



ALI 241: Akhlāq of the Ahlul Bayt عليهم السلام

Session 5: JCC; 9000 Bathurst St
Tuesday – 24 Dhul Qa‘dah 1434/
October 1, 2013

From the course outline

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

Session 5: al-Takabbur (Pride and arrogance). Why is arrogance and pride abhorred and censured in Islam? How to treat arrogance?

Takabbur in a nutshell:

Imam al-Sadiq (a) said:

لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ مَنْ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ كِبَرٍ

Imam al-Sādiq (a): One who has an atom of pride in his/her heart, will not enter Paradise (*al-Kāfī*, 2:310).

Quranic Āyāt on arrogance

• بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ * إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ ﴿النحل: ٢٣﴾

Indeed, He does not like the arrogant. (23)

• أَلَيْسَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ ﴿الزمر: ٦٠﴾

Is there not in Hell a residence for the arrogant? (60)

إِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۖ فَالَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ مُّنْكَرَةٌ وَهُمْ مُّسْتَكْبِرُونَ ﴿٢٢﴾

Your god is one God. But those who do not believe in the Hereafter - their hearts are disbelieving, and they are arrogant

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿لقمان: 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)

Arrogance (*takabbur*) meaning

- It is a mental state and disease of the nafs causing self-admiration and haughtiness against others in words and deeds; it is an offensive attitude of displaying superiority or self-importance. It is strongly chastised in Islam. There is a popular Hadith with both the Shi'ī and the Sunnis that an atom of pride will prevent a person to enter Paradise.
- In the *Exposition of Forty Hadith* by Ayatullah Khumayni: *Kibr* is the name of a psychic state in which a person feels a sense of superiority and behaves high-handedly with others.
- Imam al-Sadiq (a) in *Lantern of Path*: Pride is a plant whose seed is disbelief, whose earth is hypocrisy, and whose water is transgression. Its branches are ignorance, its leaves are misguidance, and its fruit is being cursed to remain in the Fire forever.

Half of his wealth is not accepted!

A neatly dressed person sat in the presence of the Prophet (s). Later, a poor person in tattered clothes, came and sat down near the rich man, who immediately gathered his dress from near the poor and drew it towards himself.

[Seeing this], the Prophet said *‘Did you fear that part of his poverty would touch you?’* He said, “No.” *‘Then did you fear that your richness will transfer to him?’* He said, “No.” *‘Or did you fear that he would dirty your dress?’* He said, “No.” *‘Then why did you behave such?’* He said, “O Rasūlullāh, I have a companion [in my soul] that makes good deeds appear evil to me and vice-versa. [To redress this] I gift half of my wealth to him”. So the Messenger of Allah asked the poor, *‘Do you accept (the offer)?’* “No,” said the man. ‘Why, asked the rich?’ “I fear I too might come to acquire what you have acquired [of pride and self-conceit].” (*al-Kāfi*, 2:262)

Dangers of arrogance & pride

Iblīs refused to obey Allah when he was ordered to prostrate before Adam. The Qur'an informs us of the debate between Allah the Creator and Satan.

7:12 Said (Allah), 'What prevented you from prostrating, when I commanded you?' 'I am better than him,' he said. 'You created me from fire and You created him from clay.' 7:13 *'Get down from it!' He said. 'It is not for you to be arrogant therein. Begone! You are indeed among the degraded ones.'* Iblīs was the first to display arrogance and pride.

The Quraysh rejected the apostleship of Prophet Muhammad on account of their pride and arrogance. They looked down upon the Prophet because he was an orphan and poor. In Qur'an 43:31 we read: *And they said, 'Why was not this Qur'an sent down to some great man from the two cities.'*

Pride of Abu Jahl, worse than pharaoh

“Look amongst the dying infidels [in Badr] and if you happen to find anyone of them still alive, kill him,” the Prophet (s) asked Ibn Mas‘ud. He narrates: “As I moved in the midst of people who seemed to be dead, I came to Abu Jahl, the most unyielding enemy of Islam. He still had some life left in him. ‘I thank Allah that He has humiliated you,’ I said as I sat on his chest. Abu Jahl opened his eyes and grunted, ‘Woe unto you! Who has been victorious?’ ‘Victory is for Allah and His Prophet, and it is for this reason that I shall kill you,’ I replied, placing my foot on his neck. With great arrogance, he cried, ‘O tiny shepherd! You have placed your foot on a very exalted place. Do know that nothing is more painful for me than to be killed by a dwarf like you. Oh! Why did not one of the sons of Abdul Muttalib kill me?’ I severed his head said to the Prophet (s). ‘Glad tidings to you, O Rasūlullāh! This is the head of Abu Jahl.’”

