Time to Face Ourselves

Have you ever thought about how much time you devote to what during the day?

Daily rush begins as soon as one wakes up in the morning. The television, radio and Internet are turned on, the news is followed, one goes to work or attends to the daily chores of the home. There are many matters that occupy our minds throughout the day and need to be attended to, such as traffic, shopping, bills, housework and family matters. A person closely follows all these and strives not to neglect any of them. He conducts his worldly affairs with great care and meticulousness.



Yet amid all this rushing about, how much does he think of God? How many times during the day does he remember Him and turn to Him? Moreover, not only when he falls into hardship, experiences trouble or makes a wish, but how much does he remember God because he

passionately loves Him and is bound to Him with profound loyalty? To what extent does he realize and reflect upon His infinite existence, the countless blessings He bestows and the flawless artistry in His creation?

This is the most important question a person must ask himself. Every person who has faith must take himself to account, and moreover, he must do this every day. That is because the true purpose of man's existence in the world is to know God, to love Him and to turn to Him. If he forgets his Lord Who created him while attending to the concerns of the life of this world, this is his greatest heedlessness. God reveals in the Qur'an:

"Recite what is sent of the Book by inspiration to you, and establish regular Prayer: for Prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds; and remembrance of God is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt. And God knows the (deeds) that you do." (Surat al-`Ankabut, 45)

Indeed, there is no endeavor superior to remembering God. No matter how great the achievements a person attains in the life of this world, unless all these are a means to earning God's approval, they will bring him no benefit in the Hereafter. Whoever deeply loves God, turns to Him and does not let Him slip from his mind amid worldly occupations and the blessings of the world that appear alluring, God will be pleased with that person and bestow His mercy upon him.



Everything in a person's life has an end. The tasks that seem important today, the matters on which time is spent, the means one possesses and the successes one achieves are all transient; one day, a person will leave all of them behind. Yet his devotion to God, his faith and his good behavior are the only values he will carry with him into his true life. Indeed, God reveals the transience of the life of this world as follows:

“The life of the world is nothing but a game and a diversion. The abode of the Hereafter-that is truly Life if they only knew.” (Surat al-'Ankabut, 64)

God warns those who believe regarding the occupations of the life of this world as follows:

"You who believe! Do not let your wealth or children divert you from the remembrance of God. Whoever does that is lost." (Surat al-Munafiqun, 9)

This verse shows how carefully a person must determine the priorities in his life. Work, family, earnings and daily responsibilities are, of course, part of life. However, none of these should come to occupy a position that distances a person from remembering God. It must not be forgotten that this world and everything on it are transient; only God is everlasting and true.

In order to grasp the fact that this world is brief and transitory, it is enough to think somewhat deeply and look at the recent past. Imagine the houses, buildings, streets and cities of a hundred years ago. People lived and worked in those places, raised children and made plans for the future. They too had matters that were important to them, tasks that had to be completed, concerns and expectations. And when their appointed times came, they all departed from this world.

Athletes who won the Olympics died. The richest people in the world died. Kings, queens, heads of state, famous artists, people admired by societies... They all completed their lives one day and departed from this world. Their wealth, position, fame, success and nothing that was important to them in the life of this world could keep them in this world. God reveals this truth very clearly in the Qur'an:

“Every self will taste death. Then you will be returned to Us.” (Surat al-’Ankabut, 57)

Likewise, those who are alive today will also depart from this world at the time appointed in their destinies. This is not a remote possibility or an event that happens only to others, but a certain end that every person will experience without exception. Moreover, a person does not know when

death will come. God reveals:

"Truly God has knowledge of the Hour, sends down abundant rain, and knows what is in the womb. And no self knows what it will earn tomorrow or in which land it will die. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware." (Surah Luqman, 34)

Therefore, while he is still alive, a person who has faith must look honestly at himself. While he immediately becomes anxious when any matter he encounters in his daily life goes wrong, does he display the same sensitivity when he neglects to remember God? He intends to live in accordance with God's approval and says, for example, that he will put his trust in God in the face of events, yet when he encounters the very first problem, he forgets destiny, becomes anxious and angry, loses his temper, reacts impulsively and displays shallow morality; how much does he think about why he could not keep the promise he made to God? To what extent does he confront himself by considering with clear consciousness that these weaknesses he displays at a time of difficulty plainly reveal the lack of submission in his heart and his secret attachment to the world?

Satan constantly seeks to make a person postpone improving his morality and behavior until later. Yet when death comes, postponed tasks, unfinished plans and worldly matters pursued will all be left behind. God reveals in the Qur'an the regret a person will feel at the moment of death:

"Give from what We have provided for you before death comes to one of you and he says, ‘My Lord, if only you would give me a little more time so that I can give alms and be one of the righteous!'" (Surat al-Munafiqun, 10)

This example given in the verse through spending in charity in fact expresses, in light of the spirit of the Qur'an as a whole, a general principle that applies to all of God's commands and recommendations. A person must not postpone any responsibility required of being a righteous servant. That is because when a person encounters death, the opportunity to rearrange his life, make up for shortcomings and compensate for what was neglected in the world will have completely disappeared. For this reason, no one should wait until tomorrow to confront himself. Today, indeed right now, he must ask himself: How much of my day do I spend remembering my Lord? Do I remember Him only when I am in need, or do I live with Him at every moment of my life? How faithfully do I keep the promises I made to Him?

What matters is not avoiding these answers, looking honestly at one's own life and making one's bond with God stronger every day. When a person makes a decision regarding a matter he wishes to improve in his morality and behavior, the moment he encounters a test concerning that

decision, he must not forget his promise, must remain faithful to the covenant he made with God and must display far greater determination in exhibiting the morality of the Qur'an than the effort he devotes to worldly affairs. He must begin every new day intending to remember God more, to bind himself to Him with a deeper love and to seek His approval at every moment of his life. Every sincere step he takes to draw closer to God will both beautify the life of this world and, most importantly, bring him closer to attaining the Hereafter.

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