

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

We seek forgiveness from Allah
We stand witness to Allah that there is no God but Him
That Muhammad (SAWW) is his slave and messenger

The secret of Abjad

- According to Imam Ali a.s, the letter zai' ز denotes one of the attributes of Allah SWT which is zainul ma'buudeen. It embodies an ornament or something to adorn or embellish which can also be regarded as the Lord of Beauty.
- The following is narrated in Miizalnul Hikmah: “O you, ma’syara al syiah (syiah community), you have ascribed yourself to us, so be our ornament and not disgrace”
- The name of Imam Ali Zainal ‘Abideen a.s epitomizes the ornament of the worshipper. The feminine version of the name is Zaniab; according to some it is derived from “zain wa ab” which means “The beauty or the pride of father”.

Greed (Hirs) [Part 2]

A Greedy Person is always a loser

- A ‘Greedy’ person is always a loser. He strives hard to accumulate worldly things, which in the end he either does not get or if he gets it, he is still not satisfied and fulfilled. As a result, he neither spends what he has earned for himself nor for others. Imam Ali (as) has called such a person as ‘Faqeer’ meaning ‘a pauper’. Regarding a greedy person, Imam Ali (as) said:

“A Greedy is a pauper even if he owned everything of this world”. [Ghurar al-Hikam]

“Every Greedy is a pauper”. [Ghurar al-Hikam]

Greed increases with age

- One of the things that have been mentioned about **Greed** is that it increases in a person with his age. The more a person grows in age, the greedier he becomes.

- The Holy Prophet (SAWW) has said:

يَشِيبُ ابْنُ آدَمَ وَتَشِبُّ فِيهِ خَصَلَتَانِ: الْجِرْصُ، وَظُلُوكُ الْأَمَلِ.

As man grows in age, two of his characteristics become young: greed, and far fetched hopes.

[Jame' al-Saadaat]

The following story illustrates the Prophet's saying that greed tends to increase with age:

Haroon Rashid and the Old Man

Haroon ar-Rasheed, the Abbasid Caliph, once arranged for an old man in Yemen who had seen the Holy Prophet (saw) personally to come to Baghdad and visit him. As the old man was very weak, he was brought on a stretcher. On entering his court, Haroon welcomed and made the Old man sit besides his throne. He then asked him whether he had seen the Holy Prophet (saw) personally. The Old man in his weak and lowly voice replied,

"Yes, I used to sit near the pulpit and hear his Hadith (sayings)".

Haroon asked him to describe the main features and appearance of the Prophet and he said,

"The Prophet looked handsome and of sound physique. He had black and curly hair. His face was luminescent. He was fond of perfume and made use of it so much so that his fragrance would remain behind for quite sometime wherever he passed".

Haroon then asked whether he remembered any saying of the Prophet. The Old man said that he could still remember one in which he said,

"Man grows old but two qualities in him remain young; greed and far-flung hopes".

Haroon was very happy to meet the Old man and hear from him about the Prophet. He then instructed to his people to present him with a handsome gift of money and return him home to Yemen comfortably. As he was being carried away, the Old man asked to be returned to the Caliph as he had an important matter to discuss with him. On arrival in the court, the Old man said,

"O'Callaghan! Tell me whether this gift of money you gave me was only the first and the last or whether I should come every year to receive a similar gift from you?"

On hearing this, Haroon laughed and said,

Classical Tafseer Class (Relaunched) - Notes
Session 11-Friday, 4 August 2006

“You had rightly quoted the Prophet as saying that the two qualities of greed and long hopes remain young and active even in old age”.

Haroon then promised the Old man that he could expect repeated gifts as long as he lived but alas the greedy Old man was not even destined to enjoy the first gift he had received and died on his way to Yemen.

Hadith of the Imams on Greed

- It is narrated that Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir said:-

مَثَلُ الْحَرِيصِ عَلَى الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ دُوْدَةِ الْقَرَى، كُلَّمَا ازْدَادَتْ عَلَى نَفْسِهَا لَفًا كَانَ أْبْعَدُ لَهَا مِنَ الْخُرُوجِ، حَتَّى تَمُوتَ غَمًّا.

The greedy man in his love of the world is like the silk-worm: the more it wraps itself in its cocoon the less chance it has of escaping from it, until finally it dies of grief.

