

YAQEEN INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC RESEARCH

40 HADITHS ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

LECTURE NOTES

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Chapter 17: Finding and Channeling Righteous Anger

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

A'isha, the wife of Allah's Apostle (ﷺ), said that whenever he had to choose between two things he adopted the easier one, provided it was not sin, but if it was any sin he was the one who was the farthest from it of the people; and Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) never took revenge from anyone because of his personal grievance, unless what Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, had made inviolable had been violated. [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ، زَوْجِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ مَا خَيْرٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنَ أَمْرَيْنِ إِلَّا أَخَذَ أَيْسَرَهُمَا مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ إِثْمًا فَإِنْ كَانَ إِثْمًا كَانَ أَبْعَدَ النَّاسِ مِنْهُ وَمَا انْتَقَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِنَفْسِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُنْتَهَكَ حُرْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ

[بخاري ومسلم]

Introduction

- Our focus is the second half of the Hadith.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) never enjoyed making things difficult. According to his wife Aisha (ra) the character of the Prophet (ﷺ) was very balanced.
- We can take from this Hadith that although the Messenger (ﷺ) got mad, he got mad for a good reason.
- Supplemental Hadith: "إن الله تعالى يغار، وغيره الله ، تعالى، أن يأتي المرء ما حرم الله عليه"
 - Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Verily, Allah, the Exalted, becomes angry, and His Anger is provoked when a person does what Allah has declared unlawful". [Al-Bukhari and Muslim].

What is Gheerah?

- Gheerah can mean self respect or a dignity where you are protective of someone or something else.
- Imam Bayhaqi said "If we were to say that all anger is bad, that leaves no room for gheerah and zeal."

- The Prophet (ﷺ) said, 'Do you marvel at the gheerah of Sa'd? I have greater gheerah than him, and Allah has greater gheerah than me. And it was from His gheerah that He forbid indecency.'
- Imam Nawawi, part of the human condition is that we have gheerah because the word comes from **تغير القلب** which means changing of the heart (i.e changing emotions)
- It's part of our humanity that Allah gave us these emotions, however it's our job to channel them properly.
 - For example, when speaking of the righteous (Muttaqeen), Allah (swt) did not say those who do not have anger, but rather, those who swallow their anger.

Righteous Anger at Oneself

- The scholars say that righteous anger begins with an anger with yourself when you cross limits. Righteous anger at oneself is a sign of spiritual life.
- The Prophet (ﷺ) said, **إذا سرتك حسناتك وسائتك سيئتك فأنت مؤمن**, "If you are pleased by your good deed, and bothered by your bad deed, then you are a believer." Narrated by Ahmad from Abu Umama (ra)
- As much as strong presence Umar (ra) had, he always kept himself in check. He would often say "Take account of yourself before you are brought to account"
- Ask yourself that when you commit a sinful act, are you as angry with yourself as you are with others if they had done the same sin.

What is Righteous Anger?

- Righteous anger is a quality of the messengers and Prophet (ﷺ) and something Allah also has.
- There are two determining factors in regards to righteous anger.
 - Asking yourself why you are angry
 - Looking at how do you display this anger

- These two are indicative of one another. For example, the way anger manifests itself is an indication of where it is truly coming from; whether it's for Allah (swt) or for the nafs.

The Anger of the Messenger ﷺ

- The Prophet (ﷺ) would describe the hypocrite that when they are in an argument that they transgress all limits and aren't just.
- We always look to the Prophet (ﷺ) as an example. His anger was never for petty reasons but would get angry for others and when the limits of Allah (swt) were crossed.
- Aisha (ra), the narrator, has seen the Prophet (ﷺ) in all of his emotions and she describes in excellence in all of them.
- Narrated Ibn Abi Mulaika: `Aisha said, "The Jews came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said to him, "As-Samu 'Alaika (i.e., Death be upon you)." He replied, 'The same on you.' " `Aisha said to them, "Death be upon you, and may Allah curse you and shower His wrath upon you!" Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) I said, "Be gentle and calm, O `Aisha! Be gentle and beware of being harsh and of saying evil things." She said, "Didn't you hear what they said?" He said, "Didn't you hear what I replied (to them)? have returned their statement to them, and my invocation against them will be accepted but theirs against me will not be accepted."
- Narrated Anas: While the Prophet was in the house of one of his wives, one of the mothers of the believers sent a meal in a dish. The wife at whose house the Prophet was, struck the hand of the servant, causing the dish to fall and break. The Prophet gathered the broken pieces of the dish and then started collecting on them the food which had been in the dish and said, "Your mother (my wife) felt jealous." Then he kept the servant till a (sound) dish was brought from the wife at whose house he was. He gave the sound dish to the wife whose dish had been broken and kept the broken one at the house where it had been broken [Sahih Bukhari: Volume 7, Book 62, Number 152:]

- The most angry she (Aisha) had seen RasulAllah was when she said some comments about Khadijah.
- If you compare the two incidents, the former would have been more embarrassing since it was in front of other people, however the prophet showed anger in the instance of Khadijah because there was injustice being done.
- Jabir reported: 'Mu'adh b. Jabal al-Ansari led his companions in the night prayer and prolonged it for them. A person amongst us said prayer (after having separated himself from the congregation). Mu'adh was informed of this, and he remarked that he was a hypocrite. When it (the remark) was conveyed to the man, he went to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) and informed him of what Mu'adh had said. Upon this the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to him: Mu'adh, do you want to become a person putting (people) to trial?
- The Prophet when he saw a woman in the battlefield who had died and was from the enemy and expressed his anger over her death even though she was from the opposing side.

Conclusion

- Even though the Prophet (ﷺ) dealt with the harm of others, he would always keep his composure in situations when he became angry. This is because his anger was channeled the right way
- How to find and channel your righteous anger
 - Remember the du'a of the Prophet: اللهم إني أسألك كلمة الحق في الرضا والغضب. "Oh Allah I ask for the ability to speak a word of truth when I am pleased and when I am angry."
 - The Prophet (saw) said, لا يقضين حكم بين اثنين وهو غضبان. "Let not one of you make a judgement between two people when he is in a state of anger"