Du'a for abandoning takabbur

• اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ، وَلَا تَرْفَعْنِي فِي النَّاسِ دَرَجَةً إِلَّا حَطَطْتَنِي
عِنْدَ نَفْسِي مِثْلَهَا، وَلَا تُحْدِثْ لِي عِزًّا ظَاهِرًا إِلَّا أَحْدَثْتَ لِي ذِلَّةً بَاطِنَةً
عِنْدَ نَفْسِي بِقَدَرِهَا .

O Allah, bless Muhammad and his Household, raise me not a single degree before the people without lowering me it's like in myself and bring about no outward exaltation for me without an inward abasement in myself to the same measure! (*Sahīfa*, 20:4)

• اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ . . . وَاسْتِصْغَارِ الْمَعْصِيَةِ، وَاسْتِكْبَارِ الطَّاعَةِ

O Allah! I seek refuge in You from . . . belittling the disobedience and magnifying the obedience [to You].
(*Sahīfa*, 8: 2)

Hadiths on evils of takabbur

1.Hakim says, “I asked Abu ‘Abdillah (al-Imam al-Sadiq) (a) as to the lowest degree of *ilhad* (apostasy). He answered: *Verily kibr (pride) is its lowest degree.*

2.Refrain from pride and self-glorification, since pride is God Almighty’s mantle, and one who contests with God regarding His cloak, God will shatter him and disgrace him on the Day of Resurrection.

3.Whoever is proud of himself and his actions has strayed off the path of right guidance & has claimed what is not his.

4 & 5.Imam Ali (a): He who considers himself great; with Allah he is an abased and insignificant person. (*Ghurar* H. 8340) Do not be obstinate about your own opinion, for he who is obstinate about his own opinion will meet destruction (Ibid H.9613)

Consequences of takabbur

- Dawud b. Farqad, from his brother, who said, “I heard al-Imam al-Sadiq (a) saying, ... Verily the proud [on the Judgement Day] will be created in the form of ants and people will trample them down under their feet until God is finished with the reckoning.”
- The first thing which happens to the proud man is that he is stripped of his object of pride, so that he will know that he is contemptible and incapable, and will testify against himself; and that will be a firmer proof against him. This was the case with Iblis. .(*Lantern of the Path*)
- Whoever chooses pride has sowed disbelief and cultivated hypocrisy. It is inevitable that it must bear its fruit and he will end up in the Fire (ibid)

Allah is not close to the proud

Imam Hasan was always very kind to the poor. Once the Imam (a) was walking down the road when he came across some poor people sitting on the ground eating pieces of dry bread. When the poor saw the Imam, they requested him to join them. Imam sat on the ground and ate the dry bread with them. He said, “Allah does not keep close to those who are proud.” When they had finished with the meal, the Imam got up to leave. Before leaving, he thanked them for sharing their food and requested them to accompany to his house. When they reached Imam’s house, they were given fine food and some clothing. (*Manāqib ibn Shahr ‘Āshūb*, 4:23, quoted in: *Lessons in Our Faith*, 39).

Dahwul Ardh, 25th Dhul Q'adah

Recommended *a'maal* (act of devotion) for the day:

- To reflect on our role as *khalifa* of Earth; our home.
- To perform recommended *ghusl* for this day.
- To observe recommended fast (*sawm*).
- To recite a two *rak'ah* prayer in the morning past sunrise (at forenoon): In both the rak'ahs recite Surah al-Fatiha once, and then Surat al-Shams (Sura 91) five times. After Salam recite :
- “There is no power or strength save with Allah, the Most High, the Greatest. O He who tolerates lapses, bear with my false steps, O He who responds to supplications, answer to my prayers. O He who pays attention to (all) voices, hear my cry, and have mercy on me, overlook my wrongdoings and opposition, O Owner of Might and Majesty.”