

ALI 333: Understanding Servitude

Session Three

وَلَقَدْ كَتَبْنَا فِي الزَّبُورِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الذِّكْرِ أَنَّ الْأَرْضَ يَرِثُهَا
عِبَادِي الصَّالِحُونَ

And certainly We wrote in the Book after the reminder that (as for) the land, My righteous servants shall inherit it.

Sura Anbiya, no. 21, verse 105

Points from the verse

- 1) The verse promises a reward for the virtuous servants of Allah; the inheritance of authority on the earth .
- 2) Zabur – the Psalms of Nabi Dawood (a). He established justice on earth.
- 3) Dhikr – refers to the Taurat of Nabi Musa (a). The Banu Israel were able to overcome oppression and establish themselves on earth.
- 4) When His servants are virtuous and show effort and sincerity, Allah gives them victory over those who wish to oppress them.
- 5) The verse is a reference to the time of the reappearance of Imam Mahdi (a) when he and the believers with him will establish God’s rule on earth.

Agenda

Principles of Servitude

Principle I

Principle II

Principle III

The 3 Principles of Servitude

- 1) A servant has nothing that is his. Everything he has belongs to Allah. Slaves own nothing.
- 2) A servant does not manage his own affairs. Allah is the Master Planner and Controller and He decrees all things.
- 3) All his efforts must be solely devoted to fulfilling his obligations to Allah and staying away from what He has prohibited. Slaves obey in complete submission.

Principle 1 – Allah is the True Owner

وَ لِلّٰهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضِ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا

To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them.

(Al-Maidah no.5, verse 17)

He is the owner of that which he has given them ownership of. He is the One who wields power over that which he has given them the ability to do.

Tawhid Sadooq from Imam Ridha (a)

Human ownership and ability is temporary and dependent. Therefore the owner of our inner and outer powers and all of our limbs and organs is Allah and He has given us their ownership for a period of time. We are not independent of Him in any of these.

There is perfection in not seeing ourselves as independent neither in our own powers nor our possessions. Whatever we have *is not from ourselves* but rather the grace and mercy of Allah that He has given us.

Even the Prophets and Imams to whom Allah gave so much power and knowledge did not see themselves as independent and needless.

Imam Husayn (a) says in Dua Arafah:

إِلَهِي أَنَا الْفَقِيرُ فِي غِنَايَ فَكَيْفَ لَا أَكُونُ فَقِيرًا فِي فَقْرِي

My God, I am poor in my riches so how can I not be poor in my poverty?

Principle 2: Allah is the Master Planner

الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّىٰ وَ الَّذِي قَدَّرَ فَهَدَىٰ

The One who created and proportioned who determined and guided

The servant does not make plans for himself and does not see himself as the executer of his plans.

Allah has given human beings the religion and with their own choice they can get under its rulings and arrive at its lofty results.

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَ إِمَّا كَفُورًا

Indeed We have guided him to the way, be he grateful or ungrateful.

Surah Insan (76)

All of the powers of understanding and factors in planning are from Allah. We have the power to apply will = make our own choice. Allah willed that human beings should go on the path towards felicity with his own actions.

Plan according to what Allah wants. Don't rely on your own plans but trust in Allah.

وَ شَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

And consult them in the affair then when you decide, trust in Allah (3:159)

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ = لَا مَوْثِرَ فِي الْوُجُودِ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

No god but Allah = No cause in existence except Allah

Principle 3: Complete Obedience

The servant occupies himself solely with observing what Allah has commanded and refraining from that which He has forbidden

One of the results of committing oneself to طاعة is that he will start to control his actions and his passions such that his relationship with others will also improve. When faced with the potential of polluting himself with characteristics that are other than what pleases God, he turns away.