

Those Who Are Deeply and Sincerely Devoted to God Take Him Alone as Their Friend and Guardian

Throughout their lives, people encounter various difficulties, troubles and tests. Some people believe that they can overcome these troubles through their own efforts. To this end, they develop different methods and make an intense effort. At times, they expect help from people or institutions they believe can solve their problems and endeavor to remain close to them. However, most of the time, these efforts may make their lives even more complicated and inextricable. That is because the real secret is not to seek the solution in a method or a person, but to know that it is God Who creates both the trouble and Who will remove it. This truth manifests itself in different ways according to the degree of people's faith in God:



Those Who Deny God and Believe Only in the Existence of the Life of This World

People in the first group reject the existence of God and believe that life and all the events that take place in the universe can supposedly be explained solely by the existence and power of matter, and that there can be no other explanation. Just as they do not believe in the existence of God, they are also intolerant of speeches and conversations in which God's name is mentioned. They do not believe in the Hereafter, the Day of Judgment, Paradise or Hell, and think that their existence is limited solely to the life of this world. Their hearts are filled with worldly ambition and they have virtually no bond with God. For that reason, they constantly live attached to the life of this world. They mostly adopt a mocking, prejudiced and at times hostile attitude toward Muslims. This situation is revealed in the Qur'an as follows:

“To those who are unbelievers, the life of this world is painted in glowing colors and they laugh at those who believe. But on the Day of Rising those who fear God will be over them. God provides for whomever He wills without any reckoning.” (Surat al-Baqara, 212)

The great majority of those who hold this view harbor hostility toward Muslims, try to make them abandon their faith and, through slander and plots, seek to place people who believe in God in a difficult position in the eyes of society and create a general prejudice against them. God reveals as follows that these people behave arrogantly and that the plots they devise will harm them:

“Shown by their arrogance in the land and evil plotting. But evil plotting envelops only those who do it...” (Surah Fatir, 43)

God tells our Prophet (saas) and all believers not to waste their time with people of this kind, who have no belief in the Hereafter and imagine their lives to be limited to this world, and not to pay attention or attach importance to them:

“So turn away from him who turns away from Our remembrance and desires nothing but the life of this world.” (Surat an-Najm, 29)



Those Who Are Bound to God by a Weak and Temporary Bond

In the second group are people who accept the existence of God but think that He supposedly does not concern Himself with events on earth. These people generally do not remember God in their daily lives, but ask God for help when trouble befalls them. Since these people are unable to properly comprehend and understand God's greatness and power, and since they have a limited understanding, their bond with God is also weak. The situation of these people is described in the Qur'an as follows:

“Among the people there is one who worships God right on the edge. If good befalls him, he is content with it, but if a trial befalls him, he reverts to his former ways, losing both this world and the Next World. That is indeed sheer loss.” (Surat al-Haj, 11)

These people wish to live life according to their own desires, and their devotion to God is very weak. They mostly remember God only when their interests and needs are involved and when serious deficiencies arise. At times when they think that everything is going well in their own eyes, they do not call to mind God, the Hereafter or that they are in the midst of a test created by God. They easily fall into despair in the face of adversities, while when they encounter goodness, they regard it as their own right. This state of mind is described in the Qur'an as follows:

“Man never tires of praying for the good and if evil touches him, he despairs and loses hope. But if We let him taste mercy from Us after he has suffered hardship, then he says, ‘This is my due. I do not think that the Hour is going to come. And if am returned to my Lord, I will definitely find the

best reward with Him.' But We will inform those who are unbelievers of what they did and make them suffer a ruthless punishment." (Surah Fussilat, 49-50)

These people, who regard the life of this world as the sole place and pursue comfort and self-interest, immediately become afraid of losing their interests and means in the face of adversities. Yet when God removes these troubles from them, they very quickly recover from the effects of those afflictions and return once again to their former arrogant, self-assured state of mind in which they have forgotten the existence of God. They do not even realize that the reason their troubles have passed is God's mercy, compassion and protection over them. On the contrary, they are so feeble-minded and arrogant as to claim that this result was already to be expected because of their own superior qualities. God reveals that such people do not truly believe and that they are in doubt:

"Yet they play about in doubt." (Surat ad-Dukhan, 9)

Those Who Are Devoted to God by a Profound Bond and Take Only Him as Their Friend

People in the third group, in accordance with the verse, **"He directs the whole affair from heaven to earth..." (Surat as-Sajdah, 5)** believe with certainty that all events on earth are under God's absolute control. Their faith does not change whether events develop in their favor or against them. That is because they know that:

"... God is All-Knowing, All-Aware." (Surat an-Nisa, 35)

Believers who know that God's might and knowledge encompass all things turn only to God under all circumstances and take only Him as their friend and guardian. This superior morality gives them profound understanding and submission. Believers face every event that occurs with submission, saying, **"The King said, 'Bring him to me straight away!' but when the envoy came to him, he said, 'Go back to your master and enquire of him what happened about the women who cut their hands. My Lord has knowledge of their cunning guile.'"** (Surah Yusuf, 50) God advises believers to be patient and heedful so that they will not be harmed by plots:

"If something good happens to you, it galls them. If something bad strikes you, they rejoice at it. But if you are steadfast and have piety, their scheming will not harm you in any way. God encompasses what they do." (Surah Ali `Imran, 120)

No matter how long the plots may continue, devotion to God with patience and heedfulness establishes a constant bond between the believer and his Lord. Verbal and active prayer are a means by which the plots devised are thwarted: **“His Lord replied to him and turned away from him their female guile and deviousness. He is the One Who Hears, the One Who Knows.”** (Surah Yusuf, 34)

God tests His servants with various troubles, difficulties and successes. A person must know that every event he encounters throughout his life takes place through God's creation and must not imagine that help will come from other beings. That is because all beings exist through God's creation and can do nothing without His permission. All power belongs to God. Everything and everyone apart from God is infinitely helpless and in need of God. Indeed, they are so helpless that they cannot prevent any affliction that may befall them.

For that reason, there is no being other than God in whom one can trust or from whom one can ask for help. Sincere believers trust only in God and ask only Him for help. They do not hope for help from causes, intermediaries or people; they do not regard what God creates as an independent power. When they make a request of someone, they do so with the awareness that the only power capable of bringing it about is God. In the Qur'an, God informs His servants **“... for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein”** (Surah Qaf, 16) and **“... He knows your secrets and what is even more concealed”** (Surah Ta Ha, 7). A person's seeking refuge in God, Who created him and knows all his secrets, is the most important sign of sincere devotion.

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