instruct us of the beneficial acts to do (uphold). They also inform us of those evil and detrimental acts that we need to protect ourselves from. When this short verse was revealed, it had a great effect upon the hearts of many whom came to know of it.' (Tafsir Uthmani, Tafsir Qurtubi)

Sayyidina Aktham bin Saifi رضي الله عنه who was the leader of his people, was sent a message from the Prophet ﷺ inviting him to Islam. Aktham bin Saifi رضي الله عنه who was not a believer at the time, instructed two of the most intellectual and understanding individuals of his people to go to the Prophet ﷺ to investigate the matter of Islam. These two representatives arrived in Madinah Munawwarah and asked the Prophet ﷺ two questions. "(1) Who are you? (2) What are you?" The Prophet ﷺ replied: "Firstly, I am Muhammad bin Abdullah ﷺ and secondly I am the slave of Allah and His Messenger."

The Prophet ﷺ then recited the above verse of the Holy Qur'an in front of them. These two representatives requested the Prophet ﷺ to recite again for them the above verses of the Qur'an. The Prophet ﷺ recited the verse numerous times, until they both had memorised it. They then returned to their people and recited the same verse of the Qur'an for Aktham bin Saifi رضي الله عنه. On hearing this verse, Aktham bin Saifi رضي الله عنه replied: "From these verses it is understood that this individual (Muhammad ﷺ) guides us to a very high level of character and prevents people from bad characteristics. All of our people should immediately enter this religion so that we are well advanced (morally) of other nations." The means of guidance of Aktham bin Saifi رضي الله عنه and his entire people was this single verse of the Holy Qur'an. (Maarifur Qur'an, Tafsir Ibn Abbas vol 3, p58)

Within this verse those characteristics are enjoined, that if one was to act upon them and perfect them. They would be a means of rectifying and perfecting all other characteristics in a human being. By the same token, those evil actions are forbidden, that if one was to shun them this would be a means of ridding human beings from all other evil characteristics.

1. JUSTICE: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ)

Imam Ibn Arabi رحمه الله stated there are three types of justice:

(1) **The Justice between the Creator and his creation:** This is achieved through the creation believing and worshipping none other than their Creator alone. Obedience and worship should be exclusively for the Creator, there should be no obedience to any other by compromising the Creator's orders and laws. Every Prophet and Messenger ﷺ that was sent to this world was sent with this very message.

(2) **Justice upon oneself:** This is achieved by an individual protecting himself/herself from all things/actions/places which will cause him or her physical and spiritual destruction. For example: to poison oneself, to hang oneself or to drown oneself or any form of suicide and self harm is classified a major sin in Islam. The Prophet ﷺ stated: "That the person who causes himself to die by jumping off a cliff or by drinking poison, his abode is in the Hellfire." (Jam'aul Fawaidh, vol 1, p175)

The causes of spiritual destruction lead to a life devoid of the obedience to the orders of Allah ﷻ and also failure to act on the ways and actions taught by the Prophet ﷺ.

(3) **Justice between oneself and the entire creation of Allah ﷻ:** This is achieved by being kind towards the young ones and respecting the elders. The justice of a leader towards his subjects, the justice of a judge upon the cases presented before him, the justice of a family elder to those in his household.

2. GOOD DEEDS: (وَالْإِحْسَانَ)

Human beings should strive to bring goodness within all apparent actions, all types of dealings in their daily lives and in their character.

In the Hadith of Jibril ﷺ where he posed many questions to the Prophet ﷺ in front of the Companions ﷺ whilst sat in the Prophet's Masjid, one of the questions posed was: brother "What is IHSAN (good deeds)?" the Prophet ﷺ replied: "For you to worship Allah ﷻ as though you are looking at Allah ﷻ. If you are unable to reach this status, then know at least that Allah ﷻ is watching you." (Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim)

Remember, this awareness is not restricted solely to the time of Prayer. It is applicable to every second of a person's daily life and every action that is performed. In Sahih Bukhari the Prophet ﷺ says that "unless a Muslim wishes for his fellow-brother that which he wishes for himself then he has not reached the status of a true Muslim." Even to the extent that 'an immoral woman who provided a thirsty dog with some water to drink, due to which Allah ﷻ forgave all her sins.'

