



ALI 241: Akhlāq of the Ahlul Bayt عليهم السلام

Session 4: JCC;

Tuesday – 17 Dhul Qa‘dah 1434/
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From the course outline

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

Session 4: Session 4: Tawādu' and al-Takabbur

(Modesty and arrogance). Virtues of modesty and the art of developing modesty. Modesty in behavior was the norm and practice of all Divine leaders.

Why is arrogance and pride abhorred and censured in Islam? How to treat arrogance?

The Holy Prophet (s) said:

سَيِّدُ الْقَوْمِ خَادِمُهُمْ فِي السَّفَرِ

The leader of a community is their servant in journey

(*Makarim al-Akhlaq*, p. 251)

Quranic Āyāt on humbleness

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ * وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّكَ لَن تَخْرِقَ
الْأَرْضَ وَلَن تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾

And do not walk upon the earth exultantly. Indeed, you will never tear the earth [apart], and you will never reach the mountains in height. (17:37)

وَاخْفِضْ جَنَاحَكَ لِمَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢١٥﴾

And lower your wing to those who follow you of the believers. (26:215)

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ
مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾

And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly. Indeed, Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful. (31:18)

Humility (*tawaadhu*) meaning

Humility is opposite of arrogance. A humble person does not consider him/herself better or important than others. The trait clearly appears in speech, deeds, sitting, walking, and in positive attitude.

Imam al-Sadiq (a): Humility embraces every precious and noble rank and high position... Humility is whatever is undertaken for Allah and in Allah, and anything other than that is trickery. Whoever is humble to Allah, Allah will honour over many of His servants. The people of humility have recognizable signs. When one of them was asked about humility, he said, 'It means you are humble to the truth and follow it, even if you hear it from a child.' Many types of pride keep one from using, accepting and following knowledge (*Lantern of the Path*, p.42)

Do not consider yourself special!

Just as the Prophet (s) and his companions landed from their rides it was decided that they would sacrifice a lamb for dinner. One person offered, “I’ll sacrifice the lamb.” Another, “I’ll skin it.” The third, “I’ll cook it.” Fourth one: “And I will ...” The Prophet (s) said, “And I will gather the wood from the desert.” The group: “we are sufficient for you.” He (s) said, “I know that you are there for me, but Allah, Mighty & Sublime, abhors from His servant that he distinguishes himself in the presence of his companions, and considers himself better (وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَكْرَهُ مِنْ عَبْدِهِ إِذَا كَانَ مَعَ أَصْحَابِهِ أَنْ يَنْفَرِدَ).” Then the Prophet (s) went to the desert, and gathered some firewood, and brought it to the group

(*Makārim al-Akhlāq*, p. 252)

Significance of humility

وَإِنَّ التَّوَّاضِعَ يَزِيدُ صَاحِبَهُ رِفْعَةً فَتَوَاضَعُوا يَرْفَعَكُمْ اللَّهُ

The Messenger of Allah (s): *Surely, humility increases the dignity of the one who possesses it. Be humble and Allah will exalt you. (al-Kafi, 2:121)*

Look at the simplistic life style of the Holy Prophet (s) and how raised him. Prophet Muhammad (s) did not care to sit down in the seat of honour in gatherings, and on entering any place would sit down in the first empty seat available. No wonder that Allah announced to Arabia and the rest of the world that Holy Prophet (s) had the most exalted of: *surely you are the highest stage of akhalaq* (وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ). So let us practice humility and leave it on Allah to exalt our dignity.

