

Why Some People Resist Their Conscience?

H A R U N Y A H Y A

One of the most important factors that people use to inactivate their conscience is their seeing themselves self-sufficient in everything. For instance, when asked about their observance of Islam, most people would say that it is enough not to harm anyone and to try to be a good person. However, this is pure self-deception. What is important is to be a slave to God and to live as He wishes. Unless man does this, everything else he does is meaningless and harmful. God says in the Qur'an:

And what of him the evil of whose actions appears fine to him so that he sees them as good? God misguides whoever He wills and guides whoever He wills. (Surah Fatir: 8)

What makes someone see his actions as good and attractive is the belief that his own judgement is flawless. Those who consider themselves to be kind-hearted and generous in the sight of God are such people. The truth is in fact quite different from what they assume. In a verse it is stated that one's seeing himself self-sufficient is the greatest reason for his deviation from the truth:

No indeed! Truly man is unbridled seeing himself as self-sufficient. (Surat al-'Alaq: 6-7)

The linguistic meaning of the word 'mustaghni' (self-sufficient) is 'without need, satisfied'. Its meaning as referred to in the Qur'an is someone's seeing his nearness to God, his fear of God and the hereafter, his good actions and his piety as sufficient and therefore not striving for the better. Most people deviate from God's way for this reason.

Although people see themselves as self-sufficient, they actually know in their conscience how incomplete they are, and what they fail to do to please God. This is why they avoid talking about subjects such as death, doomsday and the hereafter. When one raises the subject, they try to close it because it is 'depressing'. The reason they become depressed is because they are resisting their conscience, and dwelling on the subject causes them to feel restless inside.

It is not possible for someone who listens to his conscience to feel self-sufficient. On the contrary, he looks for the better and tries to do the better in everything. For man's conscience always reminds him of the Day of Account. Someone who knows that he will give account to God about the life of this world will never see his deeds sufficient. He practises what he is commanded by his Creator with great attention. In the Qur'an, those who seriously strive for the good pleasure of God and the hereafter are referred to as follows:

As for anyone who desires this fleeting existence, We hasten in it whatever We will to whoever We want. Then We will consign him to Hell where he will roast, reviled and driven out. But as for one who desires the hereafter, and strives for it with the striving it deserves, being a believer, the striving of such people will be gratefully acknowledged. (Surat al-Isra': 18-19)