



ALI 241: Akhlāq of the Ahlul Bayt عليهم السلام

Session 3: JCC;

Tuesday – 11 Dhul Qa‘dah 1434/
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From the course outline

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Session 3: al-Sidq and al-Kidhb (Truth and lying): these play a great role in the lives of individuals and societies. Nothing beautifies a speech more than truth and nothing makes it more useless than lying. Social and psychological reasons of lying. Can truth erect hurdles to success?

Milad of Imam Ali b. Musa al-Ridha (a) mubarak. He has said: **عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصِّدْقِ وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْكَذِبَ**

I advise you to be truthful, and warn you against lying

Quranic Āyāt on truthfulness

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ* وَالَّذِي جَاءَ بِالصِّدْقِ وَصَدَّقَ بِهِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الْمُتَّقُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ هُمْ مَّا يَشَاءُونَ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾

And the one who has brought the truth and [they who] believed in it - those are the righteous. They will have whatever they desire with their Lord. That is the reward of the doers of good - (39:33&34)

قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمٌ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ ۗ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۗ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿١١٩﴾

Allah will say, “This is the Day when the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness.” For them are gardens [in Paradise] beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever, Allah being pleased with them, and they with Him. That is the great attainment. (5:119)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with the Truthful. (9:119)

Revision: Four powers of soul

The powers of soul are: Powers of intelligence, anger, passion and imagination. Let us try to comprehend the powers from following scenario in the life of baby in a cradle.

A baby makes some noise in a cradle because apparently she is hungry. No one bothers, so she cries. The mother picks her up from the cradle and she quietens. The mother sometimes takes time before she can begin breast feeding. The baby cries again. However, if the mother hastens to pick up the baby and immediately breastfeeds her, the baby is happy and excited. On the other hand if a stranger or even sometimes the father pickups the baby, the baby cries loudly.

All four powers of soul are at play in the above incident.
Explain

You have never lied, O Muhammad

Three years after receiving the revelation the Prophet invited people to Islam. People belonging to different families of Quraysh ran up to him. He turned to those assembled: “O people! Will you believe me if I tell you that your enemies have taken positions on the other side of this hill (*Safa*) and intend attacking your lives and property?” All of them said, “We have never heard anything false from you throughout our lives,” Then he said: “O people of Quraysh! Save yourselves from fire. I cannot do anything for you in the presence of Allah. I warn you of painful torture!” Then he added: “My position is like that of a watchman, who observes an enemy at a far-off point and immediately runs to his people for their safety . . . (*The Message*)

Benefits of truth & vice of lying

زَيْنَةُ الْحَدِيثِ الصِّدْقُ The beauty of speech is truth

عِبَادُ اللَّهِ اصْدُقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ وَجَانِبُوا الْكُذِبَ فَإِنَّهُ يُجَانِبُ الْإِيمَانَ
وَإِنَّ الصَّادِقَ عَلَى شَرَفٍ مَنجَاةٍ وَكَرَامَةٍ، وَالْكَاذِبَ عَلَى شَفَا مَهْوَاةٍ وَهَلَكَةٍ

Imam Ali b. Abi Talib (a): Be truthful, for Allah is surely with the truthful; and avoid lying for it stands far from faith. Surely, the truthful is on the honor of safety and dignity; [whilst] the liar is surely on the edge deep hole and destruction. (*Tuhaf al-Uqul*, p. 174))

In another Hadith Amirul Mu'minin (a) says:

لَا يَجِدُ عَبْدٌ طَعْمَ الْإِيمَانِ حَتَّى يَتْرُكَ الْكُذِبَ هَزْلَهُ وَجِدَّهُ

A servant of Allah does not taste faith unless he gives up lying jokingly and seriously. (*Tuhafa al-Uqul*, 216)

Imam al-Sadiq (a) on Truth

عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ ع : لَا تَغْتَرُّوا بِصَلَاتِهِمْ وَلَا بِصِيَامِهِمْ فَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ رُبَّمَا لَهَجَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالصَّوْمِ حَتَّى لَوْ تَرَكَهُ اسْتَوْحَشَ وَلَكِنْ اخْتَبِرُوهُمْ عِنْدَ صِدْقِ الْحَدِيثِ وَأَدَاءِ الْأَمَانَةِ

1. Do not be fooled by their prayers and fasting, for there may be a man who has become habitual with prayers and fasting such that he would feel desolate if he abandons them. Rather, test them with truthfulness of speech and fulfilment of trust.

