



# ALI 241: Akhlāq of the Ahlul Bayt عليهم السلام

Session 6: JCC; 9000 Bathurst St

Tuesday – 2 Dhul Hijjah 1434/ October  
8, 2013

# Addition to the course outline

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

Session 6: The art of developing Tawaadhu (humbleness) and how to avoid kibr (pride and arrogance) – practical ways.

Takabbur in a nutshell:

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a) said:

الْعِزُّ رِدَاءُ اللَّهِ وَالْكَبِيرُ إِزَارُهُ. فَمَنْ تَنَاوَلَ شَيْئًا مِنْهُ أَكَبَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي جَهَنَّمَ

Imam al-Bāqir (a): Honor is Allah's robe and pride His mantle; one who takes a part from it, Allah will throw him in the Hell (*al-Kāfi*, 3:423).

# Do not exalt yourself!

• بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ \* تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِیْنَ لَا یُرِیْدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِی الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا ۝ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِیْنَ

- *That is the abode of the Hereafter, which We shall grant to those who do not desire to domineer/ exalt themselves on the earth, nor to cause corruption, and (the best) end is for the God-conscious (Q28:83).*

• وَ عِبَادُ الرَّحْمٰنِ الَّذِیْنَ یَمْشُوْنَ عَلٰی الْاَرْضِ هَوْنًا

- *And the servants of the Beneficent (Allah), are those who walk on the earth with humbleness (Q 25:63)*

# Why people act arrogantly?

- Ayatullāh Khumaynī (r) mentions in *Forty Hadith* that *kibr* is an offspring of *'ujb* which consists of self-love and conceit. He also says, “there are various causes of *kibr*, but all of them derive from the delusion, which occurs when men imagine themselves of possessing some kind of excellence” (*Forty Hadith*, p. 104).
- When a person loves the self to the extent that s/he has an excessive favorable opinion of one’s ability, importance and wit, then he develops *'ujb*. In many cases it’s nothing more than a fantasy. Overtime, he feels sense of superiority and begins behaving arrogantly and high-handedly with others.

# O Musa, bring an inferior being!

- Allah revealed to Nabi Musa (a): “Next time when you come to converse with Me, bring along someone who is inferior to you.” Musa failed to find anyone, because every person that he encountered, he did not have the nerve to think that he was superior to that person. Then, he searched in animals and decided to take a sick dog. He tied a rope around the dog’s neck to take it with him, but after a while, he regretted his action and set the dog free. He returned empty-handed to Allah. “Why did you not bring someone along with you, in accordance with My order?” came the voice from Allah. Musa said: “O Lord! I failed to find anyone who could be inferior to me.” Allah replied: “By My Might and Glory! Had you brought someone, regarding him to be inferior to yourself, I would have surely erased your name from the list of Prophets (and relieved you of the rank of apostleship! (*Anecdotes for Reflection*, 2:54))

# Share your experience with us

Please share with the class about a person or people whom you have interacted, worked or travelled with and you felt:

*This was real humble person, he reminds me of akhlaaq of the Holy Prophet (s) or his Ahlul Bayt (a).*

Now, without naming anyone or alluding through gesture think of a person or people who acted arrogantly with you or others in your presence. How did you feel? What could have caused this attitude in this person/these people?

# Harms of kibr (arrogance & pride)

- Only likes false self-flattery and exaggerate praise
- No longer sees his faults, defects and shortcomings. Q7:146 – *I shall turn away from My revelations those who magnify themselves*
- He never thinks of self-improvement or self-discipline. *Thus does Allah seal the heart of every arrogant oppressor* (Q 40:35)
- Eventually, he distances himself from truth and justice
- People dislike associating or befriending him, except if he is in authority or has influence in certain areas.
- Ayt Khumayni says kibr “causes hatred and rancor in human hearts” And, Kibr towards the Divine Commandments amounts to kibr towards Allah. “As to the kibr towards God, it is the most abominable, the most destructive, and the highest degree of pride, and is present in infidels, those who contest God’s authority” (*Forty Hadith*, p. 102 & 108).