[Jame' al-Saadaat]

- Imam `Ali (a.s) said:

إِسْتَنْغِنِ عَمَّنْ سِئْتَتْ تَكُنْ نَظِيرَهُ، وَأَزْعَبِ إِلَى مَنْ سِئْتَتْ تَكُنْ أُسِيرَهُ، وَأَحْسِنِ إِلَى مَنْ سِئْتَتْ تَكُنْ أَمِيرَهُ.

Whomever you are able to do without, you will be able to become his peer. Whomever you are fond of, you will become his captive. Whomever you are generous to, you will be able to become his master.

[Jame' al-Saadaat]

- Imam Sadiq (AS), as stated in *Misbahush-Shari'ah*, said:-

“This world is like a portrait: its head is arrogance, its eye is greed, its ear is covetousness, its tongue is pretence, its hand is desire, its leg is conceit, its heart is negligence, its being is perishing and its destiny is decline. Whoever loves it, it gives him arrogance, whoever approves of it, it grants him greed, whoever demands it, it drives him to covetousness, whoever praises it, it clothes him with pretence, whoever wants it, it offers him conceit, whoever trusts it, it neglects him, whoever admires its properties, it ruins him, and whoever accumulates it and does not spend it, it turns him down to its dwelling place, the Fire.”

[Misbahush Shar'iah, ch. 32 on This World's Attribute(s)].

Cure for the vice of greed

- Greed is a condition which makes man dissatisfied with whatever he possesses and makes him yearn for yet more. Greed is one of the worst of destructive vices and is not limited to worldly possession, but also includes indulgence in food, sex and other things.
- In order to free oneself from the vice of greed one must meditate on its evil and harmful consequences and realize that greed is a characteristic of animals, which recognize no restrictions for gratification of their sensual desires, and use all means to attain it. It is thus necessary for the individual to free himself from this vice and bring his rebellious self under control.

Contentment

- The opposite of greed is the virtue of contentment, which enables man to control his desires and to be content with having the necessities of life. One who has this virtue always lives honorably and respectably, as a free man; he is immune from the vices of affluence in this world and the consequent punishment in the Hereafter.
- In Surah An Nahl verses 16:97, Allah SWT says,

**مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً
طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ**

Whoever does good whether male or female and he is a believer, verily to him that we will give a new Life. A Life that is good and pure and we will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions.

- According to Majma al Bayan the Arabic term **حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً** also means *Al Qanaa'ah* which means to be pleased or satisfied with what Allah has portioned out. Imam Ali in *Nahjul Al Balaghah* saying 229 said that **حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً** refers to *Al Qanaa'ah* or contentment.
- Amir al mu'ineen (as) has said: Contentment is as good as estate, and goodness of moral character is as good as blessing. [*Nahjul Balaghah, saying 229*].
- "Whoever is satisfied with a morsel be it dry or wet, he himself is the King of the Land and Sea." [*Footnote Nahjul Balaghah, saying 229*].