Musa appointed due to his humility

Sh Saduq (ar) states in *‘Ilal al-Sharaai‘*: the revelation stopped coming to Musa for 30 days. So he climbed a mountain in Sham and said to Allah humbly: did you stop the wahy on account of my sins, then here I am in your presence to seek Your pleasure. If it was on account of the sins of Banu Israel then Your forgiveness is ancient. So Allah revealed to him, ‘O Musa, do you know why I distinguished you with my revelation and speech?’ He said, “I do not have knowledge about it.” Allah said, ‘O Musa I looked all around my creation and did not find anyone more humble than you (يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنِّي) (اطَّلَعْتُ إِلَىٰ خَلْقِي اِطَّلَاعَةً فَلَمْ أَرَ فِيهِمْ أَشَدَّ تَوَاضِعًا مِنْكَ)’ Musa would never complete his prayers until he sticks his right and left cheeks to the earth (in utter humility.)

Du'a for seeking humility

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ سُؤَالَ خَاضِعٍ مُتَذَلِّلٍ خَاشِعٍ أَنْ تُسَامِحَنِي وَتَرْحَمَنِي
وَتَجْعَلَنِي بِقِسْمِكَ رَاضِيًا قَانِعًا وَفِي جَمِيعِ الْأَحْوَالِ مُتَوَاضِعًا

Imam Ali (in Du'a Kumayl): O Allah, I beseech you with the asking of a submissive, abased and lowly person, to show me forbearance, to have mercy on me and to make me with Your giving pleased and content; and to be humble in all states.

وَاجْعَلْنِي اللَّهُمَّ . . . وَأَسْتَعْمِلُ حُسْنَ الظَّنِّ فِي كَافَّةِهِمْ، وَأَتَوَلَّى بِالْبِرِّ عَامَّتَهُمْ،
وَأَغْضُ بَصْرِي عَنْهُمْ عِقَّةً، وَأُلِينُ جَانِبِي لَهُمْ تَوَاضِعًا، وَأَرْقُ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْبَلَاءِ

Imam al-Sajjad in Du'a for Neighbors and Friends: Let me O Allah . . . have a good opinion of every one of them, attend to all of them with devotion, lower my eyes before them in continence, make mild my side toward them in humility, be tender toward the afflicted among them in mercy (*Sahifa* 26:3)

Hadiths on benefits of humility

إِنَّ أَحَبَّكُمْ إِلَيَّ وَأَقْرَبَكُمْ مِنِّي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ مَجْلِسًا أَحْسَنُكُمْ خُلُقًا وَأَشَدُّكُمْ تَوَاضِعًا

Rasulullah (s): The most beloved of you and the nearest to me on the Day of Judgment in gathering is one is best in akhlaq and most severe in humility.

التَّوَّاضِعُ يَرْفَعُ الْوَضِيعَ

Amirul Mu'mineen (a): Humility raises a person who is low (or looked down by others). (*Ghurar* H.5159)

إِنَّ فِي السَّمَاءِ مَلَكَيْنِ مُوَكَّلَيْنِ بِالْعِبَادِ فَمَنْ تَوَاضَعَ لِلَّهِ رَفَعَاهُ وَمَنْ تَكَبَّرَ وَضَعَاهُ.

Imam al-Sadiq (a): In the heavens there are two angels appointed for the servants (of Allah). One who humbles for the sake of Allah, the angels raise him. And the one who acts arrogantly, they lower him.

Chief of all women, but humble

1. Bibi Fatima Zahra (a) gave her new marriage dress to a poor person and wore her old dress instead, during the wedding.

The next day when the Prophet asked why she was wearing an old dress, she replied that she gave the new dress to a poor person. The Prophet, 'Why didn't you give your old dress instead?' Fatima (a): Because the Noble Qur'an says: *You will not achieve piety until you give out what you love the most.* (Q 3:92)

2. Fatimah (a) and her whole family remained hungry for three days but offered the evening meals after three long days of fasting to the beggar, the orphan and the prisoner.

Allah (swt) praising this kind act, says: *And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive.* (Q 76:8)

3. Fatima was so kind to her servant Bibi Fidra (ra), that she worked one day and the other day Bibi Fatimah (a) would work so that Bibi Fidra could rest (or study the Qur'an).