# Imam Ali (a) in Nahjul Balagha

You should take lesson from what Allah did to Iblīs, when He nullified his long worship and his strenuous efforts. (Iblīs) worshipped Allah for six thousand years – unknown whether it is according the counting of years in the world or years in the Hereafter, on account of pride for a moment. Then who can be safe from disobeying Allah after Iblīs? Never, it is not possible that Allah will allow a human to enter Paradise, when He threw an angel out of it, for Allah's rule in the heavens and the earth is one and same (*Nahjul Balaghā*, sermon Qasi'ah)



# Learn the art of Tawaadhu` - 1

- Visit the sick and the disabled. You will realize there helplessness and humility. Try to put yourself in their shoes and you will immediately feel like humbling yourself in the presence of the all-powerful and Almighty. Hadith: visit the sick and you will see Allah.
- Think of death and end time regularly. We become totally helpless such that others provide us with ablution and shroud. The Holy Prophet (s) once said the heart gathers rust the way iron does. They asked him: then what is the polish to remove the rust? The Prophet (s) said, ‘tilāwah of the Qur’an and remembrance of death.’ Imam Ali in Du‘ā Sabah says: *wa qahara ‘ibādahu bil-mawti wal-fanaa* (and [Allah] dominates His servants with death and annihilation)
- Participate in jamaat salat, for you stand shoulder to shoulder with a poor, or sometime with your servant.

# Learn the art of Tawaadhu` - 2

- Perform lengthy rukū‘ and sajdah in prayers, whilst reflecting on the Superiority of Allah and the inferiority of His servants.
- Perform simple domestic chores with your own hands. In a Hadith it is mentioned that when a person carries his own load of items in the market, it would remove the pride within him.
- Read beautiful supplications found in the *Sahifa Sajjādiyyah* of al-Sajjad and you will realize how to humble yourself before Allah when reciting Du‘ās
- Have your meals on the floor. Also, Share your meal with the poor and destitute. Imam Ridha (a) used to have meals with his servants and slaves during his time as crown prince.

# Washing the feet of disciples!

Isa Ibn Maryam (a) once told his disciples that he sought a favour from them. “What do you want us to do?” they asked. Isa (a) moved from his place and washed the feet of all the disciples! “O Spirit of Allah! It is more befitting that we should wash your feet!” they exclaimed.

“The person who is the most deserving to serve is one who is a scholar. I have acted thus in order that I may have demonstrated humbleness. You too should develop the quality of humbleness and after I have gone you should behave with the people with humility and modesty just as I have behaved with you,” Isa (a) said. “It is by means of humbleness and not arrogance that wisdom flourishes, just as it is on soft ground that plants grow, not on hard mountainous terrain. (*Anecdotes for Reflection*, 2:66-67)

# How to avoid *kibr*?

- Think of your origin, it is nothing but a drop of impure sperm. Also, as a child how helpless you were to even clean yourself of dirt and waste. Additionally, you were born knowing nothing. Allah created the means for you to learn and educate yourself. How come now suddenly you are full of pride.
- Know that it is forbidden to look down upon a believer and a Muslim. The *hurmat* (sanctity) of a believer, according to Hadith, is greater than that of al-Ka'bah. A proud and an arrogant should bring to this his mind, if his/her *nafs* makes him belittle others.
- Dress simply, avoid wearing expensive and fleshy clothes or shoes. They give wrong impression that no one or majority cannot afford what I can!

# Salam al-Farsi's advice

عَنِ الصَّادِقِ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: وَقَعَ بَيْنَ سَلْمَانَ الْفَارِسِيِّ رَحْمَهُ اللَّهُ وَبَيْنَ رَجُلٍ كَلَامٌ وَخُصُومَةٌ فَقَالَ لَهُ الرَّجُلُ مَنْ أَنْتَ يَا سَلْمَانُ فَقَالَ سَلْمَانُ أَمَّا أَوْلِيٌّ وَأَوَّلُكَ فَنُطْفَةٌ قَدِيرَةٌ وَأَمَّا آخِرِي وَآخِرُكَ فَجِيفَةٌ مُنْتِنَةٌ فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ وَوُضِعَتِ الْمَوَازِينُ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَ مِيزَانُهُ فَهُوَ الْكَرِيمُ وَمَنْ خَفَّ مِيزَانُهُ فَهُوَ اللَّئِيمُ.

Imam al-Sādiq (a) narrates from his father who narrates from his grandfather: A quarrel took place between Salmān al-Fārsī and another person, who told Salmān [with contempt]: “Who are you, O Salmān?” Salmān replied, “The first part of you and me is a dirty drop of sperm. The last part of you and me is a stinking corpse. And on the Day of Resurrection when the scales will be weighed, the one whose (good) deeds will weigh heavier will be the true noble person, but the one whose (good) deeds will weigh lighter will be blameworthy. (*Āmalī* of Sadūq, p. 610-11)