

## 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 importance of humility

From: Anecdotes of the Pious Ones, # 60, v.1

Hazrat Isa (as) told his companions: "I have a request. If you accept I shall tell you."

The companions said: "We shall accept anything that you say."

Prophet Isa (as) started washing each person's feet. The companions felt very uncomfortable with this gesture, but since they had promised to accept, they submitted to his will. When he had finished the task, his companions told him: "You are our teacher/our guide. It is becoming that we wash your feet, not vice versa."

Prophet Isa (as) said: "I did this to make you understand of the fact that an 'Alim (scholar) is much more fit to serve people. I did this due to humility, so that you learn humility, and when you become the guide of people after me, your duty would be serving people with humility. Wisdom grows amidst humility, not with arrogance, just as a seed sprouts in the soft land of the desert as opposed to the hardness of the mountains." [Wasail, v 2, p 457]

### Imamate is Guidance we need

Basra is a big city and the main port of Iraq. It is situated at the mouth of river Euphrates.

There, in a big mosque, people used to assemble to discuss various subjects on Islamic rules and laws. A famous learned 'Aleem of Sunni Sect by name **Amr Bin Ubeid** was once preaching on the **subject of Imamate**. He was surrounded by a big crowd of people who were asking various questions on the subject. Suddenly, a young and intelligent student of Islam by name of **Hesham**, entered the gathering and sat down in the first row. He addressed the 'Aleem saying that he was a stranger and would like to ask some questions. On getting the permission to do so, he asked the following:

Hesham: First, Sir! May I please know if you have eyes?

Amr: Young Boy! Is this a question to ask?

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Hesham: Whatever it may be, this is my question to which I shall appreciate your answer.

Amr: Alright! You are at liberty to ask, even though it is a foolish question.

Hesham: As I have already asked, Sir, may I please know if you have eyes?

Amr: Yes, I have.

Hesham: For what use are they?

Amr: With eyes, I can see faces of people and color of various things.

Hesham: And you have a nose also?

Amr: Yes. I do have one.

Hesham: What is its function?

Amr: I smell the scent and odor by it.

Hesham: And do you have a mouth?

Amr: Yes I do have.

Hesham: For what use is it?

Amr: I can talk to people or taste food and drink with it.

Hesham: Do you have ears?

Amr: Yes, I have two ears.

Hesham: What is their function?

Amr: I can hear voices by them.

Hesham: And do you have a mind?

Amr: Almighty has bestowed me with that also.

Hesham: What is its use?

Amr: With that I am able to distinguish things whatever is felt by the other senses like hands, eyes, ears, nose, tongue etc. In case of a difference, I am able to solve with its help. In case of a doubt, I can dispel with it and be sure.

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Hesham: So, does it mean that despite being sound and healthy, all these organs cannot function independently without the help of the mind.

Amr: No, No! None of the organs can function independently without the help of the mind.

Hesham: Why is it so? After all, are the organs perfect and strong enough to difference between things?

Amr: Young Boy! When any organ has some doubt about a thing which it smells, sees or tastes, it brings the matter to the mind and it is the mind which confirms the truth and removes the doubt.

Hesham: So, from what you have said, do you want me to understand that God Almighty has created and designed the mind to guide the organs and remove doubts.

Amr: Yes! It is so.

Hesham: So the mind is a necessity, otherwise the organs could not work independently.

Amr: Yes.

Hesham: ***Please Sir! Proclaim your opinion with fairness and justice on this point also. If the Almighty has not left the organs of man's body without the guidance of the mind, how is it possible that Almighty God could leave millions of His creatures without an IMAM to guide and solve their problems arising out of doubts and conflicts? Should not our common sense accept this fact?***

On hearing this logic argument, and having no answer to give, Amr Bin Ubeid kept silent and went into deep thinking.

Hesham was a deeply learned person and one of the closest companions of Imam J'afar Shadiq (as) from whom he had obtained his knowledge.

[Source: <http://www.ezsoftech.com/stories/imamShadiq2.asp>]

### **A question posed to Hazrat Ali (as)**

One day another Jewish person came to Imam Ali (AS). He was planning to ask Imam Ali (AS) such a question, which would take Imam Ali (AS) a long time to answer and because of that his Maghrib Prayers would be delayed.

He asked, "Imam Ali you say you know everything in the world, then tell me which animals lay eggs and which animals give birth to their young ones."

Imam Ali (AS) looked back at him smiled and said, "The animals who have their 'EARS' outside their body give birth to their young ones and the animals who have their 'EARS' inside their body lay eggs."