3. ASSISTANCE OF RELATIVES AND NEAR AND DEAR ONES: (وَأَيُّ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ)

This encompasses the fulfilment of the rights of ones relatives. If a relative is poor, he has a right to be assisted with wealth. If a relative is unwell physically, he has a right to be helped or visited. If a relative is emotionally burdened, he has a right to be consoled. And if he is upon the path of deviation, he a right to be shown towards the straight path. Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an: "And warn your tribe of the near kindred (O Muhammad ﷺ)." (Surah Ash-Shu'ara 26, v214)

This is the reason that the Prophet ﷺ after receiving Prophethood, gathered his family and near and dear ones upon Mount Safa and propagated the message of Islam to them first. The Prophet ﷺ stated: "The assistance of a poor person is equal to one reward and the assistance of a poor relative is rewarded two-fold. One is for charity, the second is for keeping the ties of kinship. (Mishkaat Ul Masabih 171)

Sayyidina Abu Hurairah ﷺ related: 'The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'That person who wishes for his wealth to be vast (blessing), love between relations and his life to be long, he should keep good ties with his relations.' (Tirmidhi vol 2, p19/ Sahih Muslim #2557)

4. IMMODESTY: (وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ)

This is the refraining from all those actions that are deemed distasteful and undesirable in the sights of Islam and also morally. For example: to speak in an insulting manner, using swear words and, utilising forbidden ways to try and satisfy the natural desire which is present within a person, in the form of Zina (fornication and adultery) rather than the permissible means of marriage, to wear such clothing that is unacceptable for a respectable person, let alone a believer, in public. The Prophet ﷺ stated: “When immodesty is present within an action or an item it ruins it, when modesty is found within an action or item it beautifies it.” (Jami Tirmidi, vol 2, p18)

The Prophet ﷺ stated: “Modesty is part of faith.” (Sahih Bukhari, vol 1, p6)

5. EVIL ACTIONS: (وَالْمُنْكَرِ)

This is the refraining from all actions that are apparent and hidden, physical and spiritual, characteristic or material which are a sin. It should also be enacted by trying with all possible means to save oneself from those sins that are mentioned clearly in the Qur’an and Ahadith of the Prophet ﷺ.

Allah ﷻ has stated in the Holy Qur’an: “(O Mankind!) Leave sin, apparent and hidden. Verily, those who committ sin will get due recompense for that which they commit.” (Holy Quran, 6:120)

In the above verse, Allah ﷻ has ordered that Mankind should abstain *from* all types of sins. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir)

The Prophet ﷺ stated: ‘If there is a sin being performed in a people and they have the power to prevent it, yet do not do so, then the time is very near that Allah ﷻ will send punishment upon them before their death.’ (Sunan Abu Dawood/ Sunan Ibn Majah)

6. OPPRESSION: (وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ)

Allah ﷻ has stated in the Holy Qur’an: ‘The recompense for an evil is an evil like thereof; but whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is with Allah ﷻ. Verily, He likes not the *Zalimun*’ (oppression, polytheists, and wrong-doers). (s42, v40)

The main reason for all the wrongdoing within the World is oppression. Sayyidina Ali رضي الله عنه related: “In any nation, even if the people are of different religions, race or mindset, they can co-exist. But if there is oppression, they cannot.” (Mimbar wal Mihrab p227)

Allah ﷻ says in the Qur’an: “When those who did wrong (the disbelievers) will see the torment, then it will not be lightened for them, nor will they be given respite.” (Surah An-Nahl 16, v85)

In Al Targeeb the Prophet ﷺ stated: “There is no sin, apart from oppression, which Allah ﷻ recompenses very swiftly.”

The Oppressors’ are due to be punished in the hereafter, however, they are punished in this World also as a clear proof for Mankind. History is witness to the punishments that Allah ﷻ prepared for those who oppressed the Prophets عليهم السلام, the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and Righteous slaves رحمهم الله اجمعين.

This is the programme of rectification for Mankind that is presented by Allah ﷻ in the Qur’an to the believers which no other nation has the likes of. If this advice is acted upon and we strive for perfection within it, victory and success of all forms will fall into our laps.

May Allah ﷻ enable us to understand and benefit from this advice and grant us the guidance to perfect ourselves for his pleasure. آمين .

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