مَنْ صَدَقَ لِسَانَهُ، زَكَّى عَمَلَهُ

2. Whoever keeps his tongue truthful, he will purify his actions.

عَلَيْكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، وَصِدْقِ الْحَدِيثِ وَأَدَاءِ الْأَمَانَةِ

3. I advise you to have fear of Allah, saying of truth and fulfilling the trust.

Qur'anic ayat on lying

إِنَّمَا يَفْتَرِي الْكَذِبَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَاذِبُونَ

They only invent falsehood who do not believe in the verses of Allah, and it is those who are the liars. (16:105)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

And a believing man from the family of Pharaoh who concealed his faith said, “Do you kill a man [merely] because he says: My Lord is Allah, while he has brought you clear proofs from your Lord? And if he should be lying, then upon him is [the consequence of] his lie; but if he should be truthful, there will strike you some of what he promises you. Indeed, Allah does not guide one who is a transgressor and a liar. (40:28)

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ ﴿٧﴾

Woe to every sinful liar (45:7)

Hadiths on avoiding lying

Imam Hasan al-'Askari (a): [if all] wickedness were put in a house, the key to that house is lying.

Imam Zaynul 'Abidin al-Sajjad (a): Avoid saying lies – small or big, whether seriously or jokingly. For, when a person lies in small (things), he will have the audacity to lie in big matters.

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a): Surely, Allah the Exalted, has made locks for evil the key of which is in (consuming) alcohol. But lying is worse than wine.

How often do people lie?

- In the United States, one study had 77 college students plus 70 community members keep a diary detailing their deceptions. The students admitted to lying an average of twice a day, while the community members lied about once per day.
- One study, published in the *Journal of Basic and Applied Psychology*, found that 60 percent of people had lied at least once during a 10 min conversation between two strangers. On average, the subjects lied almost 3 times in a 10 minute conversation.
- Another study of 2000 Britons claims men tell six lies a day with women averaging 3 lies a day.

Psychological reasons of lying

Psychologist Robert Feldman cites self-esteem as one of the biggest culprits in our lying ways: “We find that as soon as people feel that their self-esteem is threatened, they immediately begin to lie at higher levels.” He believes many lies are simply for the purpose of maintaining social contacts by avoiding insults or discord; avoiding conflict is a top motivator for deception. For example: someone lying about lateness due to traffic holding them up, rather than sleeping in. The farther one’s true self is from their ideal self, the more likely they are to lie to boost themselves up, in others’ eyes or their eyes... or perhaps how they perceive others to perceive them.

We lie because it is 'rewarded'

A toddler receives beautiful telephone as a gift from a brand shop. S/he uses it for some days or weeks or maximum for a month. But, then s/he prefers to play with black ugly used cordless phone that the family members use. Why not use beautiful telephone that is his/her own and instead go for the old handset?

Social psychologist say that it is on account of being positively reinforced by using the old phone. No one replies to his 'hallow' on the toy phone, but when the phone rings and the kid picks up and says 'hallow,' someone on the other end also says, 'hallow.' Similarly, when a child lied for the first time to parents or teachers, and he got away with it. He feels lying works and is immediately rewarded!!

How to avoid lying?

1. Develop *taqwa* (fear of Allah). If we strongly believe that Allah is watchful and knows well we will avoid lying or be ashamed of lying. See Q 5:7, 11:5.

2. Develop self esteem and be confident about yourself and what you are doing. Hadith on *himma*.

3. Chide or even punish yourself for lying – whatever the circumstance or reason may be. Imam have said:

• وَقَالَ بَعْضُ الْأَئِمَّةِ حَاسِبُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ تُحَاسِبُوا (مصباح الشريعة، ص: 86)

4. Be content with whatever you have, or what Allah has given you. Do not covet what others have.

5. Avoid hatred, envy and animosity with others, especially with fellow Muslims, for these factors blind a person in committing sins, first of these is lying.

Do not abandon right due to falsehood

Zurarah informed the Imam (a) about Ata's leaving the funeral. (Ata was a sunni jurist in Madina). "Why?" inquired the Imam (a). I replied, "Due to the lamentation of a lady. He asked her to keep quiet and when she did not, he left." Imam Baqir (a) said, "Stay with me and we shall accompany the deceased. If we notice falsehood together with the truth and forsake the truth due to that falsehood, we would not have fulfilled the right of the Muslim." i.e. escorting the funeral of the Muslim, which is his right, should not be forsaken for the sake of the wailing of that lady (which, according to the non-Shi'ite sects, is forbidden and prohibited). (*Anecdotes for Reflection*, 2:108)