### **Dua for increase in dignity**

It is narrated that once Prophet Ibrahim saw a grey hair in his beard. He asked Allah SWT what this was since he had not spotted a grey hair before. Allah SWT replied that the grey hair manifested dignity. Thereupon Prophet Ibrahim prayed to Allah:

*Rabbi zidni waqaara*  
*O Allah, increase my dignity!*

**[‘Ilalul as syaraa’e, vol 1 pg 128]**

### **Istiqamah (Steadfastness)**

#### **The meaning of Istiqamah**

- The term in Arabic commonly used for steadfastness is ***Istiqamah***. This literally means to be stable in one’s mind and be firm on one’s principles. In Islam, it means to be firm and stable on Religious principles without wavering in faith under whatever circumstances.

#### **Surah Hud 11:112**

- In Surah Hud 11:112, Allah SWT says:

**فَاسْتَقِمَّ كَمَا أَمَرْتَ وَمَنْ تَابَ مَعَكَ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ  
بَصِيرٌ**

*Therefore stand firm (in the straight Path) as thou art commanded,- thou and those who with thee turn (unto Allah); and transgress not (from the Path): for He seeth well all that ye do.*

- The above verse emphasises the importance of Istiqamah and admonishes us to stand firm on the straight path.
- There is a hadith from Ibn Abbas which says: “There is no verse revealed more severe and more difficult for the Prophet (saw) than this verse, Therefore, when the companion of the Prophet (saw) asked him why his hair had turned grey so soon, and the sign of age prematurely appeared on his face, he said: “The Surah Al Waqiah and the Surah Hud made me age.” **[An Enlightening Commentary into The Light of The Holy Quran, Vol 7 pg 330].**

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- Some other traditions indicate that when the above verse was revealed, the Prophet (saw) said: “Fasten your belts! Fasten your belts as it is time for struggling and working )”, and since that time, he was never seen smiling [*An Enlightening Commentary into The Light of The Holy Quran, Vol 7 pg 330*].

### **Surah Jinn 72:16**

- In Surah Jinn 72:16, Allah SWT says:

**وَأَلُو اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقِينَهُمْ مَاءً عَذْقًا**

*And that if they should keep to the (right) way, We would certainly give them to drink of abundant water.*

- In the above verse, ‘they’ is referring to both mankind and jinn. As explained earlier, Istiqamah means to ‘stand firm’, i.e. to keep on the straight path.
- According to Imam Jafar bin Muhammad as Shadiq the water in this verse stands for the knowledge and insight into higher things which is available to those who follow the teachings of the Imams of the Ahl ul Bayt.
- The above verse is admonishing both the jinn and men to adopt the right ‘thariqa’, i.e. to follow the path of shirat al mustaqeem (straight path). It is said that there are 73 sects in Islam and hence the question that arises is which thariqa is the ‘straight path’. It is narrated in Tafseer Nur Thaqlain and Al-Kafi that the right ‘thariqa’, is none other than the wilayat of Imam Ali (as).

### **Sirat al Mustaqeem**

- In Surah 1:7 of the Holy Quran we have the following verse which we recite everyday in our prayers:

**اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ**

- Amir-ul-mu'mineen Ali (a.s.) commenting on the verse ‘guide us (O' Lord) on the straight path’, says: “ it means: ‘ (O' lord) continue bestowing your blessings on us as you did during the days passed by which we succeeded to obey you, so that we can obey you in the future of our lives, too ’ ”.
- The Shias when reading this verse interpret it as to ‘keep’ them on the straight path. However the other sects interpret it as ‘guide’ them to the straight path. The difference is subtle but important and manifests the faiths of Shias that indeed they are on the right path.

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- It is narrated that the Prophet said to Ali: “You are the clear path (Thariiq) You are shirat al mustaqeem (the straight path). And You are ya’suub ul momineen (the leader of momineen).” [Ali fi al kitab wa assunah, vol 1 pg 35].

**Something to ponder about**

- **الصِّرَاطُ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ** , this Arabic phrase has 14 letters altogether.
- **المَوَدَّةُ فِي الْقُرْبَى** , there are 14 letters here again.
- In the Holy Qur’án, 30 Súrahs start with letters and not words. These are called the *Hurúf al-Muqatta-át*. From these letters you can form the following sentence:

**صِرَاطٌ عَلَىٰ حَقٍّ نُمْسِكُهُ**

This translates into: *"The path of Ali is truth. We hold fast to it "*

- The above sentence again has 14 Arabic letters!
- Someone who has been attending tafseer classes would recall that Ustad had talked about the mystery of the number 14 in one of his earlier classes as well. If you dig out the old summaries you will find that the lecture was given on 03-06-05. If you sum up the digits in the date you will get  $3+6+5 = 14$ . Not only date, as was pointed out in the class, the date of the current lecture is 24-11-06 and again the digits of the date sum up to  $2+4+1+1+6 = 14!$

**The importance of acknowledging the wilayat of Ahlul Bayt**

- It is narrated by Imam Baqir (as) that the Holy Prophet said: “Whoever wants to cross the bridge (on the Day of Reckoning) like a strong wind, enter jannah without hisaab, then he should engage in the tawallah of Ali Ibn Talib (as).” [Ali fi al kitab wa assunah, vol 1 pg 36].