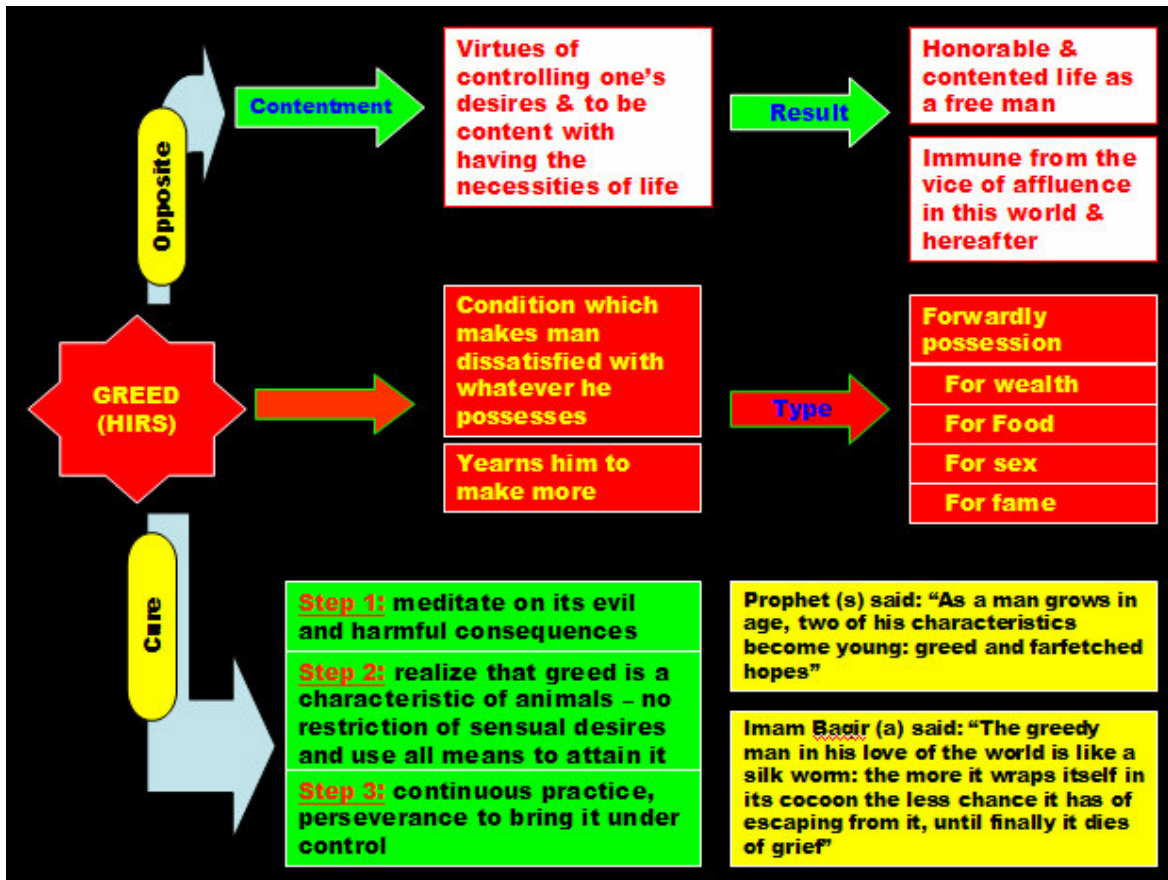
Classical Tafseer Class (Relaunched) - Notes
Session 11-Friday, 4 August 2006

- It is narrated in Biharul-Anwar that Imam Sadiq said that Rasullulah has said, ‘*The richest man is the one who is not captive to greed.*’
- In Al-Mahasin, it is narrated that Imam Sadiq (a.s) said: “*One who is contented with divine destiny is the one most aware of God.*” **[Mishkatul-Anwar Fi Ghurar Al-Akhbar, The lamp Niche For The Best Traditions].**
- Imam Baqir (a.s) quoted on the authority of the Prophet of God (a.s) that God the Almighty said:

“I swear by My Majesty and My Honor that I have not created any creature dearer to Me than a believer. That is why I put My own name (believer) on him. He should be content with My action if I deprive him of whatever lies between the East and the West, or if I bestow on him whatever exists between the East and the West. He should be patient with any catastrophes that I descend upon him, and he should be grateful for My blessings. O’ Muhammad! Please record his name among the honest ones near Me.” **[Mishkatul-Anwar Fi Ghurar Al-Akhbar, The lamp Niche For The Best Traditions].**
- Imam Sadiq (a.s) said that Imam Hassan Mujtaba (a.s) met Abdullah ibn Ja'far and told him: “*O’ Abdullah! How can one be a believer if he is not content with what God has destined for him; and considers his position to be low even though God has destined it for him. I guarantee that the supplications of those who think only of God's pleasure will be accepted.*” **[Mishkatul-Anwar Fi Ghurar Al-Akhbar, The lamp Niche For The Best Traditions].**
- One of the companions of Imam Sadiq (a.s) went to see him. The Imam (a.s) was seriously ill and near death. He saw that the Imam (a.s) was very weak, and he cried. Imam Sadiq (a.s) asked why he cried. He said: “Should I not cry seeing you this way?” The Imam (a.s) said: “Do not cry. Believers are always receiving what is good for them. Be it they lose a part of their body, or they become the owner of whatever lies between the East and the West, it is good for them.” **[Mishkatul-Anwar Fi Ghurar Al-Akhbar, 146 The lamp Niche For The Best Traditions].**

Summary

- The following diagram summarizes the above discussion.



Disclaimer:

In this tafseer class, there might be shortcomings in imparting the knowledge of the tafseer. If there is any information that requires correction, please do not hesitate to let us know via e-mail: jaafari_tafseer_committee@yahoo.com.sg. Allah knows best.