The implication of this hadith is that Ali Ibn Abi Talib is the passport to heaven.

- The importance of Ahlul Bayt is such that whosoever does not offer the durood in their shalat, their shalat is not accepted and considered void.
- In Surah Fussilat 41:30, Allah SWT says:

**إِنَّ الدِّينَ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا**

## تَحَزَّنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

*(As for) those who say: Our Lord is Allah, then continue in the right way, the angels descend upon them, saying: Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the garden which you were promised.*

- Istiqamah in the above verse refers to the wilayat of Imam Ali (as).
- The angels not only descend on the Prophets but also on those who believe and remain steadfast. It is reported on the authority of the Ahlul Bayt that the angels also descend on the true believers when they die in order to relieve the agony of death. They descend on the true believers from time to time with glad tidings. Authentic traditions confirm that angels descended on Imam Husayn and his comrades in the battle of Karbala because it was the highest manifestation of possible perseverance.
- The following sermon given by Imam Ali (as) also emphasises the importance of accepting the wilayat of Ahlul Bayt:-

Amir al-mu'minin collected the people and exhorted them to jihad but they observed long silence.<sup>1</sup> Then he said: "What is the matter with you. Have you become dumb?" A group of them replied: "O' Amir al-mu'minin if you go forth we shall be with you." Whereupon Amir al-mu'minin said:

“What has happened to you? You may not be guided aright or shown the right path. Should in these circumstances I go forth? In fact, at this time one of the brave and the valorous among you whom I select should go out. It does not suit me to leave the army, the city, the public treasury, the land revenue, the dispensation of justice among Muslims and looking after the demands of the claimants and to follow one contingent after the other moving here and there like a featherless arrow moving in the quiver.

I am the axis of the mill. It rotates on me while I remain in my position. As soon as I leave it the centre of its rotation would be disturbed and its lower stone would also be disturbed. By Allah, this is a very bad advice. By Allah, if I had not been hoping for martyrdom by my meeting with the enemy - and my meeting with him has been ordained, I would have secured my carrier and went away from you and would not have sought you so long as North and South differed.”

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<sup>1</sup> When after the Battle of Siffin, Mu'awiyah's forces began to attack various places in Amir al-mu'minin's area, he asked the Iraqis to check them but they declined on the plea that they would follow him if he himself came forward. Thereupon he delivered this sermon, and clarified his limitations, that if he himself went out it was impossible to run the affairs of the state, and that the enemy's attacks had already started on all sides. In these circumstances it was impolitic to keep the centre unguarded. But what could be hoped from those who changed the victory at Siffin into defeat and opened the door for these attacks.

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Imam Ali (as) then said: *“There is no benefit in the majority of your numbers because of lack of unity of your hearts. I have put you on the clear path whereon no one will perish except who perishes by himself.”*

*“He who sticks to it would achieve Paradise and he who deviates goes to Hell.”*

**[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 119]**

### **How do we acquire Steadfastness (Istiqamah) in our belief?**

1. In order to achieve success in this worldly life, we all exercise firmness in any task that we undertake.
2. If one wants to pass in his exams, or wants to become a scholar, or a graduate then he bears all hardship and tirelessly pursues studies till the end.
3. Similarly, if one wants to earn wealth then he works hard and no matter what happens, he never gets disheartened. Instead he continues with his efforts till he acquires wealth.
4. Likewise, if an ailing person wants to get cured then he firmly tolerates the bitterness of treatment, surgery or strict diet till he gets cured. All these show that man has a **strong will** to be firm and steadfast in order to be successful.
5. *If we honestly want to safeguard our belief and protect our Imaan, then we must apply the same strong will to remain firm on the principles shown to us by Allah (SWT) and His messenger (saw). That is, if we want the pleasure of Allah, then we ought to make efforts to obey His commands no matter what hardships and sacrifices we have to face. If we want to save ourselves from His wrath and curse, then we ought to refrain from Haraam things no matter how strong the temptations of forbidden pleasures come our way. In other words, we should never allow anything, however big or small it may be, to come and interfere between us and Allah (SWT). If we do this, we shall become firm and steadfast in our belief and faith. The greatest example of remaining steadfast on the right path in the hour of most arduous trial was set by Imam Husayn and his comrades in Karbala*

### **.Conclusion**

- Imam as-Shadiq (as) has said: **“The relation of steadfastness with Imaan is same as the relation of head with the body. Just as, if the head goes, the body goes similarly, if the steadfastness goes, the Imaan goes (too)”**. **[Bihar]**
- Imam Ali (as) has said: **“Steadfastness against one’s lusts is a sign of chastity and against anger is a sign of bravery, and against sins is a sign of being god fearing”**. **[Ghurar al-Hikam]**

#### 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](mailto:jaafari_tafseer_committee@yahoo.com.sg). Allah knows best.